



Herefordshire Archaeology
Conservation and Environmental Planning
Planning Services
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Herefordshire Council

**Herefordshire Woodlands
Archaeological Survey,
Part 1
Lingen Vallet Wood**

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 160

**Report prepared by
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Herefordshire Archaeology is Herefordshire Council's county archaeological 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 Archaeological Survey, Part 1 Lingen Vallet Wood

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 160, November 2004.

Summary: An archaeological rapid reconnaissance survey (EHE37025) was undertaken in partnership with the Forestry Commission, within Lingen Vallet Wood. The survey involved recording earthwork features relating to woodland management, former industrial processes and previous land use, using a Global Positioning System.

A rapid site identification survey was carried out in the wood concerned; using a hand held Global Positioning System to record the location of the features that were recognised as having archaeological significance.

Earthwork features were recorded within the wood that illustrate the intensive use of the woodland resource in the late and post medieval periods. These included saw pits, charcoal burning platforms, quarries and woodland management boundaries.

A series of lynchets associated with an earthwork enclosure on the northern slope, indicate that at least this portion of the wood was part of the common field system during the medieval period.

Disclaimer: It should not be assumed that land referred to in this document is accessible to the public. Location plans are indicative only. NGRs 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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Herefordshire Woodlands Archaeological Survey, Part 1

Lingen Vallet Wood

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 160, November 2004.

Introduction.

This report provides an account of a rapid survey of Lingen Vallet Wood (EHE37025). The survey was carried out in 2004 within year 1 of the Herefordshire Woodlands Archaeological Survey which followed a pilot study undertaken by Herefordshire Archaeology in partnership with and grant-aided by the Forestry Commission. The purpose of the survey is to begin 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 for site identification and until recently recording an accurate location within woodland was often not practicable.

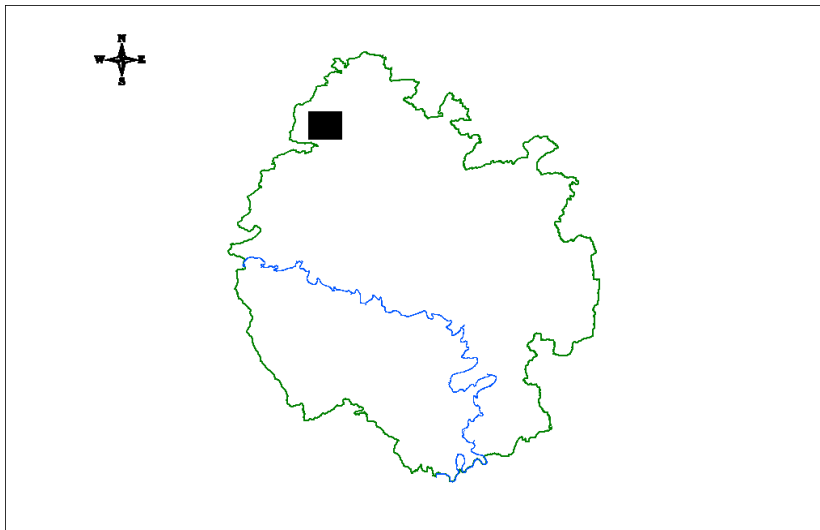
Woodland boundaries have often moved over the centuries, sometimes expanding to encapsulate and preserve evidence of alternative land-use (for instance, field systems) and on other occasions shrinking and being subject to differing forms of woodland management. These variations in land-use inevitably influence the kind of ecological data that can be obtained from different areas of woodland. Archaeological survey can contribute significant data concerning woodland history, management history and sequential development, and this can provide independent evidence of historical change. It is only when the changes throughout history within a wood have been documented and understood in this way that a well informed management strategy can be implemented.

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 of which took place in 2001-2, and Phase 2 took place in 2003. The surveys carried out in early 2004 were an extension to this initial pilot work.

The survey for each woodland area identifies the potential for the survival of archaeological features and samples the types of features present. Further planned survey may re-visit woodlands identified in the rapid reconnaissance surveys as being of high archaeological potential and will involve a more detailed survey. 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.

Location.

Lingen Vallet Wood is located at NGR: SO 3600 6700 and covers the top and north facing slope of a steep sided hill approximately 325m O.D. The northern slope is predominantly under mature coniferous cover whilst the top is mostly under mixed deciduous with some stands of conifer.



The geology of Lingen Vallet Wood and parish is composed of Silurian sedimentary rock of the Ludlow and Wenlock formations, with some Old Red Sandstone. The soils around the area are typical brown earths (Dinn, J. 1995).

Figure 1: Location of Lingen Vallet Wood

The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study for Herefordshire describes Lingen Vallet Wood as woodland surrounded by fields derived from the enclosure of former common arable areas into small, regular, broad closes, (HLC 35).(HLC 33), (Ray and White, 2003).

Previous Fieldwork/Records.

A detailed search of the Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) revealed ten entries for Lingen Vallet Wood (Dinn, J. 1995). The entries found in the SMR relate to a survey transect carried out as part of the Marches Upland Survey (Dinn, J. 1995) and are as follows:

SMR Record: 136591
Site Name: Charcoal burning platform
NGR: SO 3518 6687
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Charcoal burning platform

SMR Record: 136592
Site Name: Holloway
NGR: SO 3556 6680
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Holloway

SMR Record: 136593
Site Name: Packhorse Tracks
NGR: SO 3575 6675
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Trackway

SMR Record: 136594
Site Name: Bank
NGR: SO 3566 6684
Period: Modern
Site Type: Bank

SMR Record: 136595
Site Name: Charcoal burning platform
NGR: SO 3515 6686
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Charcoal burning platform

SMR Record: 136596
Site Name: Holloway
NGR: SO 3510 6689
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Holloway

SMR Record: 136601
Site Name: Holloway
NGR: SO 3600 6678
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Holloway

SMR Record: 136782
Site Name: Holloway
NGR: SO 3545 6660
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Holloway

SMR Record: 136783
Site Name: Bank
NGR: SO 3533 6657
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Enclosure

SMR Record: 136831
Site Name: Wood bank
NGR: SO 3595 6669
Period: Post Medieval
Site Type: Wood bank

Only one entry from the Marches Upland Survey transect can reliably be cross-referenced to a feature recorded within this survey (SMR 13678/03 with HSM 37030). This is described within the 1995 Marches Uplands Survey report as a bank forming part of, or associated with, a large enclosure. This feature has been recorded within this report as an enclosure associated with a medieval field system.

It is probable that a number of sites recorded during the Marches Upland Survey have also been recorded during this survey, particularly linear features. However, due to imprecise grid references contained within the 1995 survey, (generated without the aid of a G.P.S. system), and with only a single grid reference for each linear feature, identification of duplicated records is not possible.

Survey Description.

Lingen Vallet Wood was surveyed on 26th November 2003. The survey comprised a reconnaissance walk over in order to locate and identify archaeological features, comment on their preservation and assess their significance. Features were mapped using a hand-held 'SILVA Multi-Navigator' Global Positioning System, enabling a ten figure grid reference to be recorded for each feature. This system is accurate to within approximately 10m even under tree canopy.

It is necessary for this type of survey to be undertaken in the winter months when foliage is light, usually after December and through to April. Ideally, it should be carried out during or soon after a cold spell as this helps flatten long grass and old bracken, making the identification of earthwork features easier.

The survey area was walked in transects aligned roughly east/west and approximately 50m to 100m apart. If a large feature was encountered and no other features of archaeological significance could 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. Transcriptions were used as a basis for the database and synthesis in this report.

The Following survey should not be taken as exhaustive or its results as entirely definitive. The level of survey carried out is intended to record the character of features present, their state of preservation and their relationships to other features within the survey area. More detailed survey would produce more precise documentation, and further features. However it is anticipated that the majority of principal earthwork and other features have been recorded. As such, it is believed that the survey results will provide a useful basis for future management of the historic environment.

Survey Results.

The recorded data from the survey is described in detail within this results section. This section is concluded by a brief discussion highlighting the historical development of the woodland as understood using the 2003 survey results. The significance of

recorded features and management implications are then commented upon within the subsequent discussion section.

Appendix 1 contains a simple data base which cross references each site to the Ordnance Survey National Grid, (NGR), and the series of unique Sites and Monuments "Primary Record Numbers" (PRN), allocated following the transcription. These numbers are referred to within both the text and illustrations. They are prefixed by HSM, these initials relating to Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record unique numbers.

Woodland management features

A total of sixteen charcoal burning platforms were recorded. These ranged in size from 5-10m in diameter and in the main comprised a level, circular platform with a pronounced down-slope lip. These are predominantly distributed on the northern and western slopes.

In contrast, a single saw pit was recorded within Lingen Vallet Wood, (HSM 37047). The 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.

The presence and distribution of these classes of features suggests that either:

- The woodland has been primarily managed historically for the production of coppiced timber predominantly for the production of charcoal, or
- The woodland has been managed with standards and an under-storey of coppice but much of the lumber has been taken elsewhere for sawing.

Woodland boundaries

Lingen Vallet Wood does not appear to have been surrounded by a woodland boundary bank. It is probable that much, if not all of the wood was laid out over a series of medieval field banks and lynchets, some of which were used to define the woodland boundaries. This is particularly apparent on the northern boundary of the wood.

Within the wood three banks and ditches were recorded, (at HSM 37027, 37031, and 37048). These appear to be woodland compartment boundary features created in order to divide the wood into smaller units and enable differing management regimes for each area.

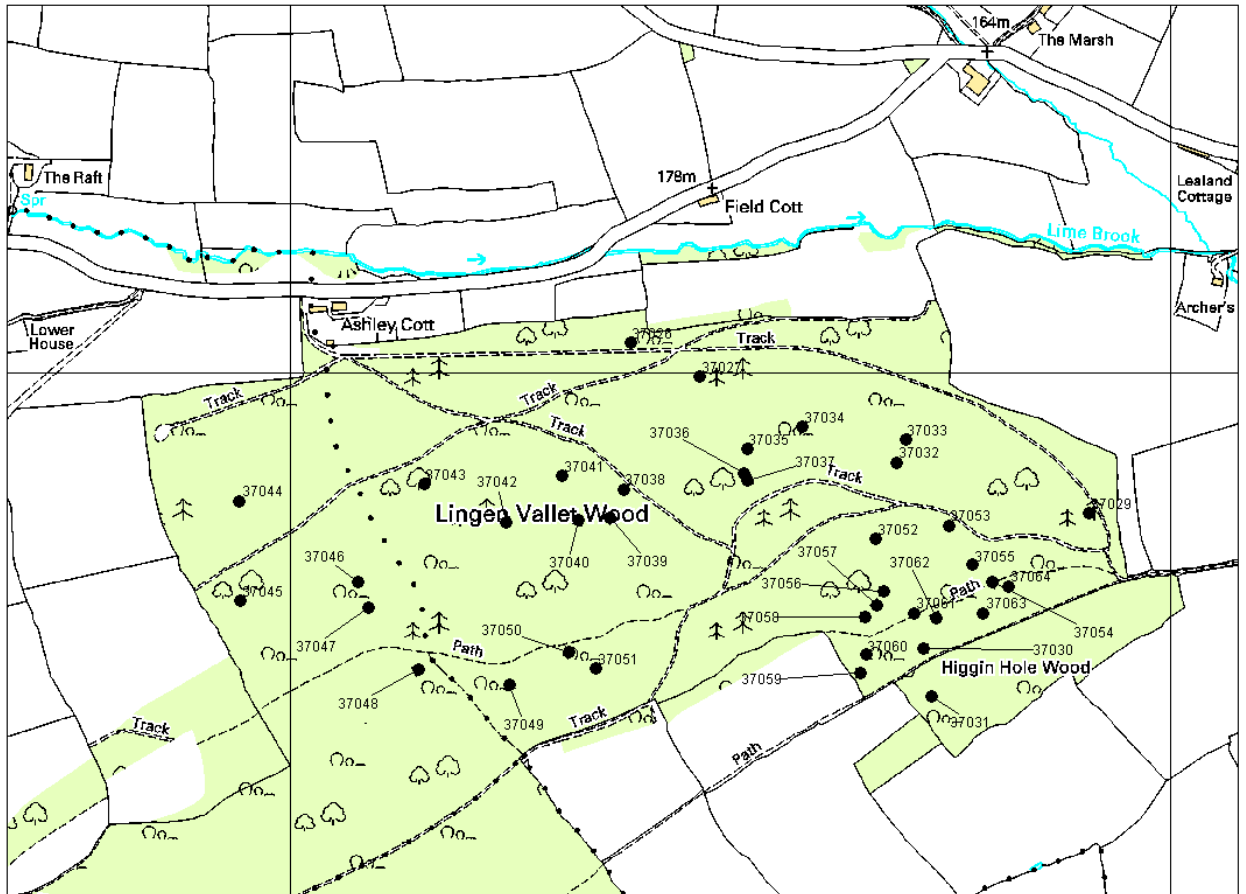


Figure 2: Location of features recorded within Lingen Vallet Wood.

The parish boundary bank HSM 37048 was recorded. This comprised a large bank, approximately 3m wide and 0.5m high with a shallow ditch on either side, which runs on a north-west / south-east axis through the wood.

Buildings/structures

Three building platforms were recorded, (HSM 37039, 37061, and 37062). These comprised level, rectangular platforms ranging in size from 8m long and 6m wide in the case of HSM 37039, to 4m by 3m in the case of HSM 37062. Their aspect, proximity to recorded hollow ways (and other route-ways), and location in respect to a stone lined well (HSM 37058), would suggest that at least one of these platforms were for at least seasonal domestic use. The date of this small ‘settlement’ is uncertain as the well is not recorded on any available map. It is however most likely to date from some time within the post-medieval period.

Two triangular shaped platforms were noted during the survey, HSM 37037 and HSM 37064. Both were similar in size having roughly 5m long sides. It is likely that both were used as storage areas for lumber, coppiced wood or charcoal.

Former land use

Five Lynchets were recorded on the northern slopes of Lingen Vallet Wood, (HSM 37044, 37053, 37055, 37056, and 37057). These comprise an earthwork “step” cut

into the natural hill slope up to 1.7m in height and in excess of 60m in length. Each lynchet has been constructed at a slight angle to the contour – a method employed to bring marginal, sloping land into intensive arable production. Further lynchets can be seen to the north of the wood, many of which have hedges on them. The presence of the five lynchets within Lingen Vallet Wood indicate that at least the northern slopes of the wood formed part of the medieval common field system and was therefore not wooded at that time.

Attached to eastern side of the lynchet system was an earthwork enclosure, HSM 37030. This comprised a well spread, 3.5m wide, bank with an external ditch, approximately 40m square constructed on a naturally level area on the northern slope of the wood. The function of this enclosure is unclear and rather than being directly related to the field system, it may have more to do with the land use on the hill top and further to the south and east, e.g. an enclosure for corralling livestock prior to letting them grazed on open land.

Other Features.

Six hollow ways were recorded (HSM 37028, 37033, 37054, 37059, 37065 and 37051). These were all located within the eastern portion of the wood and either ran diagonally across the northern slope (HSM 37033) or ran on a north-east / south-west axis close to the boundary with Higgin's Hole Wood e.g. HSM 37054, 37059 and HSM 37065.

Discussion and Implications

Implications regarding site condition

Woodland boundary banks and compartment boundaries generally survive well as do other woodland management features and features relating to former land-use. Relationships are difficult to established between the woodland management features and earlier features due to their truncation.

Implications for future management

Existing access routes should be used for future management and extraction of the woodland. The density and overall state of preservation of a wide range of features suggest that; with the exception of the central area. Additional information concerning land-use and woodland management could be learned from further, more detailed survey of particularly the linear features.

Implications for future field work.

This area of woodland has a high potential for the presence of well preserved archaeological features. The survival of the lynchet system and enclosure is of high archaeological significance. It should be possible to recognise relationships between many features and hence produce a series of phases illustrating the changing management of the woodland and the extent of former land use. A more detailed survey would bring more subtle relationships out and may reveal the extent of medieval and post-medieval woodland boundaries.

Acknowledgements.

I would like to acknowledge the Forestry Commission for their commitment to this survey scheme.

Dr. Keith Ray, County Archaeologist, for his editorial input into this report.

Archive arising from this piece of fieldwork.

1 Dictaphone Tape
1 Microsoft word file of record transcriptions.
1 Excel Database
1 Mapinfo workspace and table
This Document.

Bibliography.

Dinn, J. 1995 *Marches Uplands Survey: Lingen Transect*, Report 131, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council.

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. K. Ray County Archaeologist.

<i>Appendix: Site Database.</i>

HSM	Eastings	Northings	Description	Preservation
37026	335385	267033	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37027	335463	266995	Bank	Fair
37028	335906	272750	Holloway	Fair
37029	335905	266840	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37030	335717	266687	Banked enclosure	Fair
37031	335726	266633	Bank	Fair
37032	335686	266897	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37033	335697	266924	Holloway	Fair
37034	335580	266938	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37035	335517	266913	Charcoal Burning Platform	Poor
37036	335513	266885	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37037	335517	266878	Triangular Platform	Fair
37038	335377	266867	Charcoal Burning Platform	Poor
37039	335362	266835	Building Platform	Fair
37040	335325	266832	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37041	335307	266883	Charcoal Burning Platform	Fair
37042	335244	266830	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37043	335151	266873	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37044	334941	266854	Lynchet	Poor
37045	334942	266741	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37046	335076	266763	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37047	335088	266734	Sawpit	Fair
37048	335145	266663	Bank and Ditch	Fair
37049	335247	266646	Ditch	Poor
37050	335315	266683	Charcoal Burning Platform	Good
37051	335346	266665	Holloway	Fair
37052	335663	266811	Parish Boundary Bank	Fair
37053	335746	266826	Lynchet	Good
37054	335795	266762	Holloway	Fair
37055	335773	266782	Lynchet	Fair
37056	335672	266752	Lynchet	Fair
37057	335664	266736	Lynchet	Fair
37058	335651	266723	Well	Fair
37059	335646	266659	Holloway	Fair
37060	335652	266680	Charcoal Burning Platform	Poor
37061	335706	266727	Building Platform	Fair
37062	335732	266721	Building Platform	Fair
37063	335785	266727	Lynchet	Good
37064	335814	266757	Triangular Platform	Fair
37065	339544	266737	Holloway	Good