

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

LYNDHURST

1. INTRODUCTION

English Heritage has initiated a national series of Extensive Urban Surveys. Several counties have commenced such projects including Hampshire County Council who are undertaking the survey of the small towns of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The survey is intended to provide an up-to-date view of the archaeological resource in each of the towns building on earlier surveys (e.g. Hughes, 1976; Basford, 1980) and consists of three phases: Data Collection, Data Assessment and Strategy. The first stage, Data Collection, draws together the accessible history of the town, the archaeological knowledge and historic buildings data. The Data Assessment phase of the survey leads to the production of a report which presents a brief history of the town, (this document is not intended as a definitive history) an analysis of the plan of the town, an assessment of the archaeological and buildings data and the state of modern development resulting in the identification of areas of archaeological importance. Information about the development of the town through the ages, including plan-form analysis and the identified areas of archaeological importance, is also presented in cartographic form at the end of the report. The Strategy phase of the survey, uses the information presented in the Data Assessment combined with current statutory and non-statutory constraints, and present and future planning policy to make recommendations for policies regarding the historic environment. The policies may be incorporated into Local and Unitary Development Plans, non-statutory policies, supplementary guidance and for use within development control.

2. LOCATION

Lyndhurst lies in the heart of the New Forest in western Hampshire, approximately 15km from Southampton, 18km from Ringwood, and 5km from Brockenhurst. The source of the Beaulieu River lies around 700m to the north of the town near Pikeshill. There are many small streams around the settlement but no streams run through the settlement.

The church and Queen's House, which lie on the western side of the settlement, are positioned on a small promontory at a little over 50m OD. To the east, north and south, the land falls away gently to around 40m OD. To the west is Lyndhurst Hill which rises to 90m OD.

3. BACKGROUND

ARCHAEOLOGY

Prehistoric

There have been a few isolated finds of prehistoric date recovered from near the town, but little evidence for settlement.

- A1 There are several Bronze Age barrows in the vicinity of the town including Bolton's Bench to the east of the settlement.

Roman

There is no evidence for Roman occupation in the immediate area of the town. Roman coins have been found in that area of Parkhill Lawn (not on map extent), to the south-west of the settlement. A Roman road, running between Otterbourne and the New Forest through Cadnam, has been traced a little over 4km to the north of Lyndhurst (Margary, 422, 1955, 86).

Anglo-Saxon

No sites of Anglo-Saxon date have been identified in or around Lyndhurst.

Medieval

The SMR identifies only the Queen's House and the fact that the estate of Lyndhurst was recorded in the Domesday Book.

- A2 Two phases of the boundary of the medieval deer-park survive to the east of Lyndhurst in the form of banks and ditches.

HISTORY

Medieval

The first mention of Lyndhurst occurs in the Domesday Book which records that the manor of *Linhest* was held by the king. The manor was assessed at two hides, all of which, apart from one virgate held by Herbert the Forester, had been taken into the Forest. Domesday Book states that 'now there is nothing except two smallholders'. The value of the manor in 1086 was 10s, a significant drop from the pre-1066 value of six pounds (Munby 1982, fol 39a). The place-name derives from OE *Lindhyrst* 'lime wooded hill' that would indicate that limes used to grow in the area, although limes have now almost disappeared from southern England (Gelling 1984, 197; Rackham 1986, 102 & 140).

Although the estate was in royal hands, it does not appear to have been of particular local importance or the site of a *villa regalis*, i.e. a royal estate centre. The fact that the church of Lyndhurst was a chapelry of Minstead until the nineteenth century (Page 1911, 633) also reflects the lower status of the estate.

The history of Lyndhurst is closely tied to the use of the New Forest as a royal hunting-ground, and the settlement received frequent royal visitors. However, under the early Norman kings Brockenhurst appears to have been preferred over Lyndhurst, as William II used Brockenhurst as his head-quarters for hunting expeditions in the New Forest (Thompson 1977, 22). The relative importance of Lyndhurst probably increased during the thirteenth century. At that time it became the custom to grant the manor in dower to the reigning queen, together with the Wardenship of the New Forest. Edward I signed documents at Lyndhurst, and granted Queen Eleanor oaks for building construction and repairs on the manor house in 1277 and 1280 (*ibid*, 23). During the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) the park of Lyndhurst was enclosed, and by the second half of the fourteenth century there was a fishpond within the park as at that time works were undertaken on 'the head of the great pond within Lyndhurst Park' (Brown *et al* 1963, 984-6).

In 1334 Edward III granted Queen Philippa a three day fair on her manor of Lyndhurst but this is the only reference to the fair. It is possible that the fair was only granted for her lifetime. Queen Philippa gave up the custody of the Forest and Manor of Lyndhurst in 1358 to the king who immediately assumed control, ordering the construction of four lodges called The Park, Hatheburgh, Studley, and Helmesley. The Park has been identified as Lyndhurst Old Park, and Hatheburgh was later described as within the same park. It is possible that the other two lodges were also within the park, which has been called the 'inner sanctum' of royal sport (Brown *et al* 1963, 984). Hatheburgh was the most important of the lodges judging from the larger sum spent on its construction and the greater number of buildings erected. The manor house of Lyndhurst also received attention at this time. Some buildings, described as 'old and ruinous', were demolished and repairs were undertaken to the hall and chambers, the prison, gatehouse and kitchen. (*ibid*, 985). One of the lodges probably superseded the old manor house (Page 1911, 632).

The fortunes of the town would have fluctuated with the popularity of Lyndhurst as a hunting ground for the monarch. During periods of frequent visits the settlement would have been full of activity, with numbers of court followers seeking lodgings, food and entertainment.

In the mid-fifteenth century the then Warden of the Forest, the Earl of Salisbury, had to undertake emergency repairs to the lodges because they would have fallen into complete ruin. Between 1432-40 two hundred pounds was spent on further repairs (Brown *et al* 1963, 986).

Post-medieval

Royal interest in the manor-house continued with repairs and alterations being made in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with major rebuilding undertaken during the reigns of Charles I and Charles II (Thompson, 1977, 33; Page 1911, 632-3).

In the mid-nineteenth century The King's (later Queen's) House became the residence of the Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest (*ibid*, 633).

There are no references in either the medieval or post-medieval periods that would indicate that the settlement had any urban features. Where properties are recorded, they are always called messuages, never burgages. The settlement does not appear to have ever functioned as a market centre for the surrounding area, and it is probable that the inhabitants of Lyndhurst were principally involved in agriculture, but some would have also gained income from serving the entourage of court followers during the frequent royal hunting expeditions.

4. ANALYSIS

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF LYNDHURST

Introduction

The plan of the town does not exhibit any evidence of planning or any urban qualities. The principal road through Lyndhurst, the High Street, is orientated east - west, with Romsey Road leading to the north.

Streets

The main street of Lyndhurst is the east - west road between Southampton and Christchurch that forms the High Street.

The Lymington to Lyndhurst road was turnpiked in 1765 (Coles 1983, 31) but this does not appear to have affected the line of the road through the settlement.

Property plots

The Queen's House B1

The Queen's House, the medieval manor-house, stood to the west of the church. The nineteenth-century plot within which the house stood was small, with few outbuildings shown around the main house. Between the church and the Queen's House there was an unoccupied plot that may have been the site of some of the ancillary and outbuildings recorded in the medieval period. Alternatively, the ancillary buildings may have been located to the south of the main house. The Queen's House and the church are sited on a prominent knoll that would have provided extensive views across the park to the south, east and north, allowing the ladies and other members of the court to watch the chase.

High Street property plots B2

The main street was the principal area of occupation. The mid-nineteenth-century Tithe map (HRO 21M65/F7/151/2) shows a series of irregular plots that are mainly aligned with their long axes along the street, although it is difficult at this stage to be certain how far medieval settlement extended along the main street.

Post-medieval development B3

On the eastern and northern edges of the settlement there were several property plots that appear to have encroached onto the common at the edge of the town. Some of the plots either form 'islands' on the common, or it is clear that they were once separate units but have now coalesced into larger areas of occupation.

Larger properties and parks B4

Much of the immediate landscape to the north-west and south-west of Lyndhurst was dominated by the four large parks of Northerwood, Cuffnalls, Wilverley, and Foxlease. Foxlease is recorded as early as 1604, and Cuffnalls was recorded in 1784 (Page 1911, 631).

To the south of the town several moderately sized villas were built in the nineteenth century, some of which also had small parks.

Buildings

The Queen's House B1

The most important building in the town was The Queen's House. There are frequent references to expenditure on repairs and rebuilding throughout the medieval period (see History, above). The present house was substantially rebuilt in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but it incorporates part of the thirteenth-century stone building. In 1359, on the advice of the keeper of the forest, the manor-house was inclosed by a ditch and hedge (Page 1911, 632). It is not known if any of the present boundaries represent the medieval boundaries.

Other buildings

There are few medieval buildings recorded in the Historic Building Record of Lyndhurst. There are only two or three buildings at the north end of the High Street that could possibly have late medieval elements including the Fox and Hounds public house.

In 1635/6, forty-nine inhabitants of Lyndhurst were given licence to erect lodgings and stables for receiving the people and horses of the king's train (Stagg 1983, 260). This reference indicates the importance of royal patronage to the inhabitants of the settlement.

Church B5

The church of St Michael and All Angels was a chapelry of Minstead. The building is situated on the highest part of the settlement, and was formerly the chapel of the king's hunting lodge. It was described as being attached to King Edward I's lodgings (Page 1911, 630). The reference to the chapel being 'attached' may indicate that it formed part of the complex of royal buildings although by the nineteenth century there was an unoccupied plot between the church and the Queen's House. The church was rebuilt between 1858-70. No features from the earlier church survive (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 326-7).

It has been suggested that the mound upon which the church stands is artificial (*ibid.*) but it has been countered that there is no evidence for this, with any increase in ground level being the result of the use of the churchyard for burials (Thompson 1977, 31).

Mill (Not on map extent)

No mill was recorded in the Domesday Book and there appears to be no references to a mill during the medieval period. There was a mill approximately 1.5km to the north of Lyndhurst that was demolished during the Second World War that may have stood on the site of a medieval mill. The mill pond survives (Ellis, 1969, 132). The mill may have been associated with the manor of Minstead rather than Lyndhurst

Other trades and industries

There are few references to trades or industries undertaken in the town during the medieval period. A turner of Lyndhurst was fined in 1489 (Stagg 1983, 260).

The majority of Lyndhurst residents who were presented at post-medieval courts were described as yeomen or husbandmen, but several tailors, carpenters, a blacksmith and a charcoal burner were recorded in the early to mid-seventeenth century (Stagg, 1983).

5. RECENT DEVELOPMENT

There has been little modern development along the High Street of Lyndhurst. A car-park has been constructed behind the property plots on the south side of High Street that has erased many of the property boundaries in this area, although sub-surface remains may still survive.

To the south of the town several residential developments have encircled the settlement. Most of the developments have been built within the grounds of the nineteenth century villas. Some of these villas have now been demolished. There are also areas of modern housing to the north of the town, but these are also outside the area of the historic core of Lyndhurst.

There is little evidence for cellars beneath the buildings along the High Street.

6. IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL

CRITERIA FOR THE AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL

Introduction

The primary aim of the Data Collection and Data Assessment phases of the project is to enable the identification of areas of archaeological importance within each town to inform the Strategy phase of the project. Four such areas of importance have been defined, and the criteria for these are briefly described below. Although they are all described in this introduction, not all towns will have areas within each of these categories.

Levels of Archaeological Importance

The levels of importance are Areas Comprising Nationally Important Remains; Areas of High Archaeological Importance; Archaeologically Important Areas; and Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance.

As additional archaeological information becomes available, and a greater understanding of the archaeological resource of the town is achieved, it is possible that some areas will be re-assigned to different levels of importance.

Areas Comprising Nationally Important Remains

Areas of identified nationally important archaeological remains, whose location, character and importance have been demonstrably established. These remains merit physical preservation *in situ*. The criteria used to assess national importance is set out in Annex 4 of the Secretary of State's non-statutory guidance note PPG16, and are briefly noted below.

- Period
- Rarity
- Documentation
- Group Value
- Survival/Condition
- Fragility/Vulnerability
- Diversity
- Potential

This category will include Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance

Areas considered to include other important archaeological remains, whose location, character and importance are inferred from observation, research and interpretation. Those remains are likely to merit preservation *in situ*. Where preservation is not justified appropriate archaeological recording will be required.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance may:

- Contain well preserved, archaeological deposits which may not be of national importance, but which are of importance to the understanding of the origins and development of the town;
- Be areas where the destruction, without archaeological record, of well preserved archaeological deposits means that the last surviving elements have an increased value for the understanding of the origins and development of the town;
- Have been identified as having significant water-logged deposits;
- Have a high number of existing medieval buildings. The survival of medieval buildings may also indicate that there is well preserved stratigraphy beneath the building;
- Be areas that are thought to have High Archaeological Importance due to their proximity to other, recognised, plan elements even though there is little direct evidence to indicate high importance. For example, the area around an isolated church that may have been the focus for earlier settlement may be defined as an Area of High Archaeological Importance.

It is possible that areas that areas of High Archaeological Importance may, through further archaeological or documentary work, be shown to include Nationally Important Remains.

Archaeologically Important Areas

Areas considered to contain archaeological remains of some importance. Where these remains cannot be preserved *in situ*, they are likely to require appropriate archaeological recording.

Such areas:

- Are significant elements in the plan but where there has been a moderate level of modern development or cellaring;
- Have had little archaeological work undertaken within them but cartographic or documentary sources suggest that they may have been within the historic core of the town or areas of important suburban development.

Surviving archaeological deposits in Archaeologically Important Areas will probably have a relatively high density but, due to pressures of development over many centuries, there may be a high level of fragmentation.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance

Areas considered to include archaeological remains of a character unlikely to provide significant information, or archaeological remains whose integrity has been severely compromised by development. These remains may require appropriate archaeological recording if threatened by development.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance may:

- Have a good survival of archaeological deposits, but where there is likely to be a low density of archaeological features;
- Be areas with significant modern development resulting in limited archaeological importance, either due to the scale of development or due to the limited nature of the archaeological resource before development;
- Be areas where the current hypothesis supports only a limited possibility of encountering archaeological remains.

THE POTENTIAL OF LYNDHURST

Areas of Archaeological Importance

Areas Comprising Nationally Important Archaeological Remains

At present, there are no areas that are considered to contain Nationally Important Archaeological Remains. However, the area around the Queen's House has the potential to contain Nationally Important Archaeological Remains.

Areas of High Archaeological Importance

The royal hunting lodge centred on the Queen's House would have consisted of the main, royal, lodgings, a chapel and several ancillary and out-buildings. The present day church is probably on or near the site of the royal chapel, and evidence for many of the other buildings may survive in the grounds of the Queen's House, although the grounds are now laid out as gardens, and it is possible that there has been some landscaping. Archaeological survey of the grounds could examine the survival and condition of any archaeological remains relating to the royal complex, and, if the survival is good, demonstrate that the area contains Nationally Important Archaeological Remains.

The property plots along the High Street are Areas of High Archaeological Importance. Within these areas information regarding the development of the settlement in relation to the royal hunting lodge may survive, together with evidence for the occupations of the medieval inhabitants of Lyndhurst. Although there is unlikely to be evidence for any large scale industry, Lyndhurst gains importance as being an example of a settlement that developed around a royal hunting lodge.

Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance

The areas of settlement that appear to be encroachment onto the common around the settlement are Areas of Limited Archaeological Importance. Some of these areas have buildings of seventeenth and eighteenth-century date, whilst others contain nineteenth-century houses that may represent rebuilding on the plots. There is unlikely to be a high density of archaeological features in these areas but they do represent a particular stage of development in the history of the settlement and are frequently dismissed or over-looked in settlement studies.

Research Framework

- The royal hunting lodge

Although the hunting lodge at Lyndhurst was probably not one of the largest royal lodges in the country, it may be possible to infer much about the number and layout of the buildings from other, better known lodges, both in Hampshire, for example, those at Odiham and Freemantle and in other counties. Documentary research may add further information about the lodge, including episodes of building and repairs.

7. SOURCES

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

Details about expenditure and repairs on the manor house are well recorded in royal archives in the Public Record Office. There appear to be few other major sources of information about Lyndhurst.

MAPS AND PLANS

1841 Tithing Apportionment map HRO 21M65/F7/151/2

1871 OS 1st Edition 6" map Sheet 72

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8. ABBREVIATIONS

<i>c.</i>	<i>circa</i>
HRO	Hampshire Records Office
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record