

Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Bugley Meadow – possible sheepcote
Main Grid Ref	SO291274
Date/ Conditions	23/05/16/ dry and clear Spring day/ located in a terraced dry sheep pasture
Access/ permission	Private agricultural land crossed by a Public Right of Way/ permission received from farmer

Notes and photographs



Figure 1

The possible monastic sheepcote site described here (see sketch plan at Figure 6) stands in a level arc of level land in a bend of the River Honddu below the sloping ground of the eastern valley side (Figure 1). Entering Bugley Meadow at the gate from the valley road in its north-western corner, a prominent natural river terrace runs immediately south-eastwards. The northern field boundary is formed by the disused 'Old Roadway' holloway that formed part of the main approach to the priory from Hatterall Hill (Figure 2).

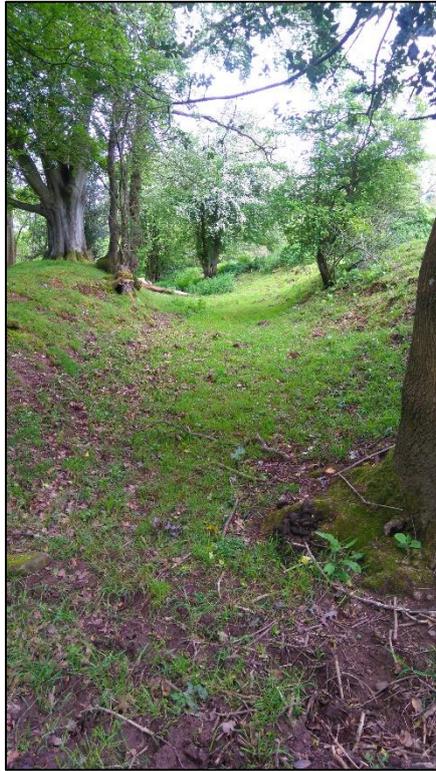


Figure 2

Downslope from the gate stands a broadly triangular low platform alongside a sunken trackway cutting down from the river terrace to the flat plain containing the main platform now described. The platform is indistinct from above, but is formed by a long, low bank (85m long and 4m wide) cut into the gentle slope running down to the river from the steeper natural terrace above (Figure 3). The location, earthwork morphology and field-name evidence suggest that this may have been the site of the priory's main sheepcote building. Further detailed survey would be required to investigate this further.



Figure 3



Figure 4

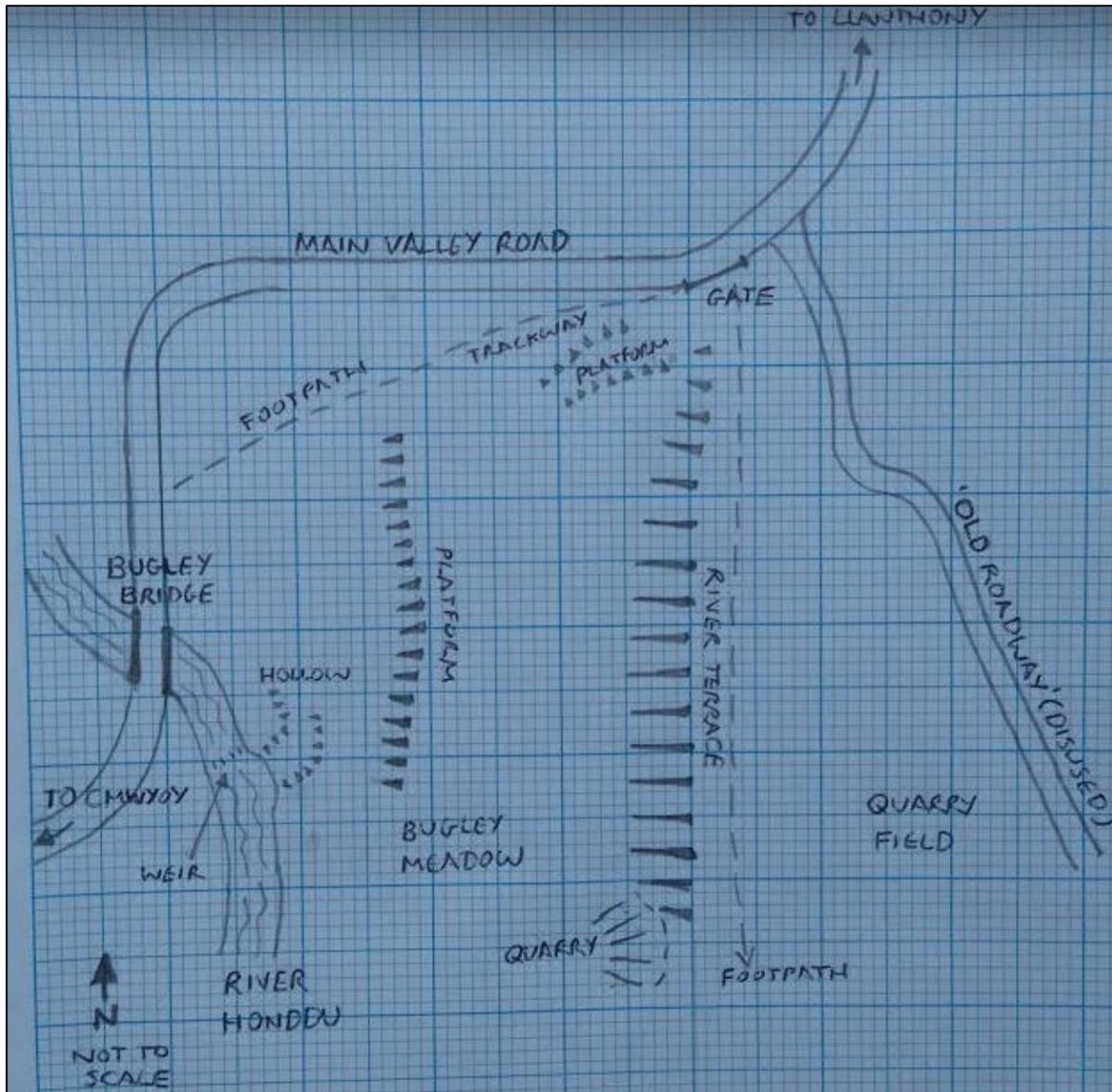


Below the southern terminus of the platform a short banked hollow with signs of possible stone revetments drops to the river, just downstream from the post-medieval Bugley Bridge carrying the main valley road (Figure 4). The river here is revetted by a line of large rectangular boulders, some now dislodged (Figure 5). No similar structure can be observed on the other side of the river to suggest a ford, and the relationship with the possible sheepcote platform indicate that this feature may have had a sheep dipping function. At this point the river is crossed by the remnants of a low stone weir.

Between this feature and the bridge, a more substantial revetment along the river bank with more regular stonework is probably contemporary to the bridge.

Figure 5

Figure 6: Sketch plan based on tape measurements and GPS spot grid references



Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Cwm-bwchel terrace-way
Main Grid Ref	SO282273
Date/ Conditions	21/5/16. Rain but good visibility and ground relatively firm 29/2/17. Dry, sunny winter conditions
Access/ permission	Public Right of Way on Access Land

Notes and photographs

A well-constructed engineered terrace-way structure up Cwm-bwchel valley from Llanthony Priory to ridge path at Bal Bach with sections of stone construction both above and below mountain wall boundary running for approximately 150m, between the 270 and 350 contour (sketch map at Figure 13).

The author was accompanied on the second visit by Professor Andrew Fleming, who confirmed that the nature of the construction and wear of the trackway suggested a medieval rather than post-medieval origin.



Figures 1 and 2

Starting at the highest point of the feature, a long section of large rectangular worked sandstone blocks (1 x 0.5m), double width in parts, stretches downhill for 18m, between 0.5 and 1m in height from SO2806327282 (see figures 1 and 2, and sketch plan section 1 at Figure 13). This appears to be the foundations of a raised track or causeway, now exposed by erosion and collapse. Evidence of scatters of smaller stones may suggest that

the surface would have been metalled. The modern right of way footpath follows the line of a ditch cut into the hillside parallel to the feature. The trackway is on a steep uphill gradient and forms a terrace-way cut into the steep slope down to the stream that forms the deep gully that contains it.

After a small gap, the feature commences again further downslope at SO2808527294 (see sketch plan section 2 at Figure 13) for a further 59m, with a similar shape and formation, though with more intact double blocks, to a crossroads with a path parallel with mountain wall boundary between fields below and open common grazing land above.



Figures 3 and 4

Below the mountain wall is a more broken up but longer (73m) section commencing at SO2817727371 (see figures 3 and 4, and sketch plan section 3 at Figure 13), which has become the surface of the modern footpath. The surface appears to have been eroded downwards and a raised trackway is less apparent. The surface is more disturbed without the regular line of large blocks observed on the higher sections, though there are smaller irregular stone blocks observable and lying nearby (Figure 5). However, the causeway character returns in the lower portion which has a deep parallel ditch at its terminus 2-2.5m deep (Figure 6). A section of revetment wall also features along the trackway just below the mountain wall.



Figures 5 and 6

The bank between the causeway and the ditch here has a layered stone construction (Figure 7).



Figure 7

At its widest the causeway is 2m wide with a 1m wide sloped bank on either side (Figure 8).



Figure 8

Below the terminus of this section the more recent line of the track up the hill has cut through the line of the causeway. However, the structure can be picked up again intermittently (from SO2825127389) in the scrub alongside the stream parallel with the continuation of the modern right of way footpath through a field down to Cwm-bwchel farmstead. The structure ends at massive buttress above a gate into the farmyard (at SO2831427400) (Figure 9). Here it is unclear whether the buttress is a causeway or the bank between the stream and a holloway feature to the right.



Figure 9



There is no trace of a similarly engineered trackway above the sections already described but plenty of large stone lying around the path that could indicate a much-disturbed structure. In addition, sections of overgrown holloway, with some sections of degraded revetment walling, can be observed running parallel with the modern footpath at the steep highest point of the gulley before it begins to crest the gentler gradient towards the Bal-bach pass (Figures 10 and 11). There are also depressions above and next to the path in its higher sections which may be small quarries used to source the sandstone blocks for the construction.

Figure 10



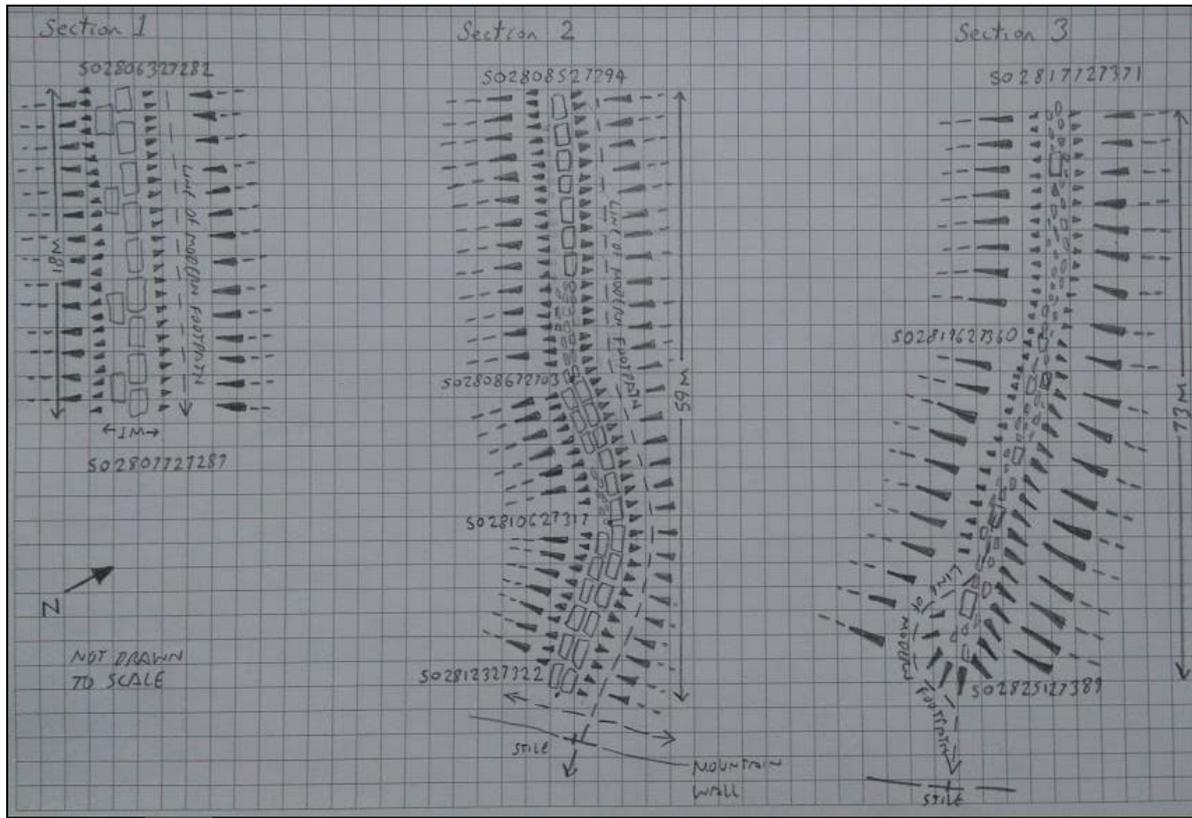
Figure 11

Below the farm a holloway runs alongside the stream to a ford at the modern right of way bridge (Figure 12).



Figure 12

Figure 13: Sketch plan based on tape measurements and GPS spot grid references



Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Kildare (possible site of Redcastle church)
Main Grid Ref	SO327217
Date/ Conditions	16/05/16/ dry and clear Spring day/ located in a narrow riverside pasture, building ruin overgrown with brambles and small bushes in part
Access/ permission	Private land (Mr Egerton, Treveddw Farm), accessed from a Public Right of Way

Notes and photographs



Figure 1

The ruined buildings stand in the overgrown corner of a narrow field, a few metres from the track and footbridge carrying the Offa's Dyke National Trail and between the River Honddu and an embankment of the Abergavenny to Hereford railway line which both encroaches on the site and divides it from the 'Redcastle' motte further uphill (Figure 1 and sketch plan at Figure 8).

The site comprises the remains of two parallel building structures built into a gentle slope, which then becomes significantly steeper directly behind the structures partly due to a natural change in slope, the change exaggerated by the encroaching railway embankment. The buildings are also much encroached upon by brambles, bushes, small trees and patches of nettles.

The larger structure (building 1) to the north approximates to the location of the Kildare 'cottage/ garden' indicated on the tithe map (enclosure 1262). It comprises two walled rectangular compartments, the walls partially still extant to a height of 2m, one 7m x 4m, the other 2m x 5m (Figure 2). The walls are roughly built, with the larger structure including a small lintelled fireplace on the wall built into the slope (Figure 3).



Figure 2



Figure 3

The second building (building 2) to the south is a rectangular single cell structure. It is more ruinous than the first structure and has less extant stone work, with a 1m high, 5m long back wall built into the slope, a possible 2.5m extension above it, and only faint remains of its other walls, the likely position of its lower wall obscured by a mature holly tree and other undergrowth. The remaining stone work is of a higher quality than the other building with signs of mortar. Could be an out-building of the main cottage or an earlier structure. Many worked pieces of stone lie on the ground around the ruin and in the open part of the field next to the ruin (Figure 4).



Figure 4

A striking 'foot' shaped piece of sandstone was found embedded in turf a few metres west of the ruined building during the visit (SO3310121759) (Figures). Probably shaped by water from nearby river, but shaped as a foot from a statue.



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

As well as the footbridge crossing of the river, a ford approached by a hollow track crossed into a large field between the river and the main A465 Abergavenny to Hereford road at Pandy. This field holds considerable sunken linear features, probably paleo-channels from an old river course, and signs of other earthworks which could be settlement or enclosure features.

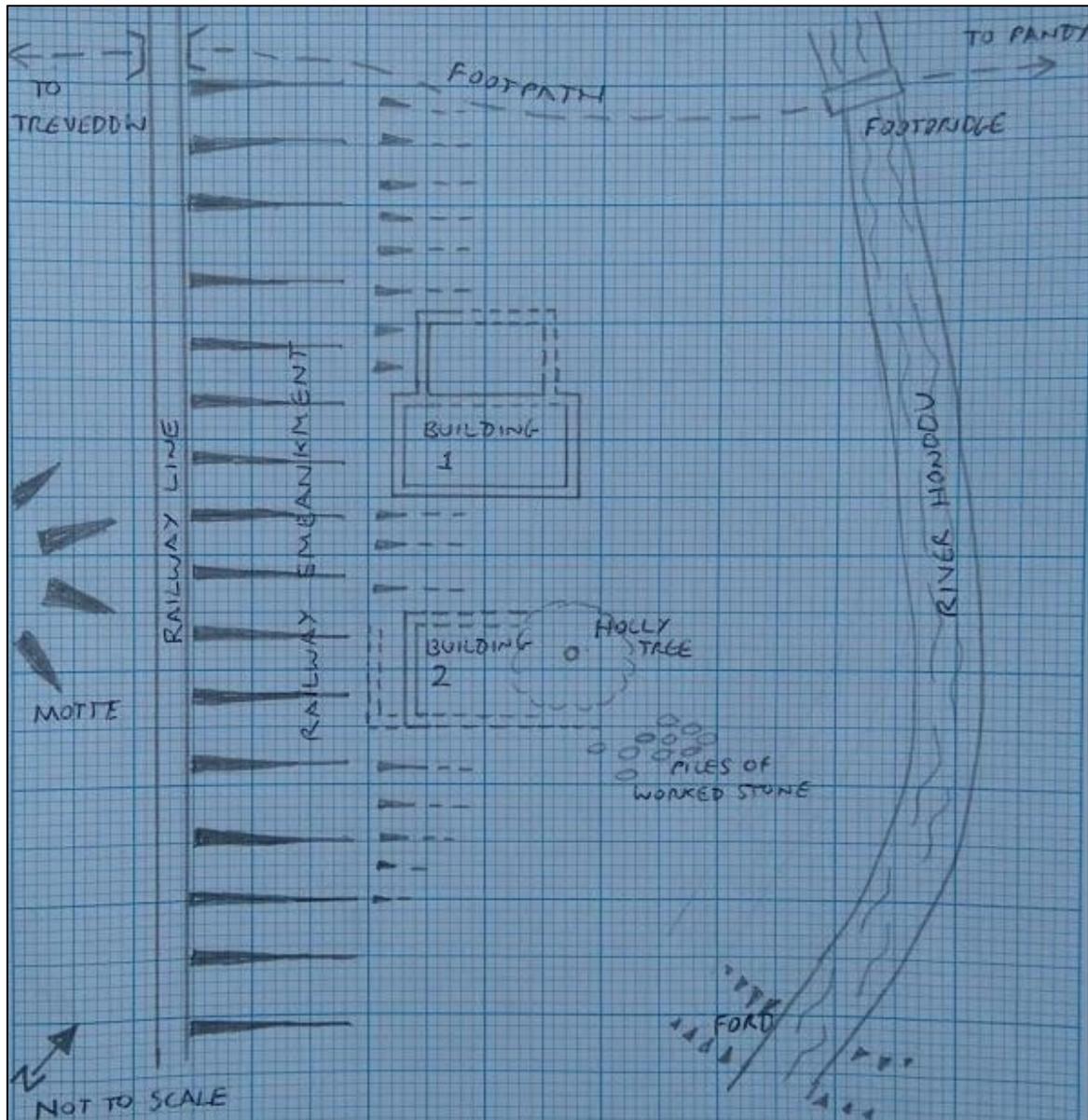
Other possible sites for the church:

SO326217 – A wide grassy meadow north of the above site contained within a bend of the River Honddu (named Lancaster Field, for the public house on the other side of the river). Within the meadow are located a raised mound or platform covered in nettles and scrub, a curvilinear hollow feature which could be a paleo-channel or a holloway and an earthen bank along the field boundary. This enclosure displays a broadly oval shape on the tithe map.

SO334221 – Significant area of earthworks and relict enclosures in the corner of a field due north of Treveddw Farm. Has been partly utilised as a farm dump and may originate as a quarry. Land-owner permission for rapid survey but site fenced off and occupied by herd of cattle so unable to carry out when visited.

SO326220 – Circular field boundary, site investigated and probably a quarry site.

Figure 8: Sketch plan based on tape measurements and GPS spot grid references



Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Loxidge Tump enclosure
Main Grid Ref	SO287287
Date/ Conditions	23/05/16/ Dry and clear Spring day/ sited on a steep hillside of rough grass and ferns
Access/ permission	Site located within Public Access Land and crossed by a Public Right of Way.

Notes and photographs



Figure 1

The enclosure is located above the line of the mountain wall within the open common, detached from any other enclosure/ field systems (see sketch plan at Figure 5).

A terrace-way track winds uphill steeply to the enclosure from Siarpal via the post-medieval farmstead of Loxidge, the site sitting on a shelf notably less steep than the slope below and the promontory of Loxidge Tump above. A modern Public Right of Way partly follows the curves of the old track but in parts takes a steeper, more direct route. An area of quarry pits with large piles of stone sits downslope below the enclosure, linked by a track, with a further series of pits just north of the hollowed section of track from Loxidge farm. The whole enclosure site is indicated as 'quarry (dis)' on the modern Ordnance Survey map.

The centre of the enclosure is occupied by the remains of wall structures built into the slope which suggest a broadly square building (4m x 4m, 1m high in parts) (Figure 1). A 6m long revetment wall links this structure with hollow section of track that dissects the site (Figure 2). The remains of a smaller structure (2m x 2m) sit aside the trackway (foreground in Figure 1). Between the two stone structures stands a line of box trees. Above the structures a semi-circular earthwork bank runs from the larger structure to the trackway.



Figure 2



Figure 3

The above structure stand in the middle of a roughly bell-shaped enclosure wall. The lower part of which is a still extant wall built into the hillside as a 1m high revetment. The steepness of the slope could have contributed to the build-up of land-slip or soil-creep downwards to back up against the wall. This section of wall is breached by the hollow track, which suggests the entrance to the enclosure. To the west, the largely collapsed wall follows a straight course steeply uphill with a parallel shallow ditch outside (Figure 3). The wall then right-angles into its upper section, with parts still standing (the other corners of enclosure are gently curved). After a straight section, the wall then curves eastwards downhill and is crossed by the trackway as it ascends towards the top of the hill (Figure 4). Further downslope, the broken-down wall curves back westwards to its lower portion.

The morphology of the enclosure and building structures are similar to several other detached enclosures above the mountain wall in the valley, though outside the priory manors: Waun Gach and The Castle north of Capel-y-ffin, and The Castle above Trewyn hill-fort.



Figure 4

Figure 5: Sketch plan based on tape measurements and GPS spot grid references

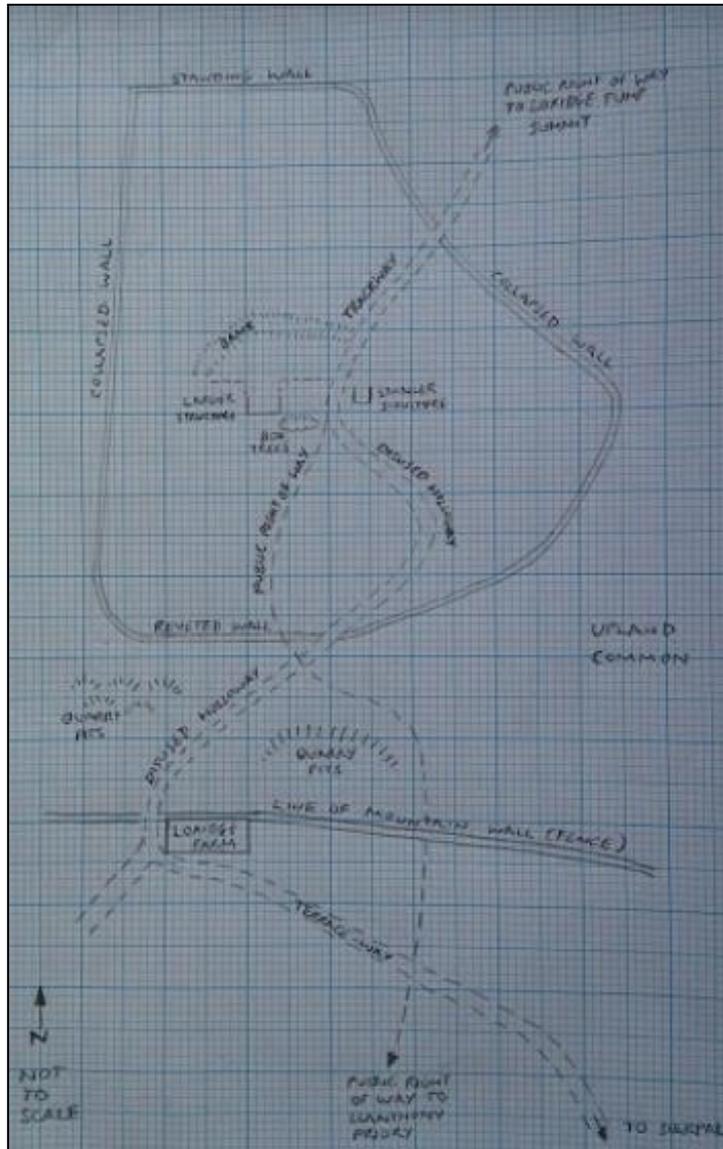


Figure 5

Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	The Old Abbey
Main Grid Ref	SO269338
Date/ Conditions	31/03/07/ Clear, dry early Spring day (accompanied by monastic landscape expert, James Bond, and fellow Masters student, Chris Green).
Access/ permission	Agricultural fields in private ownership with no public access. Trackway above the site located within Access Land area.

Notes and photographs



Figure 1: The Old Abbey enclosure (oval shaped fields in left of picture) looking W from above Cat Hill with the dog-leg track up to the ridge clearly visible above (Photograph supplied by Herefordshire Archaeology).

The site of a possible 'grange' or out-farm for the Llanthony Priory estate has been located in the upper part of the Olchon valley, adjacent to the Vale of Ewyas and immediately to the east of the study area. The 1840 tithe map for the Township of Llanveynoe records an area of small oval shaped enclosures in the upper part of the valley with the name *The Old Abbey* (Figures 1 and 2). Today this area of fields has been partially reclaimed by scrub and bracken and this was already the case in the late nineteenth century, as shown by the Ordnance Survey map extract in Figure 2. Unfortunately, none of the other fields in the locality have names recorded. This field system has a different character to the more rectilinear field patterns that dominate the enclosed hillside along the rest of the valley, perhaps indicating an earlier medieval origin associated with the operation of a 'grange' type farm. 'Olchon' is recorded as paying tithes to the priory in the list of holdings sold at Dissolution, although the lack of any clear reference to a grange or farm here in the primary documents is problematic.

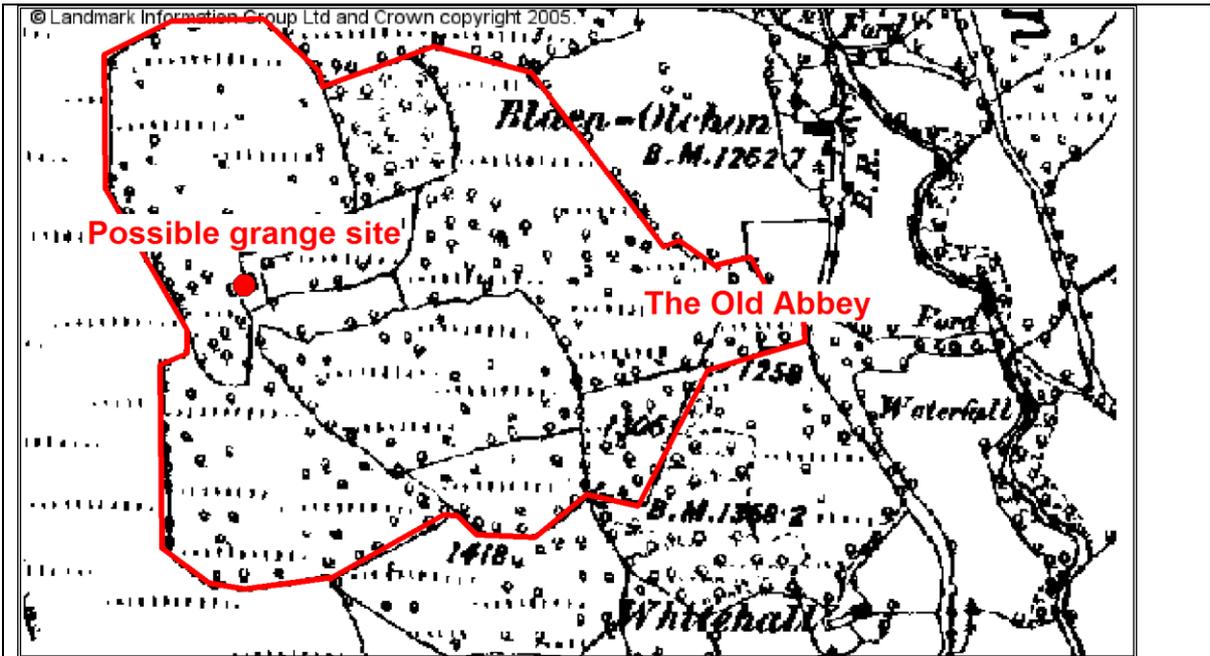


Figure 2: The Old Abbey enclosure and possible 'grange' site in the upper Olchon Valley (map created in MapInfo, using the first edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch as a base map).

The farmstead site, high up on the valley side, consists of extensive ruins located within the bounds of The Old Abbey enclosure, which have been surveyed by Herefordshire Archaeology as part of the Olchon Valley Project (Figure 95). The scale and form of the relict features would support the infrastructure typically associated with a monastic farm: banked and ditched enclosures, barns, animal crofts, domestic quarters and often a small chapel (Figures 3, 4 and 5). The location high up at the head of the valley with access to exploit extensive open grazing as well as pasture is a typical one for a monastic grange operating as a *bercaria* (sheep station) or a *vaccaria* (cattle ranch).



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

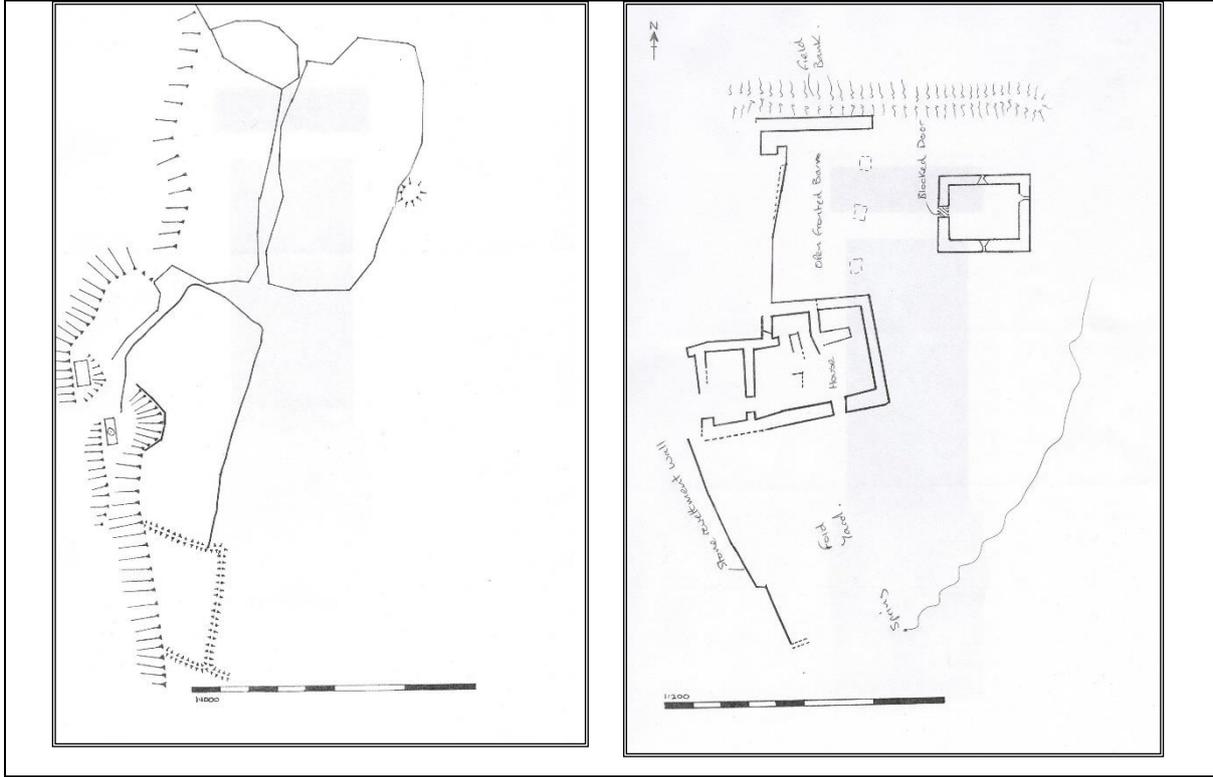
A trackway that is no longer recorded or easily traceable on the steep ground, but clearly visible as two parallel and deeply incised hollows in the aerial photograph at Figure 1, leads from the complex and follows a dog-leg course over the ridge to join the main routeway giving access to Llanthony in the next valley (Figure 5). A trackway that runs down slope from the site gives access to Oldcastle, Clodock, and other locations associated with the Priory. Traces of a further trackway north to lime kilns at the head of the valley are also visible.



Figure 6

Figure 7: Survey plans of the grange site at The Old Abbey produced as part of the Olchen Valley Project (courtesy of Tim Hoverd, Herefordshire Archaeology).

Appendix 7



Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Possible site of Secular Firmary grange (in Fermery Grove wood)
Main Grid Ref	c. ST5219999
Date/ Conditions	23 rd January 2017/ dry and overcast with clearing mist; winter ground cover, muddy in parts
Access/ permission	Access road to Penterry House/ Forestry Commission open access

Notes and photographs

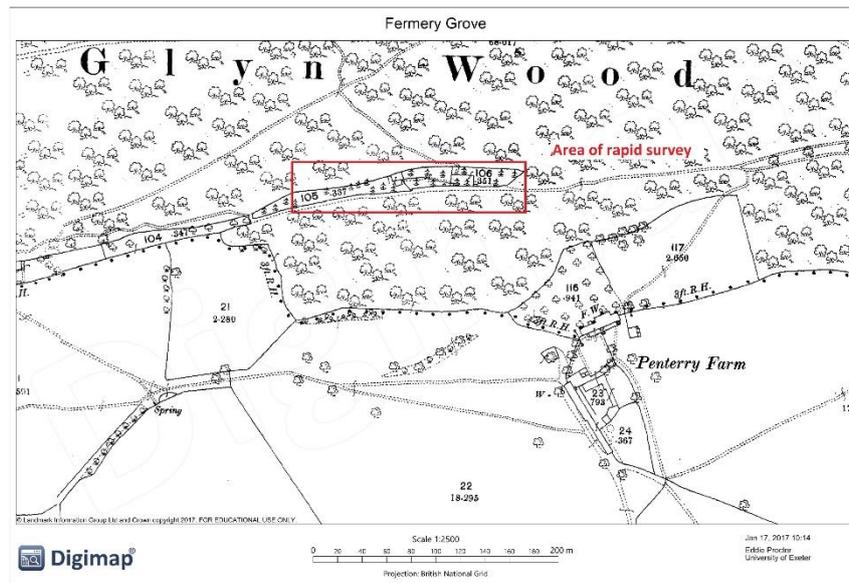


Figure 1: Ordnance Survey extract showing the area of the rapid survey (Ordnance Survey 1:10560 County Series 1st edition, Monmouthshire, 1887, downloaded from Digimap under licence, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>).

The location is a narrow shelf of more level ground on a steep and overgrown valley side within the woodland of the Angidy Valley, on the route of the medieval route from Tintern Abbey to the old Chepstow to Monmouth road at Fair Oak (Figure 1 and sketch plan at Figure 7).

Ranged along the length of the site are sections of an old broken-down wall (as located on the 1763 Porthcasseg Estate Map), sunken lanes and the remains of building structures along the linear lane and the parallel wall downslope.

Further west along the old roadway nineteenth century encroachment cottages and small-holdings developed, but the building remains here seem older in character. The features recorded here do not fully reflect the enclosure boundaries indicated on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (see extract below), which are likely to be part of this encroachment as not present on the 1763 map, though locating and recording such features in overgrown woodland is a difficult task.



Figure 2: Boundary wall (Source: author).

The sections of wall lie above the point where the land falls away steeply to the valley bottom and presumably marked the northern boundary of the grange lands. Largely broken down (though in parts up to 1.5m high), the wall is 1m thick and constructed of large blocks (Figures 2, 3 and 7). Further to the west, the wall disappears as a structure but probably followed the line of a visible bank that runs to the holloway leading towards Fair Oak (Figure 5).



Figure 3: Highest section of boundary wall (Source: author).

The sunken track runs parallel and downslope to the access road to Penterry Farm (this modern road takes the line of the older track immediately after leaving the main forest road further to the east before running above the now disused and overgrown sunken track) (Figure 6). Further along the track is then slighted and overlain by the massive bank of the sharp sweeping turn of the modern road but can be picked up again beyond the

road. Visible building remains lie just below this bank and further structures may also have possibly been destroyed by it. The remains of two rectangular building structures, with the back wall built into the slope and are dissected by a reveted pathway, are very broken down and overgrown by saplings and brambles (Figure 3 and 7).



Figure 4: Remains of walls in rectangular building structure (Source: author).

As the track runs westwards towards the edge of the woodland, it becomes a terrace-way, passing above a large platform with significant stone revetment (Figure 4). It is then crossed by a section of stone wall extending from the boundary of the woodland above. Here the track is joined by the line of the downslope boundary wall described above, alongside which lies a possible sunken track. To the east of this wall a larger holloway with revetment walls continues towards Fair Oak where it meets the old main way from Chepstow to Monmouth (Figure 5).

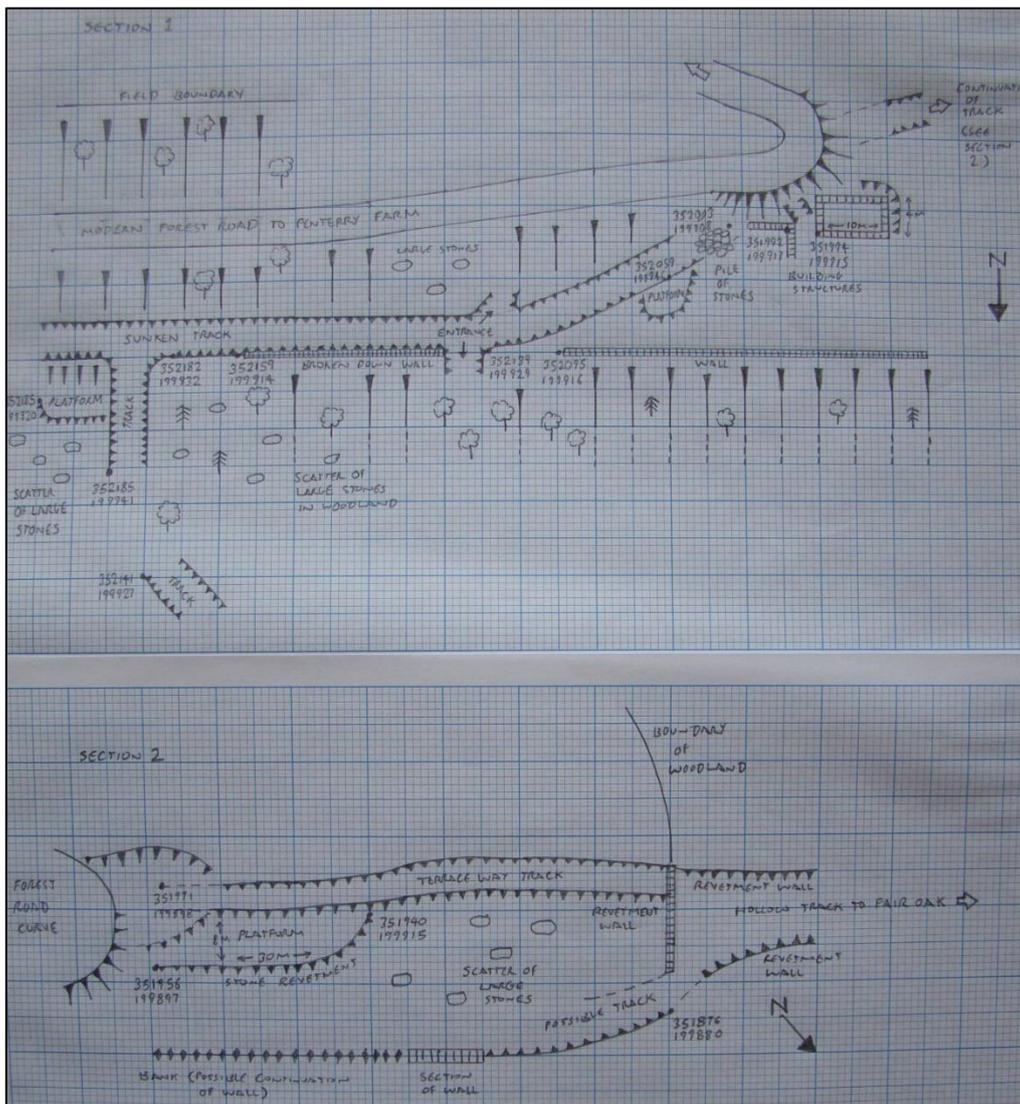


Figure 5: Part of platform revetment (Source: author).



Figure 6: Start of reveted holloway running away from the site to Fair Oak (Source: author).

Figure 7: Sketch plan based on tape measurements and GPS spot grid references



Rapid survey recording sheet

Site	Minepit Wood - site of iron mine
Main Grid Ref	ST630978
Date/ Conditions	23 rd January 2017/ Sunny and clear; winter ground conditions; muddy in parts
Access/ permission	Public Right of Way (PROW) path within private woodland (west part of site) and Forestry Commission woodland (east part of site)/ Porthcasseg Farm

Notes and photographs



Figure 1: Minepit Wood looking north (Source: author).

Minepit Wood is a small rectilinear finger of coppice woodland extending into the fieldscape of Porthcasseg Farm from the extensive wooded western slope of the Wye Valley above Black Cliff (Figure 1). The woodland appears in the same form (though without a name) on the 1763 Porthcasseg Estate Map, indicating that it was already the location of a disused industrial site at this time.



Figure 2: An example of one of the pits (Source: author).

The wood contains the fossilised remains of industrial workings, namely the scowle-like pits of probably iron mining now covered by a blanket of moss and ferns (Figure 2). The main workings are formed by two long parallel lines of pits, some joined in a continuous trench following the seam of iron-ore, running downslope from the western edge of Minepit Wood into the expanse of Black Cliff Wood downslope from the PROW footpath through the site (Figure 7). The northern-most line of pits is the larger and longer of the two (Figures 3 and 4). The trench sections are 10-20m deep and partially filled in by fallen earth and rubble, including infill by a spoil heap. The main trenches are lined by smaller, irregularly placed roughly circular pits.



Figure 3: Large trench looking east downslope (Source: author)

Figure 4: Large trench looking west upslope (Source: author)

At the western end of the smaller tunnel a partly excavated hole extends further westwards (Figure 5) – perhaps an example of an ‘in progress’ pit working which has been abandoned before completion (which would involve the roof of the working being dug out to form an open pit). This working was partially full of limestone rubble and a range of animal bones.



Figure 5: Abandoned pit working (Source: author).

Well-established coppiced trees and a large yew tree on and around the pits indicate that the workings had been abandoned prior to usage of the area as a coppice woodland from at least the eighteenth century (see reference to estate map above).

The western boundary of the working and the wood is marked by a pile of large boulders, perhaps spoil from the workings.

The PROW that currently provides access to the site and links with a further PROW from Porthcasseg farm does not display any evidence of great age or usage. However, alongside the path in the woods and also at the field boundary at the top of the Porthcasseg path piles of large, irregular rocks can be seen (Figure 6). A possible track visible on the LiDAR image for the site further down slope in the woodland and leading towards Tintern may be the original access route but was not investigated during this visit (Figure 7).



Figure 6: Pile of rocks near the path to Minepit Wood (Source: author).

Detailed survey and field investigation of this site would be useful to provide further detail on its form and use. There is also evidence of some despoliation of the site, which is currently neither scheduled or recorded in the HER.

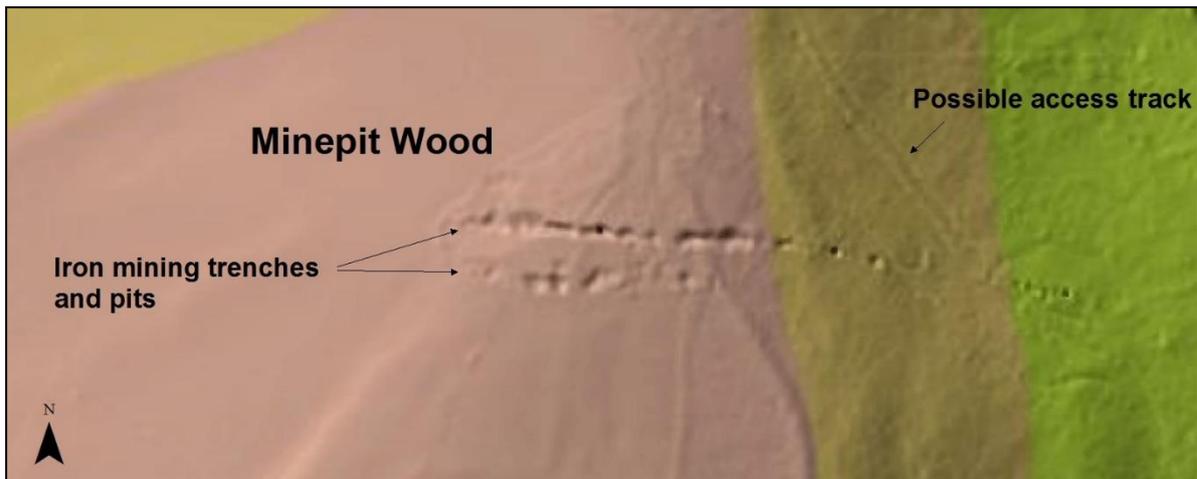


Figure 7: LiDAR image of the site (annotated in ArcGIS, 2m DTM LiDAR supplied by Natural Resources Wales).

Survey recording sheet

Site	Site of Modesgate grange and associated features e.g. chapel site, trackways, Modesgate earthworks
Main Grid Ref	ST551006
Date/ Conditions	Initial rapid survey: 24/01/17/ Dry and clear; winter ground cover, muddy in parts Measured earthwork survey: 8-10/05/17/ Dry and clear; some late spring growth of vegetation
Access/ permission	Miss Grace's Lane and parking at Beeches Farm camp site/ landowner permission from Madgetts Farm and Beeches Farm

Survey methodology

Earthworks around the Modesgate grange site were surveyed in 2006 at a landscape scale of 1:10,000 as part of the English Heritage National Mapping Programme (Forest of Dean Mapping Project (Small and Stoertz 2006, 33-4) (Figure 8). However, this covered quite a large area and the brief interpretive analysis did not mention the monastic grange (and Chapel Meadow at Madgett Farm was not included in the survey). It was therefore decided to investigate earthwork features in the immediate area of the likely grange site (the modern farms of Beeches and Madgetts) for this research project.

The fields surrounding the farmsteads of Beeches and Madgetts farms were initially walked and visible features recorded on a sketch map (Figures 9 and 10). It was concluded that the scale and range of earthworks and other archaeological features provided a suitable subject for further, more detailed measured survey and recording.

Key objectives of the survey:

- To establish the main medieval routes in and out of and through the grange
- To interpret the possible earthwork of enclosures and field systems, lynchets, buildings and any other grange infrastructure, including the site of a possible grange chapel in Chapel Meadow.

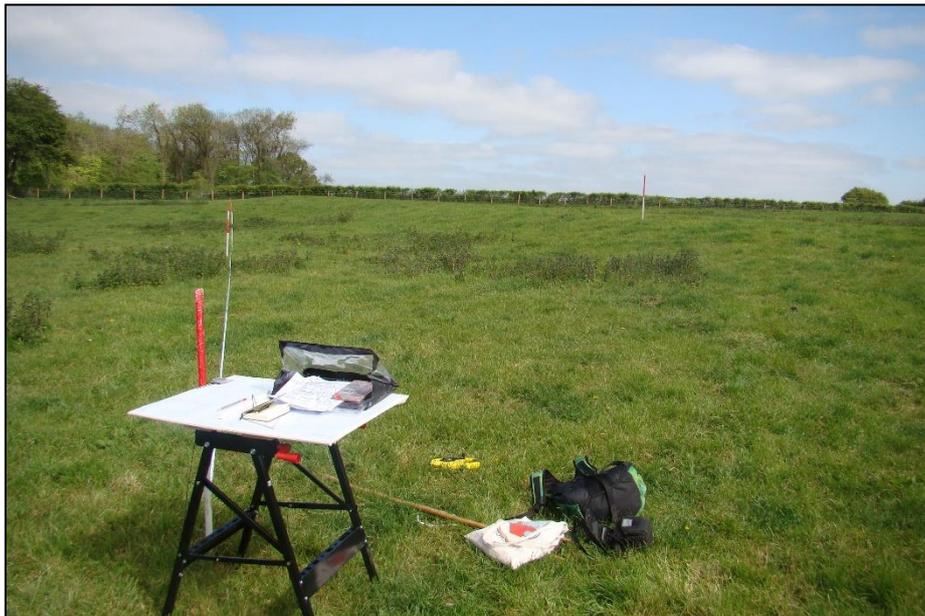


Figure 1: Plane table and survey tapes and ranging poles used for the tape and off-set survey.

A full earthwork survey of the recorded features was commenced in early May 2017 during which over half of the earthworks were surveyed (Figure 1). The survey was carried out at the more fine-grained scale of 1:1000, to achieve a good balance between sufficient detail of individual features and providing an overall picture of the landscape. The survey was carried out using the simple tape and off-set technique utilising 30m measuring tapes, ranging poles, point markers, a hand-held optical square; the initial plan was pencil-drawn onto tracing paper on a portable plane-table on-site. The partially completed field plan be seen as Figure 7.

Tape and off-set survey was selected as it is a flexible process that can easily be undertaken by a single surveyor without the need to call on specialist equipment. As it can be a more time-consuming process (for a relatively large survey area) sufficient time needs to be allowed for the survey be completed, but the time taken and 'manual' nature of the survey enable a more nuanced feel for the topography and 'lie of the land' of the survey area.

The survey did not include modern farm buildings and yards themselves and poultry sheds of Madgetts Farm (may well cover remnants of the grange infrastructure).

A further session is required to complete the survey of all the features observed, including the main camping field at Beeches Farm and Chapel Meadow at Madgetts Farm. Timing did not allow for this to be completed within the timeframe of the PhD research project and the results of the full survey were not deemed to be critical for inclusion in the final thesis. However, it is hoped that the survey can be completed at a later date. An inked version will then be traced and digitised with additional contextual features (e.g. main contours, modern field boundaries, buildings etc.) added within GIS to produce the final plan.

Interpretation

The earthworks observed, at least in part, can be interpreted as remnants of the medieval infrastructure of Modesgate grange, some of the field system and lynchet features pre-dating the monastic period and re-used or re-purposed from an earlier settled estate landscape (as indicated by Domesday records for Modesgate). The earlier features would seem more likely to originate in the recorded Domesday vill of Modiate as suggested by Fox (1955) and the Forest of Dean Mapping Project Report (Small and Stoertz 2006, 34) than earlier interpretations of a Roman or prehistoric camp, though some of the features appear to have a topographical relationship with the nearby early medieval 'Offa's Dyke' linear earthwork. It is also likely that the modern farm buildings of Beech and Madgett Farm overlie elements of the medieval grange infrastructure.



Figure 3: Linear earthworks indicating possible lynchets (Source: author).

The series of linear earthworks in the fields to the north-east and north of Beeches Farm have the appearance of medieval strip lynchets (Figure 2). These features are aligned with the significantly larger banks further upslope which link to the large linear earthwork just beyond the western boundary of the grange land, interpreted as part of the early medieval 'Offas Dyke' (and providing a highly prominent boundary along the western and part of the northern edge of the grange lands). The first large bank above the sunken lane that runs up to Madgetts Farm through the valley-side woodlands from the Ferry Passage at Tintern (Figure 3), and two truncated much shorter but similar banks on the slope above it, have been previously interpreted as part of an Iron Age camp or an Anglo-Saxon earthwork related to the dyke. The Forest of Dean Mapping Project Report identified these banks as part of a more extensive pattern of rectilinear earthwork features ranged north and south along Madgett Hill, interpreted as a field system (Small and Stoertz 2006, 34) (Figure 8).



Figure 3: Large bank or lynchet at Beeches Farm (Source: author).

The sunken lane running through the survey area (Figure 4) slights and crosses the 'Offa's Dyke' earthwork at the western boundary of the grange lands and then also slights

the larger of the banks that run at right angles from the main dyke. This would seem to indicate that the track post-dates these features and this lane may be the origin of the estate name of Modesgate: the gate or trackway through the dyke.



Figure 4: Sunken track from Modesgate through gap in Offa's Dyke (Source: author).

The features in the fields now containing the camp site have been somewhat smoothed out either as part of the development of the site for camping or previous agricultural activity. The Forest of Dean Mapping Project Report interpreted these features as a complex of small enclosures representing the foci of the Domesday vill, but makes no reference to the medieval grange other than suggesting that the settlement was subject to 'probable further developments in the medieval period' (Small and Stoertz 2006, 35) (Figure 8). These recorded earthworks, annotated from aerial photographs (check details) do not correlate well to those observed and recorded for this project. Whether or not this area represents an early medieval settlement or new or repurposed features of the later grange is open to interpretation. Subsequent woodland management and utility as a campsite may have significantly altered the topography here.

Main camping field reverted to woodland (as recorded on the tithe map) therefore this may have increased preservation of some of these features.

No sign of building footings or worked stone in either of the two features in Chapel Meadow (a large enclosed pond with trees around it, large blocks of stone around; and a pool with a concrete water company cover behind, a large holly tree and lots of large boulders and stones, perhaps the site of a spring).

The modern straight farm lane from the main road does not show any signs of being a medieval track (could the original route from here/ Brockweir/ the abbey have been along the curved edge of Chapel Meadow/ boundary with Oakhill Wood). Some signs of an old

track at both ends but need to investigate further (perhaps largely destroyed by forestry activity).



Figure 5: Earthworks in meadow north of Madgetts Farm (Source: author).

The field boundaries (one now grubbed out) in the fields to the north of Beeches Farm have a curved reverse 'S' shape, perhaps indicating medieval ridge and furrow cultivation (though unclear how would this fit with the possible lynchets at right angles to these boundaries) (Figure 6).

The larger fields further south of both farmsteads within the boundary of the probably grange farm are sheep pasture or new grass and no earthworks or features of interest were observed, though they were not walked.

Additional notes:

Possible quarry in NW corner of grange fields – interpreted by Bapty and Ray (2016, 190) as a quarry pit for the early medieval dyke.

A local prehistorian is a regular visitor to Beeches Farm and has found artefacts in a field to south of farm, suggests that this may have been the site of an early medieval battle.

Abbey lands at Brockweir, Harthill and Porthcasseg are viewable from Modesgate.

Postscript:

The earthwork footprints of the grange and earlier agricultural and settlement activity in and around the Beeches Farm camp site have become the framework of the site, with camping pitches enclosed by earthwork banks and some of the camping area names reflecting the grange antecedents e.g. Moads Gate and Monks Road. This is an interesting juxtaposition as many of the campers visit or walk from the nearby Tintern Abbey and Brockweir or are walking the Offa's Dyke National Trail passing through abbey lands. This is an element of the promotional story for the camp site that can potentially be given more emphasis.



Figure 6: Reverse 'S' shape field boundary north of Beeches Farm (Source: author).

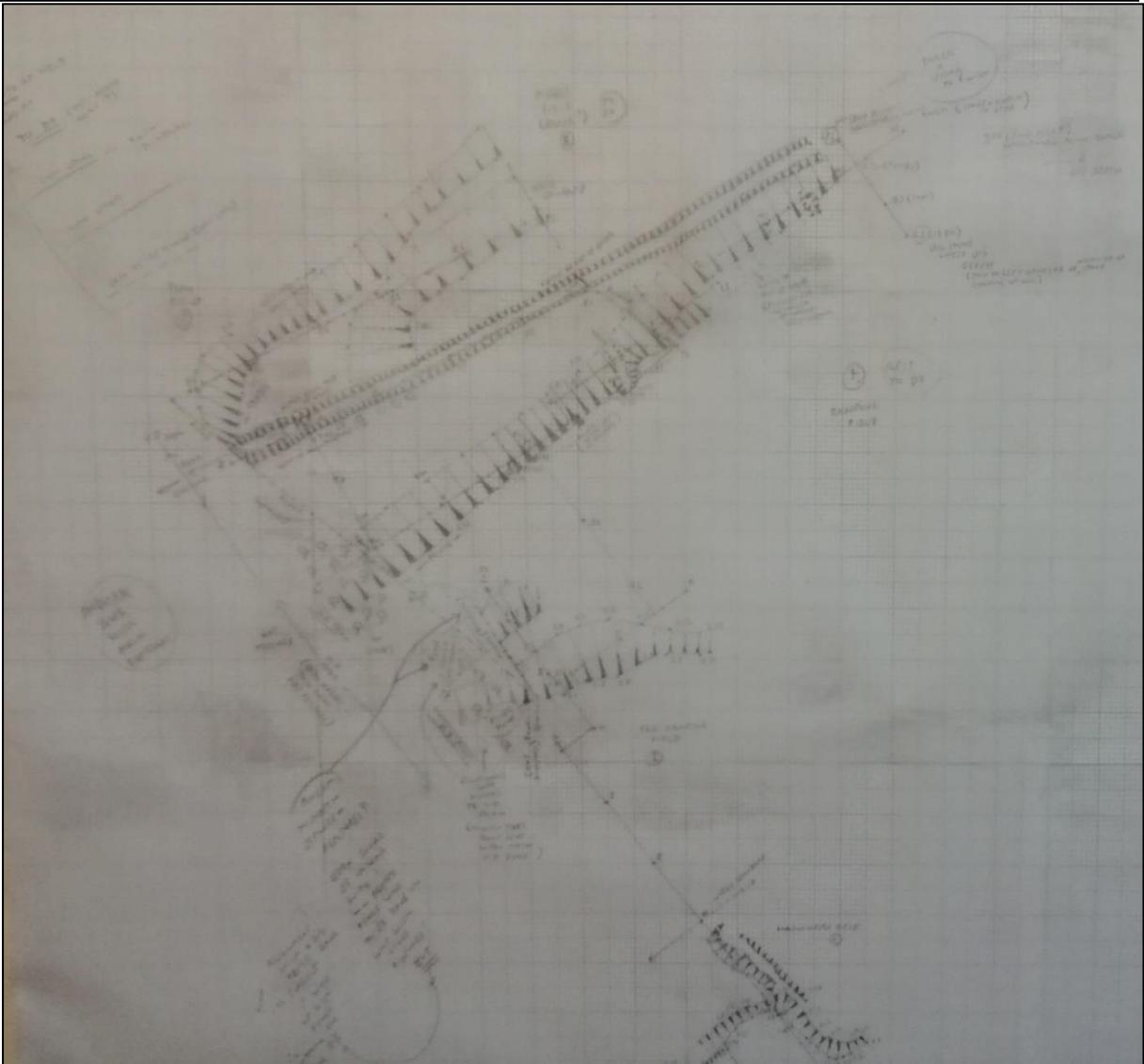


Figure 7: Tape and off-set field plan (partially completed).

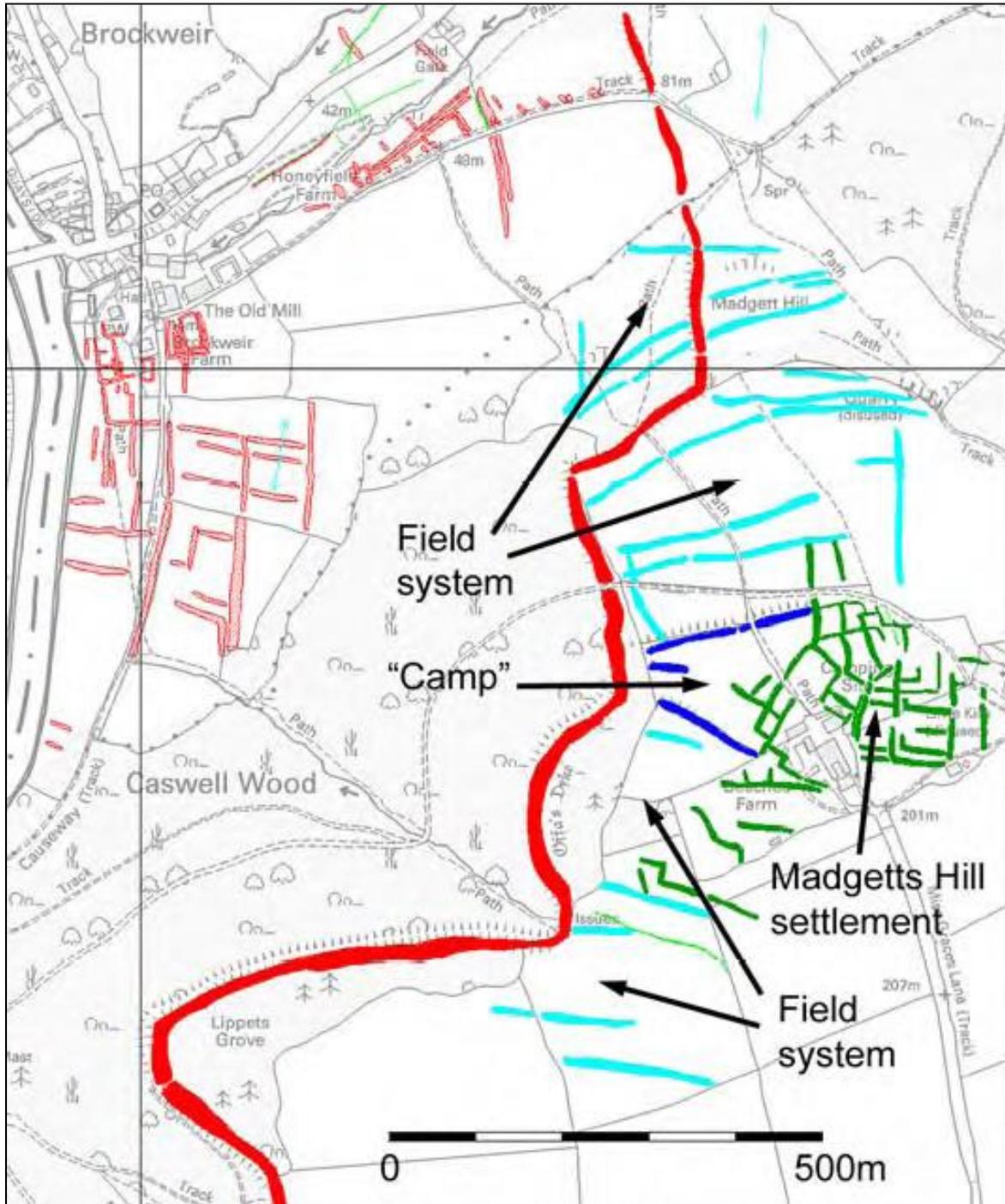


Figure 8: Plan of Earthworks around Madgett Farm, Forest of Dean Mapping Project Report (Source: after Small and Stoertz 2006, 34).

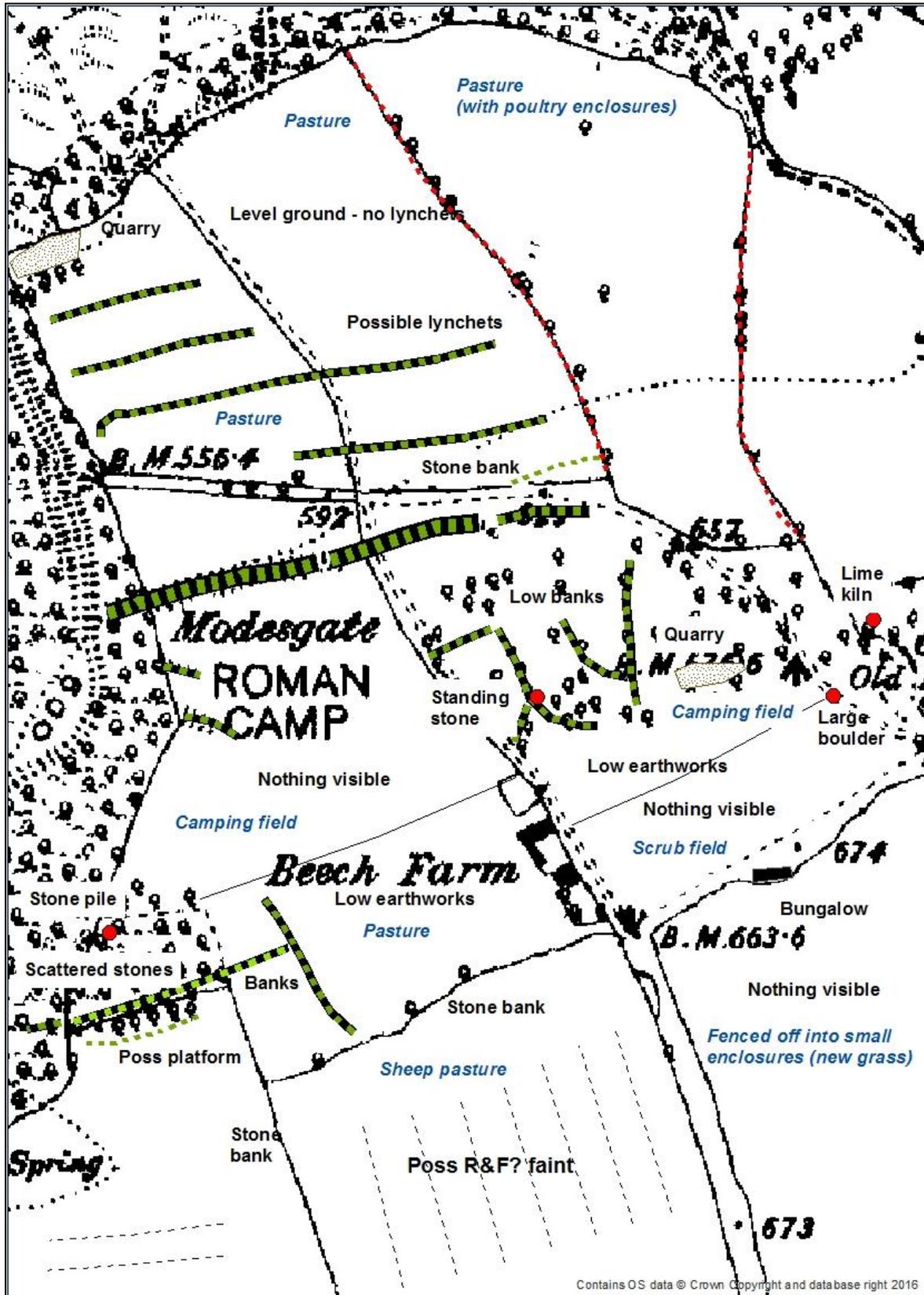


Figure 9: Initial rapid survey sketch plan (west).

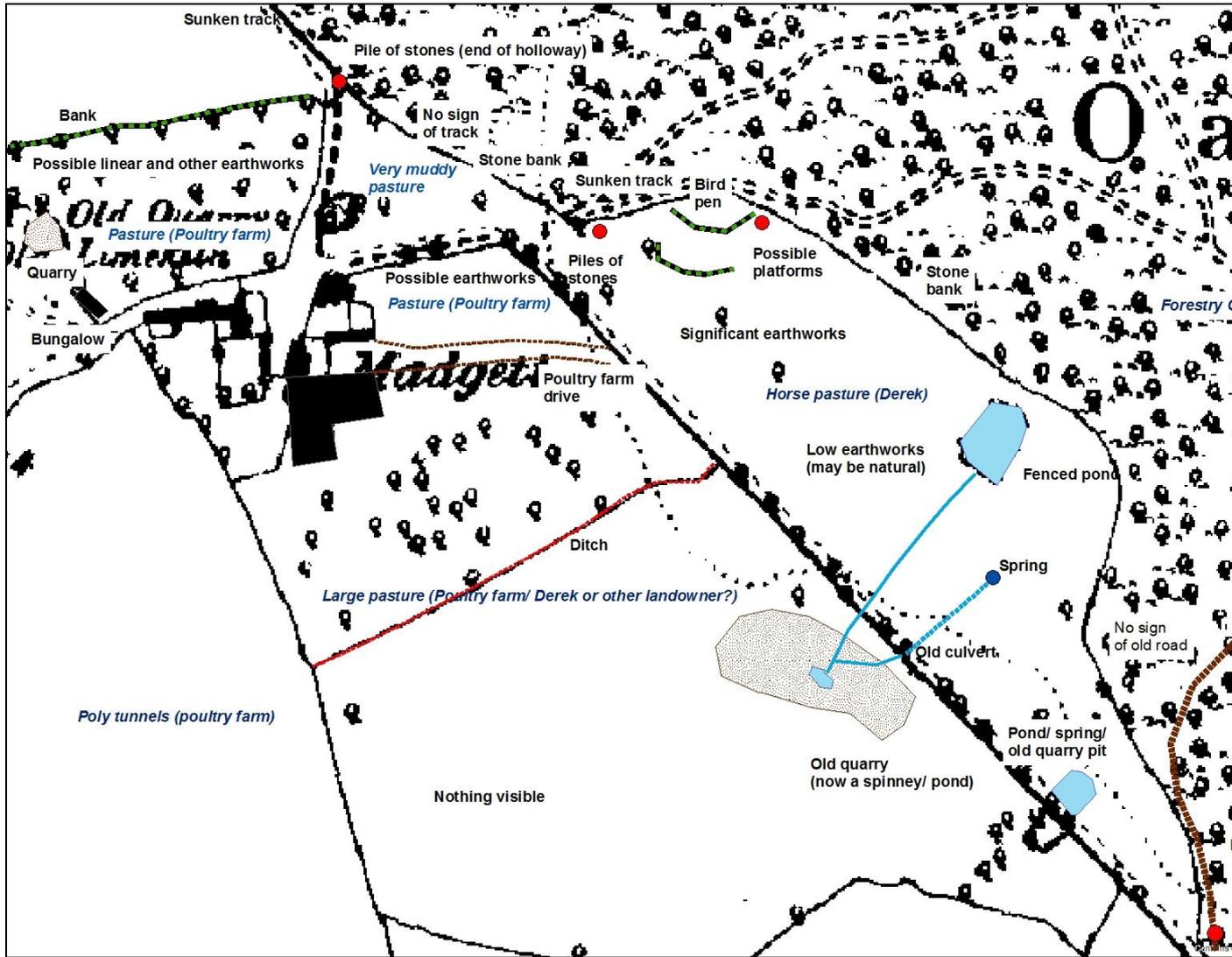


Figure 10: Initial rapid survey sketch plan (east).