

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Medieval hunting lodge in Queen Bower

PARISH: BROCKENHURST

DISTRICT: NEW FOREST

COUNTY: HAMPSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 30267

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SU28730437

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes the remains of a medieval hunting lodge situated on a plateau within Queen Bower in the New Forest.

The location of the lodge is indicated by earthwork banks, an external ditch and a scarp which enclose a rectangular platform measuring approximately 55m north west to south east and 45m north east to south west. The banks are a maximum of 7m in width, up to 1m in height and define the south western, north western and north eastern sides of the platform. The south eastern edge of the platform is defined by a slight scarp. Breaks in the north western bank and the south eastern scarp may indicate entrances at these points. The possible presence of internal structures is suggested by a mound up to 11m in diameter and 1.8m in height formed by a widening in the bank at the northern corner of the platform and by two slight linear banks projecting inwards from the eastern corner. Further evidence for structures is provided by finds of Devon slate from the adjacent stream bed. The external ditch or moat, now dry, measures a maximum of 8m in width and up to 1.2m in depth and has the remains of leats projecting from its eastern and western corners defined by short linear depressions. The monument has been disturbed by the construction of a 19th century drainage ditch known as Fletchers Water which bisects its north western and north eastern sides.

A document dated to 1428 mentions several royal lodges in the New Forest by name, including one at Queneboure, which is a clear reference to this monument. The document remarks that 'It appears that the said lodges are ruinous, and would have fallen to the ground, but for the expenditure done on them by Thomas earl of Salisbury and count of Perche, keeper of the said forest, out of his own goods'. The result was the issue of a Royal Commission to cut and sell sufficient timber to provide the necessary finance for the repair of the lodges. Contemporary sources record that between 1432 and 1440 a further 200 pounds was spent on the lodges by Richard Clyvedon, who in July 1435 was appointed clerk and surveyor of the king's works in the New Forest.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Forests in the medieval period were tracts of land subject to forest law, and generally outside the common law of the land. In fact, the term 'forest', by today's meaning, is something of a misnomer as only about one-fifth of legal forest was actually woodland. Forest law was a system devised to preserve, for the king's amusement and profit, certain designated animals and

the trees and pasture which provided shelter and sustenance for them. The main animals hunted were fallow deer, red deer, roe deer and wild boar. Forests had special officials and courts assigned to them; the laws were strictly enforced and provided the king with a steady income from rents, goods and fines. However, the management and exploitation of forest resources also entailed some expenditure. Game were often enclosed within a park pale, a massive fenced or hedged bank, sometimes with an internal ditch, and hunting lodges, usually moated, were built in the forests to provide temporary accommodation for visiting royalty or nobility.

Like deer parks, the establishment of hunting forests peaked between the end of the 12th and the middle of the 14th centuries, at which point it is estimated to have covered a third of England. The creation of royal forest led to significant changes in the landscape, including the abandonment and destruction of many existing villages and farms.

Whilst documentary sources indicate that there were at least five hunting lodges in Hampshire forests other than the New Forest, possible locations for only two have been identified. Therefore, the seven lodge sites in the New Forest, which are well documented, combined with well preserved stretches of pale, represent a rare and unusually complete survival. As a group, these remains provide a rare opportunity to understand the management, development and use of a royal forest. As a consequence, all components with significant surviving remains are considered to be of national importance.

The remains of the hunting lodge within Queen Bower survive in good condition with little significant disturbance. As a result of the survival of contemporary documentation relating to the lodge, the site is comparatively well understood, but archaeological deposits will provide additional important information about the construction, layout and use of the lodge, its economy, the nature and extent of the structures related to it and the possible factors leading to its eventual decline and abandonment.

SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument included in the Schedule on 8th November 1972 as:
COUNTY/NUMBER: Hampshire 477
NAME: Site of Royal Hunting Lodge at Queen Bower

The reference of this monument is now:
NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 30267
NAME: Medieval hunting lodge in Queen Bower

SCHEDULING REVISED ON 19th March 1999