
Iron Age enclosed settlement and Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge 68m south west of Cranford Farm

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Scheduled Monument**

List Entry Number: **1004542**

Date first listed: **26-Jun-1952**

Location Description: Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Location

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **South Gloucestershire (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Pucklechurch**

National Grid Reference: **ST7021976632**

Reasons for Designation

The size and form of Iron Age enclosed settlements vary considerably from single farmsteads up to large semi-urban oppida. Farmsteads are generally represented by curvilinear enclosures containing evidence of a small group of circular domestic buildings and associated agricultural structures. Where excavated, these sites are also found to contain pits or rectangular post-built structures for the storage of grain and other produce, evidence of an organised and efficient farming system. The surrounding enclosures would have provided protection against cattle rustling and tribal raiding. Most enclosed Iron Age farmsteads are situated in areas which are now under intensive arable cultivation. As a result, although some examples survive with upstanding earthworks, the majority have been recorded as crop- and soil-marks appearing on aerial photographs.

The royal hunting lodge can be viewed as being similar to other types of Anglo-Saxon aristocratic residences and probably included a large and elaborately-built timber hall. These were typically between 12m and 20m in length and between 5m and 10m in width, although larger examples do occur. In common with timber buildings from other classes of Anglo-Saxon settlement sites, most were rectangular, often with simple length to width ratios (often 2:1 or 4:1). The evidence for these buildings includes foundation trenches and postholes from which may be inferred the methods of construction and the basic superstructure of the building. They had between one and four doors, with two usually set symmetrically in the centre of the long walls. In several cases the halls had annexes at one or both ends of the main building, or partitions within the building to create antechambers. Internal postholes indicate that some halls were aisled. The timber walls and other internal timbers supported thatched roofs. The large timber halls were used as reception rooms, for feasting and for accommodation although some may have had a specialised function such as the hunting lodge.

Despite some subsequent building, the Iron Age enclosed settlement and Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge 68m south west of Cranford Farm survive comparatively well and will contain archaeological and environmental evidence relating to their construction, longevity, layout, function, social, economic and territorial significance, the chronological and spatial relationship between the two types of monument and their overall landscape context.

Details

The monument includes an Iron Age enclosed settlement and Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge, situated in the wide valley of the Feltham Brook, close to the confluence of several tributaries. The enclosed settlement and hunting lodge survive differentially as partially visible earthworks and largely buried structures and deposits. The visible outer banks of the Iron Age enclosure are to the north west and south western edges of the scheduled area and stand up to 8.2m wide and 0.6m high, with slight traces of an outer largely-buried ditch and low

counterscarp bank visible to the south west.

Within the interior of the prehistoric enclosure, and bisected by a modern track, is a rectangular platform which stands up to 0.6m high. This is the site of the Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge. In the past the lodge was interpreted as a royal palace. To the north of the track it is possible to identify as many as six rectangular hollows, interpreted as buildings or rooms, with further slight earthworks visible to the south of the track.

From documentary sources Edmund the King of the West Saxons was in residence on May 26th in 946 AD. Amongst his retinue an outlaw called Leofra was identified and, as Edmund personally intervened in his apprehension, the king was fatally stabbed in the stomach and died almost instantly. Historians have long debated the definition of this site as a 'palace' and today it is thought more likely to have been a mutation of the name 'place'. The earthworks, long-attributed to a once large building on the site, are now believed to represent a royal hunting lodge rather than a palace. Limited trial excavations and geophysical surveys carried out in 1964, prior to building development, found no conclusive Anglo-Saxon evidence. The area has long been called 'King Edmund's Palace' locally and was afforded such status by antiquarians from 1779 onwards.

Several buildings, their gardens a farm track and a road lie within the current scheduled area and these are excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath all of these features is included.

Sources: PastScape 204854 South Gloucestershire HER 1950 and 18053

Legacy

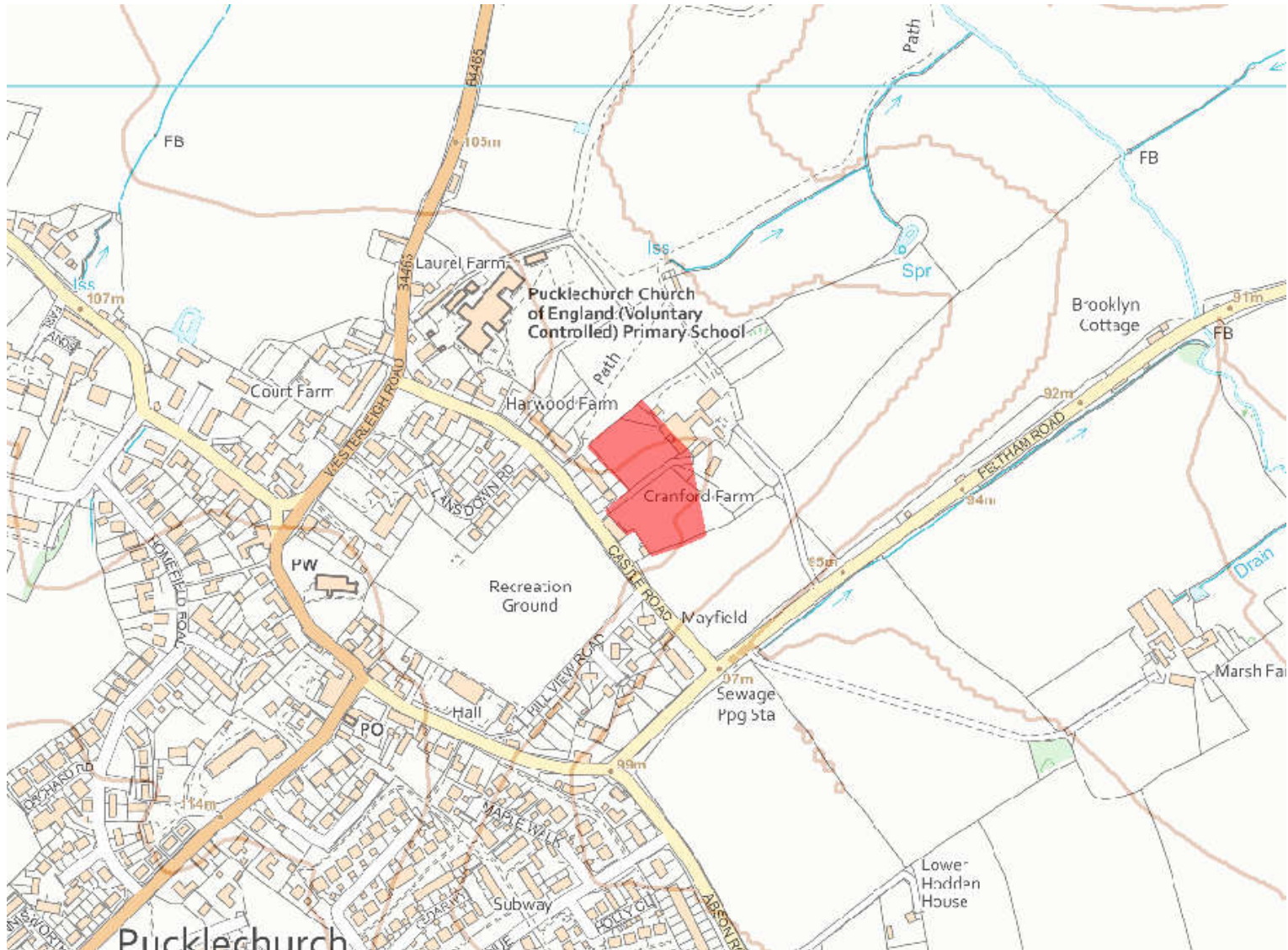
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **SG 153**

Legacy System: **RSM - OCN**

Legal

This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance. This entry is a copy, the original is held by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 10-May-2023 at 10:24:46.

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