

Staffordshire CC HER Designation Full Report

09/05/2017

Number of records: 2

DesigUID: DST3510 **Type:** Scheduled Monument **Status:** Active

List Entry No. **SM Number** **County Schedule No.**
1011892 13465 190

Name: Lea Head moated site

Grade: **Date Assigned:** 19/12/1968 **Amended:** 21/01/1992 **Revoked:**

Legal Description

Details:

The monument comprises a moated site situated in a shallow valley and includes an island surrounded by a stream-fed waterlogged moat. The grass covered island measures c.41m x 23m, contains a few trees, and projects out of the valley slope towards the stream. The surrounding moat is c.9-12m wide x 1.5m deep and is supplied by short channels at the N and W corners connecting with a stream flowing parallel to the moat's NW arm but separated from the moat by an outer bank c.12m max. width. Access to the island is via a stone revetted causeway on the SE arm. Lea Head moated site is unexcavated and, although no structural remains are visible, is seen as the precursor of the present Lea Head Manor built c.1671 some 70m to the SE. All fences are excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath them is included.

Reasons for Designation:

The monument survives well, its earthworks being particularly evident. The site remains unencumbered by modern development and will retain considerable archaeological evidence of structural foundations associated with the building which occupied the island until c.1671.

Selected Sources:

Book Reference - Title: Lea Head, Maer - Type: SMR - Description: PRN No. 185

Book Reference - Author: Darvill, T. - Title: MPP Single Monument Class description - Moats - Date: 1988 - Type: DESC TEXT

Book Reference - Author: Snowdon, C A - Title: AM 107 - Date: 1982 - Type: DESC TEXT

Curatorial Notes

Scheduled Monument consent granted for the removal of debris and slurry from four arms of the medieval moat employing a mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision in February 1989.

Description imported from the National Heritage List for England (<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1011892>) on 12-Sept-2012.

Designating Organisation: English Heritage

Location

Grid Reference: Centred SJ 7500 4211 (76m by 78m)

Map sheet: SJ74SE **Area (Ha):** 0.26

Administrative Areas

County Shropshire

Parish Newcastle under Lyme, Newcastle Under Lyme Borough

Postal Addresses - None recorded

Sources - None recorded

Associated Monuments

00185 Monument: Lea Head Moated Site, Maer

Additional Information

Status: Designated

Mgmt Ag?:

DesigUID: DST5283 **Type:** Scheduled Monument **Status:** Active

List Entry No. **SM Number** **County Schedule No.**
1009771 21569 008

Name: Multivallate hillfort at Berth Hill**Grade:** **Date Assigned:** 30/11/1925 **Amended:** 03/02/1995 **Revoked:****Legal Description**

Description of the Monument:

The monument occupies a prominent sandstone outcrop on the south east periphery of Maer Hills, approximately 600 metres north-west of Maer Hall, and includes the earthwork and buried remains of a multivallate Iron Age hillfort and the earthwork remains of a 19th century ornamental landscape garden. The hillfort has an irregular plan governed largely by the outline of the hill upon which it is located. The defensive earthworks enclose a central area of approximately 3.75 hectares and include an inner rampart and ditch, beyond which, in some sections, is a second rampart. The two ramparts have both been formed by a re-definition of the natural hillslope; the inner by a combination of cutting back into and building out over the hillside and the outer purely by a process of dumping. The flat-topped, inner rampart which measures up to 15 metres wide and rises to a height of 0.8 metres internally, is constructed of earth and stone. The rampart is a complex structure which retains evidence of a complex history of development. To the north, where the natural hillslope is less steep, there is an outer rampart, 10 metres wide and 1 metre high. A ditch, up to 10 metres wide, has been formed beyond the inner rampart. This earthwork is, in effect, a terracing and steepening of the natural hillslope. A low, discontinuous bank is visible, in parts, running along the outer lip of this terrace.

Access into the interior of the of the hillfort is by means of causeways in the central part of the south west side and at the north end of the eastern defences. The former is a 2-3 metres wide inturned or funnel entrance which originally approached from the north west along a steep embanked causeway built along a gully. The second entrance is marked by a break in the inner rampart, although this area has been damaged by quarrying. A break in the north defences of the site is thought to be modern in date and is approached by a track which cuts through the outer defences at the north east corner of the site and climbs diagonally up the face of the of the hill. The west side of this entrance is revetted by a dry-stone wall which is thought to belong to the 19th century phase of the site's history when it was incorporated into a landscape garden. No internal earthworks associated with the hillfort's occupation are visible, but buried remains of structures will survive beneath the ground surface. A spring exists within the east part of the interior from which, during the 19th century, water was piped to Maer Hall and the village of Maer by a member of the Wedgewood family. An aqueduct which transported the water from the spring remains visible terraced into the east side of the hill and has damaged a section of the inner rampart in this area. This 19th century feature provides evidence for later alterations to the hillfort's east defences and is included in the scheduling.

During the 19th century the hillfort's defences, particularly in the north and east parts of the site, were partly modified to create a series of garden walkways set within an ornamental landscape centred on the remains of the hillfort. In the north part of the site, a zig-zag pathway is visible leading to a small platform within the hillfort's defences. This platform is thought to have been created during the 19th century as a viewing area. A small grotto, carved with the date 1824, has been cut into the rock face in the north west part of the site and is thought to be associated with this phase in the site's history. These ornamental features are interesting evidence for the 19th century reuse of the site and are included in the scheduling.

All fence posts are excluded from the scheduling, but the ground beneath these features is included.

Assessment of Importance:

The hillfort at Berth Hill survives well and represents a good example of this class of monument. Despite partial excavation, buried features and artefactual evidence associated with the occupation and development of the hillfort will survive within the defensive ramparts and the site's interior. These internal structures and the defensive ditch will retain environmental evidence relating to the economy of the site's inhabitants and the landscape in which they lived.

The earthwork and other remains of a 19th century ornamental landscape garden centred on the hillfort provide unusual information reflecting the contemporary preoccupation with archaeological sites in antiquity.

(MPP23/ AA 90616/1 03-Feb-1995)

Curatorial Notes

Former Name: Berth Hill Camp, Maer

Designating Organisation: English Heritage

Location**Grid Reference:** Centred SJ 7875 3905 (363m by 337m)**Map sheet:** SJ73NE**Area (Ha):****Administrative Areas**

Parish

Maer, Newcastle Under Lyme Borough

Postal Addresses - None recorded

DesigUID: DST5283

Name: Multivallate hillfort at Berth Hill

Sources

Designation Record: Department for Culture Media and Sport / English Heritage. Ongoing-2016. Scheduled Monument Designation Documents, Scheduled Monument Consents and Section 17 Management Agreements. MPP23/ AA 90616/1 (03-Feb-1995)

Associated Monuments

00023 Monument: Berth Hill Camp, Maer

Additional Information

Status: Designated

Mgmt Ag?:
