

**KVSWP**

**Kennet Valley South-Western Parklands**

**Historic Character**

This is a mixed zone of parkland, recent and historic fields and small areas of ancient and other old woodlands. Historically, the zone was covered by the parklands of Inglewood House, Wallingtons, Templeton and Hungerford Park. The parklands were unlike those to the south in *VSWP* as they were much less wooded and composed of extensive lawns with avenues and ornamental tree plantations. Hungerford Park seems to be the oldest parkland in the zone and has its roots in a deer park created by the Earl of Leicester in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. Wallingtons was in existence by the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A small park existed around Inglewood House by the 1880s, but the land to its east comprised fields that had recently been created through Parliamentary enclosure of open fields. Templeton was still a farm surrounded by irregularly-shaped early enclosure fields. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these areas had been converted into parkland. This included creation of new woods and wooded borders south of Templeton and north and east of Inglewood.

Each of the parklands has experienced some degree of change. All that remains at Hungerford Park are the ornamental wooded areas on the edges of the park. The survival of the ornamental woodland has retained some of its parkland feel, but very other few important features remain. The large area of wood pasture north of the mansion has been cleared of trees and the 18<sup>th</sup> century mansion and the home farm have been demolished and a new dairy farm and cottages constructed. Inglewood House was converted into a health farm and the parkland around the house is relatively intact; however, much of the parkland to the north and east has been converted back into arable fields. Recently the main house has been converted into apartments with extensive new build adjacent. Templeton is now a stud farm, and despite the conversion of lawns to paddocks, it retains much of its parkland characteristics. The historic buildings at Templeton have been demolished and replaced as part of its conversion to a stud.

**Historic Environment**

HER records are fairly dense in this zone and are dominated by cropmarks, features known from documentary evidence and buildings. The zone was covered by the National Mapping Programme, but little other work has been carried out. Other archaeological work is limited to evaluation and survey at Hungerford Park and building recording at Kintbury Farm and Inglewood.

Prehistoric material is very scarce in the zone and the only possible features of this date consist of groups of cropmarks. An important area of Mesolithic occupation lies immediately north of the zone and it is possible that material and features of this date are also present.. Cropmarks of several circular features have been mapped between Inglewood House and Foxley Covert and have been interpreted as a Bronze Age barrow cemetery, although it is also possible that they represent parkland plantation features. An area of cropmarks east of Wallingtons is thought to be part of a later prehistoric/Romano-British field system. The zone could have been utilised in these periods as surrounding areas of the Kennet valley have significant concentrations of prehistoric and Romano-British activity.

Early medieval settlement is known from this zone and Templeton and Kintbury-Easton (thought to be Kintbury Farm) were recorded amongst the seven manors of Kintbury in Domesday. The origin, extent and precise location of these settlements is unclear and deposits relating to them have yet to be found. Three burials thought to be from a late medieval chapel were found at Templeton during building works. Hungerford Park was established in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century and earthworks on its periphery are thought to be

## *Historic Environment Character Zone*

remnants of the medieval park pale, but have not been investigated in detail. Other late medieval features are known from documentary evidence. A Benedictine priory was established at or near Kintbury Farm but was short-lived and was moved to Nuneaton in the 1150s. Some documentary evidence exists for a deserted medieval village at Inglewood, but physical remains have not yet been found.

Few post-medieval features are recorded in this zone. Inglewood House, its gates and the site of Hungerford Park mansion are the only definite post-medieval records in the zone. Little is known about Inglewood House; it is thought to date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century but was greatly altered later and is not listed. However the entrance gates to Inglewood Park appear to be the only listed buildings in this zone; possibly other gate piers serving Hungerford Park are also listed. Significant elements of the historic building stock have already been demolished and little is known of the importance of surviving buildings.

### **Historic Environment Potential**

Much of the zone has been covered by parkland, a land-use that can mask archaeological features, but could also preserve them. The zone has the potential to contain Mesolithic material, but the location and quality of any deposits that may exist is unclear. Cropmarks of circular features between Inglewood House and Foxley Covert may be Bronze Age burial features and this needs to be clarified. Later prehistoric and Romano-British features are likely in the area of cropmarked field systems east of Wallingtons, and may be present across the rest of the zone. Below-ground archaeological deposits of early settlement are likely to survive at Templeton and Kintbury Farm and any such material is crucial in understanding the development of settlement in this zone. There has been limited study of the historic building stock and it is possible that further significant structures could be identified.

### **Historic Environment Action Plan**

#### Conservation Issues

- Intensive modern agriculture threatens the resource on buried archaeological sites.
- Ancient woodland has not been well managed in recent years and this poses a threat to its survival.
- There is a need to ensure that any new tree planting avoids the visually and archaeologically erosive impacts of recent plantations.
- Designed parklands are a key feature of this zone, but are poorly recorded and not recognised through designation. These landscapes are also threatened by modern development pressure.
- More detail is needed on the historic building stock to ensure appropriate policies are put in place to conserve this resource.

#### Research Priorities

- Does the paucity of evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the zone represent a true picture of the resource?
- Are the 'ring ditches' an indication of a ploughed out Bronze Age barrow cemetery or parkland features? If the former does their locations tell us anything about the use of the landscape in this period?
- Does evidence for the medieval deer park and associated structures survive at Hungerford Park?
- Does Inglewood House stand on the site of a medieval settlement?
- What date are the burials found at Templeton? Do they indicate the presence of a settlement of medieval date?

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- What are the origins of the farmsteads in the zone?
- What are the origins and main features of the designed landscapes in this zone?