

Bozdown Camp – an Iron Age hillfort



Situated on the chalk hills to the north of Hardwick Road, the Iron Age hillfort of Bozdown Camp offered commanding views across the Thames and was once busy with human activity. Nowadays the site, which is on the flatter ground above the alpaca-grazed slopes in the photo, consists mainly of arable fields. But some remnants of the earth rampart and ditch that surrounded the site can still be seen from the public footpath that runs along its northern boundary, shown on the map.

The location would have provided some security for our predecessors against a threatening group coming along the river or approaching from the valley. It was also well above any flood level. The area of the fort is more than 50 acres, suggesting its occupation by a large number of people and their animals and also perhaps its use for tribal gatherings and ceremonies.

Over the years the site has been subject to occasional archaeological digs to try to establish its age and use but only a few artefacts were found. Small fragments of pottery enabled a date of Early Iron Age to be given to the fort. The Iron Age runs from 800 BC to the Roman invasion of 43 AD.



Recently, during the years 2018 to 2022, The Chilterns Conservation Board has undertaken an extensive project **Chilterns Hillforts - Beacons of the Past**. Aerial surveys of many of the sites in the area have been made using LiDAR, a laser scanning technique. Bozdown Camp was included in the survey and new details have been revealed. Whitchurch Parish Council made a financial contribution to the project, which is described in detail [here](#).

One of the outcomes of the project is a large number of finds by a metal detectorist investigating fields near the entrance to the Hardwick estate. These were on display at an event in the Hardwick packing shed in April 2023

Another of the outcomes is an artist's impression, shown here, of how Bozedown Camp might have looked during the Iron Age.

There is a discussion on the history of our hillfort in the book *Relics & Monuments* by Peter Hawley, second edition 2017. To obtain a copy, turn to [this page](#).

Thanks are due to Eric Hartley for providing much of the above information.



Richard Wingfield, Whitchurch Web News Editor, August 2017, revised 1st May 2023