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Stonehenge Southern WHS Project: Vespasian's Camp, Amesbury, Wiltshire: analytical earthwork survey

Mark Bowden

Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment

Research Report Series no. 49/2016

Research Report Series 49-2016

STONEHENGE SOUTHERN WHS PROJECT: VESPASIAN'S CAMP, AMESBURY, WILTSHIRE:

ANALYTICAL EARTHWORK SURVEY

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NGR: SU 146 416

ISSN 2059-4453 (Online)

SUMMARY
Vespasian's Camp is a hillfort situated on the west bank of the River Avon at Amesbury, Wiltshire. It is the only major Iron Age monument within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site but had not been surveyed in detail until the present study. The analysis has highlighted the form of the monument, aspects of which are unusual; it has also thrown light on the Bronze Age objects found within barrows on the site and on the 18th-century landscaping of the site, several elements of which survive as earthworks.

CONTRIBUTORS
Survey was undertaken by the author with Olaf Bayer, Becca Pullen, Cara Pearce and Rebecca Lane. The aerial photograph (Fig 2) is by Damian Grady; all site photographs are by the author; Fig 10 was prepared by Olaf Bayer. Pete Herring made some useful suggestions for improving the report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Historic England is very grateful to the owner of the main part of the site, Sir Edward Antrobus, and to all the owners of properties on the south side of the road for permission to undertake the survey. We also wish to record our thanks to David Jacques and especially to Mike Clarke for facilitating access to the site and for all his help during the course of the survey. We also wish to express our gratitude to: Sue Haynes for discussion of the 18th-century parkland landscape; Lorraine Mepham for discussion of the post-medieval pottery; Jane Ellis-Schön of the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum for making available material from the Vatcher and Hunter-Mann archives; Magda Kowalczuk and Alana Farrell of the Society of Antiquaries Library for locating drawings of the lost bronzes and arranging to have them photographed. Deb Cunliffe kindly undertook the hachuring of the survey plans (Figs 5 and 12-16).

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DATE OF SURVEY
December 2015-March 2016.

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INTRODUCTION

Vespasian's Camp is an Iron Age hillfort (centred SU 146 416) situated to the west of the River Avon at Amesbury, Wiltshire (Fig 1). It is the only major Iron Age monument within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS) and was, until 2015, the only major monument within the WHS not to have been surveyed to modern archaeological standards. A measured analytical earthwork survey, at a scale of 1:1000, was undertaken in the winter of 2015-16 by the Assessment Team (now Historic Places Investigation Team) of Historic England as part of the Southern Stonehenge WHS Project (HE Project 7238), a programme of work designed to address the imbalance in understanding of the WHS between the northern part (which has been well studied) and the southern part (which, for various historical reasons, has seen much less research).

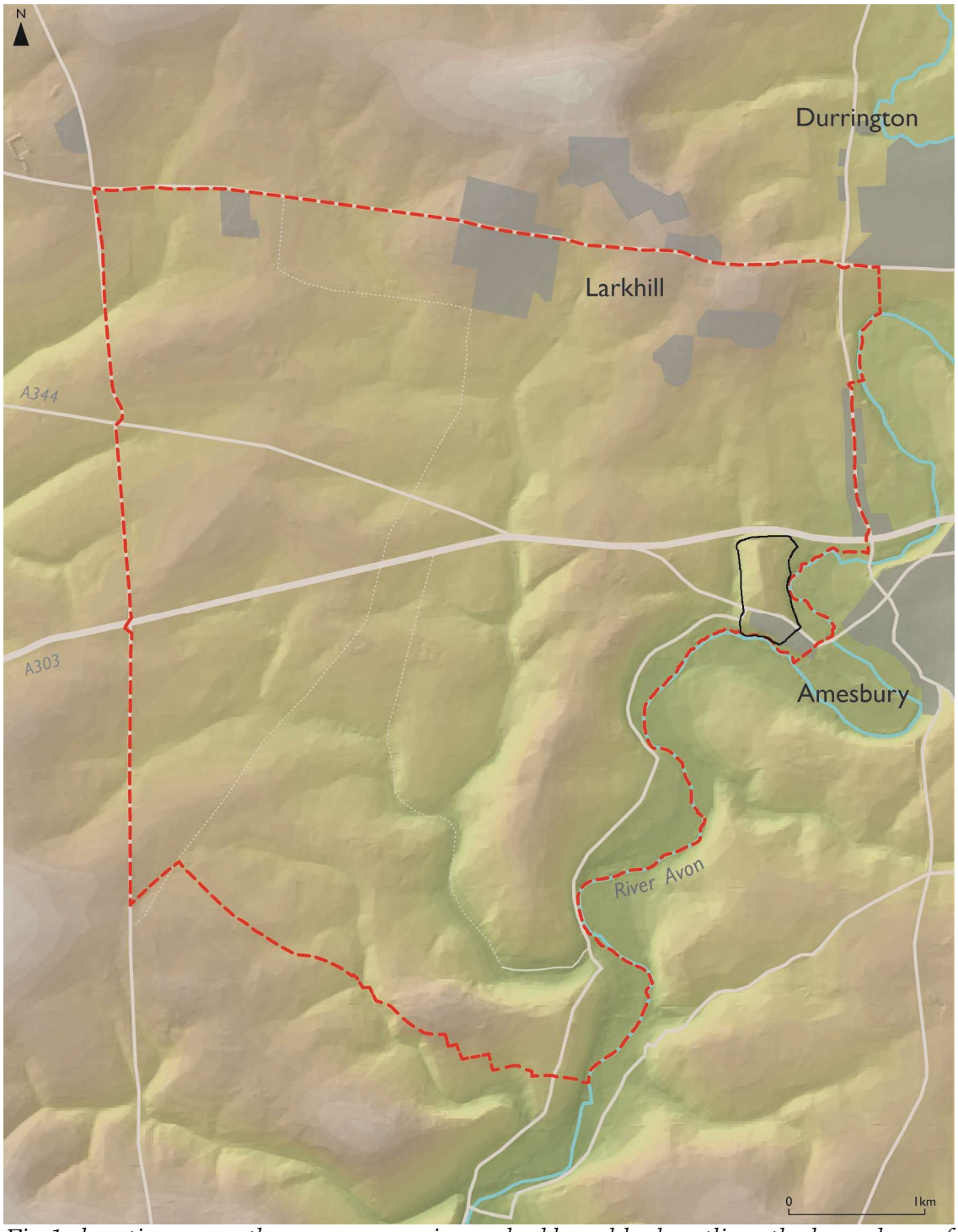

Fig 1: location map: the survey area is marked by a black outline; the boundary of the Stonehenge WHS is shown by a broken red line (Height data: licensed to Historic England for PGA through Next Perspectives™)

GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND USE

Vespasian's Camp lies on a ridge of Upper Chalk on the west bank of the River Avon. A tongue of Plateau Gravel extends over the southern part of the site; this was noted as having a distinct effect on geophysical survey results (Cole 1995). Another tongue of Plateau Gravel occupies the dry valley to the west of the fort and Alluvium fills the floor of the river valley itself, which has extensive post-medieval water meadows.

Fig 2: aerial photograph from the west, 10th December 2012, with Stonehenge bottom right: Vespasian's Camp lies within the wooded area at top left; flooding of the water meadows in the Avon valley is evident. ©Historic England 27569-041

The topographical position is striking. The ridge on which the fort, and the pre-existing barrow group, sits is relatively narrow and steep-sided, with straight flanks orientated almost due north and south. This is a southerly extension of the Ratfyn Ridge which descends from the high ground around Durrington and Larkhill. At only about 90m OD at its highest point, Vespasian's Camp is overlooked by the higher ground of Coneybury Hill (114m) and the King Barrow Ridge (110m) to the west and the Ratfyn Ridge (rising to 134m) to the north. Beacon Hill to the east of the Avon at 204m dwarfs all these high points. When viewed from further afield in the Stonehenge landscape the Vespasian's Camp ridge therefore looks insignificant (Fig 2). However, with the valley of the Avon to the east and south, and a deep dry valley to the west, the location feels locally dominant and commanding. (This dominance has been falsely exaggerated by the deep cutting for the A303, which passes a few metres north of the hillfort ramparts, passing through a former saddle in the ridge.) The valley to the west, separating Vespasian's Camp from Coneybury, though technically 'dry' is in fact damp; a hollow shown on early OS map editions is labelled on the Amesbury Estate sale map of 1823 (Fig 3) as a pond and the same

feature seems to be shown, though not labelled, on Andrews and Dury's map of 1773. This location still holds water in the winter months.

Fig 3: extract from the 1823 sale map of the Amesbury Estate, showing a pond in the dry valley immediately west of Vespasian's Camp; a 'softened' version of Bridgeman's landscaping is depicted on the hillfort itself (WHC 283/202)

The earliest documentary references to the site, at the end of the 14th century, mention arable lands in Great Walls and Little Walls, showing that the interior of the hillfort was under the plough and inferring that the road through the site was established by the that time, dividing it into two unequal parts. The details are given in an Appendix below. The northern part was still under arable cultivation in the early 18th century but this ceased about 1742 (RCHME 1979, 22; WHC 283/6). Amesbury Abbey Park was developed by the 3rd Duke and Duchess of Queensberry (but mainly by the Duchess) between the 1730s and the 1770s. The formal gardens and walls of the abbey near the house were removed in 1733. The creation of a ha-ha in the same year suggests that Charles Bridgman was already involved in the park design though his plan (Bodleian, MS Gough a3* folio 32) is dated 1738. The northern part of Vespasian's Camp was acquired by the Duke in 1735 and brought into the Park after 1741, when ploughing of its interior ceased. Bridgman's plan for the hillfort was at least partly carried out, as attested by the earthworks now visible on site. Further planting was undertaken in the 19th century.
Some activity requiring the establishment of a track and fenced enclosure on the slope beneath the western rampart of the fort took place during or shortly after the Second World War (OS First Edition National Grid 1:2500 map) and in 1969 the current accommodation track along the western side of the site was constructed (SBYWM.1996.517) . The northern part of the site is currently under woodland with shrubs and undergrowth, dense in places, managed mainly for pheasant rearing and feeding. This use of the site is marked by a post-and-wire pheasant feeding enclosure near the northern end of the site. There is also an electricity sub-station adjacent to the north side of the road. The southern part of the hillfort has seen development of residential properties (with some commercial aspects) since the early 20th century and this part of the site now lies within sixteen separate private gardens and paddocks.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The site was mentioned by William Camden, who erroneously believed it to be a Roman work, stating boldly that 'by the forme and manner of making, a man may easily know it was a Romane campe' (1610, Wiltshire 10). William Stukeley described the hillfort expressively as 'hanging over the river'; he also believed it to be Roman and accepted a pre-existing attribution to the Emperor Vespasian, remarking that 'It is pretty to observe that the road from *Stonehenge* to *Ambresbury*, runs upon the true *via praetoria* of the camp' (1740, 49). He thought that the fort was 'an oblong square' (ibid), which partly explains his acceptance of a Roman date but if he had known the Roman forts of northern England and Scotland he could hardly have made this error.

The extensive landscaping of the mid-18th century led to considerable modification of the site and two or more barrows were excavated, probably in the 1740s; the records of these excavations are less than adequate (*see* Discussion below). Richard Colt Hoare described the site at the beginning of the 19th century and dismissed the dating of previous scholars; while admitting that Vespasian might have used the site he didn't believe that it had been built by him, as it bears 'no resemblance whatever to camps formed by the Romans'; instead, it was a stronghold of the Britons, modified in subsequent eras and with the rampart 'much mutilated on the east side in forming the pleasure grounds of Amesbury park ... The area is planted and fancifully disposed in avenues, walks, &c, near the principal one of which, and on the highest ground, is the appearance of a barrow, but much disfigured in its form' (1812, 160). He illustrated the site with a sketch plan by Philip Crocker (ibid, opp 128) and it also appears in the 'Map of Stonehenge and its Environs' (ibid, opp 170). Crocker's plan is reasonably faithful but he has introduced a sinuous line to the western rampart which does not exist and somewhat contradicts Hoare's description – 'The ramparts on the western side towards STONEHENGE, are very bold and perfect' (ibid, 160).

In 1921 John Soul of Amesbury noted earthworks and buried remains within and near Vespasian's Camp, which he reported to EH Goddard at Devizes Museum (WM.MSS.2674). These were probably traces of ridge-and-furrow and a hollow way, rather than the Bronze Age settlement earthworks that Soul believed them to be.

During road-widening in 1964 the main rampart on the west side was partly revealed in section and two phases of construction were noted but the Royal Commission's account (RCHME 1979, 20) gives no reference for this observation.

The site was surveyed by Alan King for OS Archaeology Division in 1969 (the resulting Antiquity Model being the best available plan of the site until the current survey – Fig 4); internal evidence in King's site record (NMR SU 14 SW 69, Authority 4) suggests that it was he who observed the phasing in the exposed section and recovered the Iron Age sherds, which he passed on to the RCHME Salisbury office. (This observation therefore occurred five years after the road - or track - widening took place.) Various watching briefs took place from the 1960s onwards but recovered little of significance. The RCHME described the site in 1979 but did not carry out any new survey, basing their plan on the OS Antiquity Model, though they did provide extra profiles across the earthworks (20-22, figs 13a and 13b).

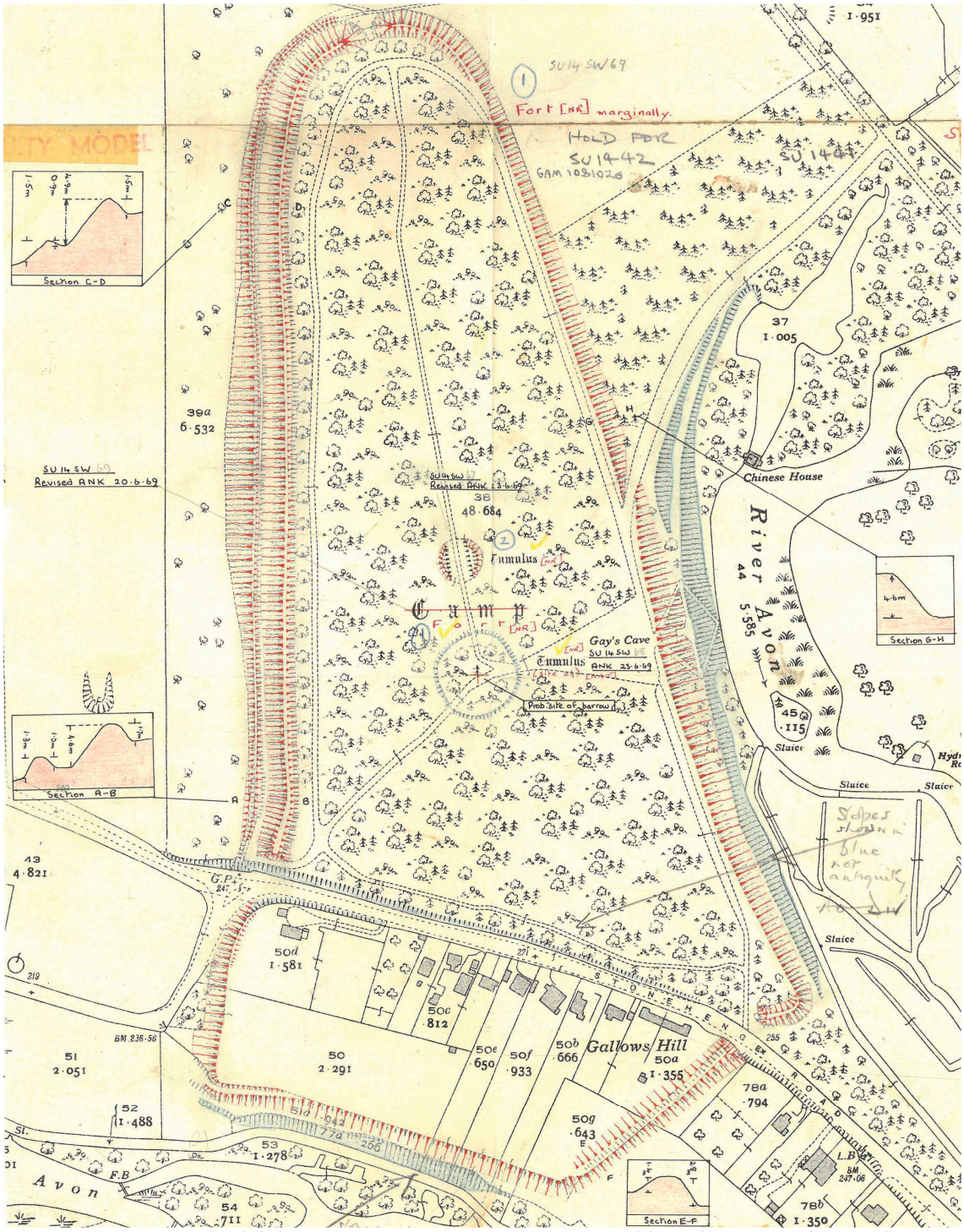

Fig 4: Antiquity Model for Vespasian's Camp, surveyed by Alan King for Ordnance Survey Archaeology Division, 1969; the profile E-F at the extreme southern corner of the hillfort indicates the state of preservation of the ramparts here at this time (1081026 ©Crown copyright. Historic England)

Some small-scale excavations were directed by Kurt Hunter-Mann in 1987, following a resistivity survey the previous year; his three trenches were intended to investigate possible re-use of the site 'at the end of the Roman period', to assess the 'archaeological character' of a poorly understood site, and to assess what effect the

tree cover was having on the archaeological deposits (1999, 39). Geophysical survey of an area at the south end of the site was undertaken in 1995 (Cole 1995), leading to the discovery of a large ring ditch, during discussions over proposed changes to the Scheduling of the site; English Heritage had wished to extend the Scheduled area but in the event vigorous opposition from some residents led to a diminution in the area protected (Canham 1996).

In the early 2000s Sue Haynes of the University of East Anglia studied the 18th-century park design with particular reference to the treatment of the ancient earthworks (2012; 2013). This was coincident with the excavations by the Open University and the University of Buckingham directed by David Jacques at Blick Mead, to the north-east of the hillfort (Jacques *et al* 2012; 2015; Jacques and Phillips 2013; 2014).

DESCRIPTION

The rampart and ditch enclose approximately 14ha and occupy a strongly defensive or dominant position at the south end of a spur cutting across a meander in the River Avon (Figs 5 and 12-16). The slightly domed interior of the fort rises to a height of about 91m OD but at the southern end it is only at about 69m OD, overlooking the river. There is an original entrance at the north end and it seems probable that there were further original entrances where the medieval and modern road cuts through the site but both have been heavily modified. In the interior the remains of at least one badly damaged barrow is visible, and there is considerable evidence for the 18th-century landscaping but traces of the medieval and early post-medieval cultivation are very hard to see.
Many tree throws are evident across the site but only those which impinge directly on the earthworks were recorded. There are a number of veteran trees, probably the result of 19th-century planting, around the ramparts and these were recorded. There are also many yew trees but these were too numerous to record individually; only two large examples framing the vista above Gay's Cave were surveyed.

Entrances

The north entrance at (1) is the best preserved but it has possibly been widened for the passage of a carriage drive in the 18th century, as there is now an 8m-wide gap between the substantial bank terminals. It is notable that the terminals are not precisely aligned; the crest of the eastern terminal is positioned slightly to the north of its partner, suggesting that the entrance was originally slightly staggered. A lower subsidiary platform on the inner face of the eastern terminal also suggests that there might have been an inturn but this feature could be due to later disturbance or damage. The rampart survives as a massive earthwork either side of the entrance, though to the east it rapidly diminishes in height, the interior scarp fading out within about 75m. The cutting for the Amesbury by-pass (A303), dug in the 1960s, passes within 6m of the rampart at the entrance and will have destroyed any ditch and other outworks that might have existed; it should be noted, however, that earlier maps do not show a ditch at this location, so either there never was a ditch here or it had been in-filled as part of the 18th-century works or earlier. It seems unlikely that there was never a ditch here but Major and Mrs Vatcher kept a watching brief while the A303 cutting was being made and they seem not to have recorded any features here.
Evidence for an original entrance in the south-east at (2) comprises: the sharp inturn of the rampart a few metres north of the current road; the fact that the rampart is enlarged here (and is indeed the almost only element of rampart with a visible back on the east side of the fort north of the road); and is even more noticeably enlarged immediately south of the road at (3) where the rampart top is 5.8m above the current road and there is also an apparent inturn; the lack of any other possible entrance on the eastern side of the fort; and, less convincingly, the existence of a hollow way at (4) running eastwards down the slope from this point adjacent to the modern road. However, the gap between the apparent rampart terminals is now 18m and the suggestive size and form of the rampart at this point must be at least in part due to relatively recent modification.

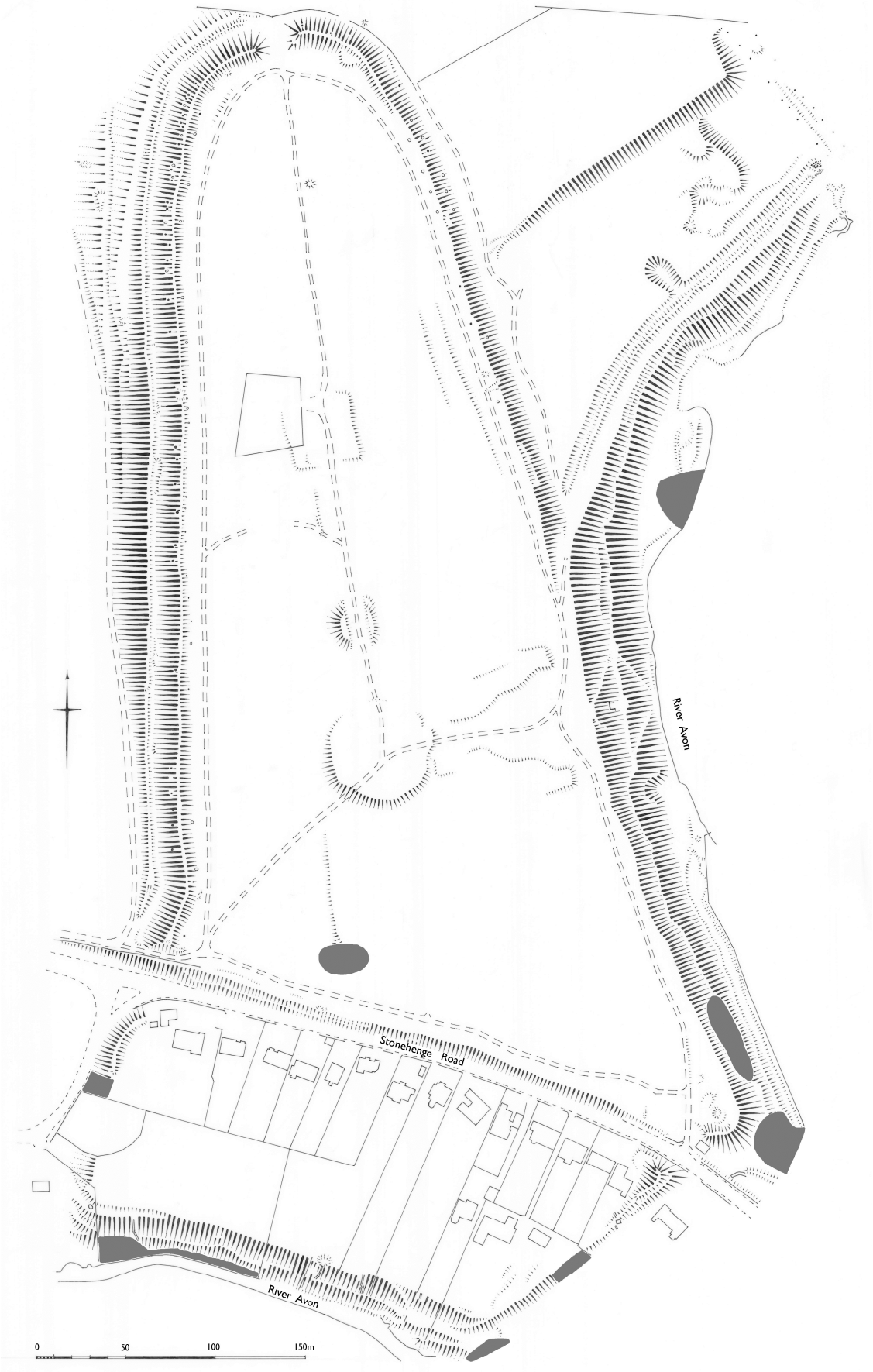
River Avon
Stonehenge Road
River Avon
0
50
100
150m

Fig 5, previous page: survey plan reduced from original scale of 1:1000; the dark grey areas were inaccessible because of dense vegetation at the time of survey; for details see Figs 12-16 at the end of the report (©Historic England)

Evidence for an entrance to the south-west at (**5**) is even more difficult to establish. The apparent inturn of the rampart to the south of the modern road is suggestive but may be entirely due to relatively recent re-modelling due to the junction of Stonehenge Road and the road to West Amesbury which lies at this point. There is also a noticeable kink in the rampart and ditch only 45m north of the road here (**6**) but this is not in itself compelling evidence for an entrance. Stonehenge Road here is hollowed, perhaps exaggerating the apparent height of the rampart within the garden of Sky House (*see* below); nevertheless, it is a formidable earthwork.

Ramparts

The main rampart is a substantial bank on the west side and around the northern extremity of the site; elsewhere it survives, only as a substantial outward-facing scarp, except in the south-east where scraps of the back scarp survive, especially close to the supposed entrance at (**2**). Where best preserved, on the western side, the bank stands up to 7.5m above the ditch bottom and is up to 2.2m high internally (Fig 6). Outside the ditch on the west is a counterscarp bank, up to 0.4m high internally. The counterscarp bank has been modified, probably by agricultural activity forming a negative lynchet on its outer side; this makes it difficult to estimate the original outer height of the counterscarp – it now appears in places to be almost 6m high. Near the north end of the site this counterscarp appears as a very sharp earthwork (**7**), perhaps the result of 18th-century landscaping and the creation of a carriage drive or path along the bottom of the ditch or below the foot of the counterscarp. The ditch bottom has several minor irregularities along its length but these all seem to be the result of burrowing animals or other minor disturbances.

Fig 6: the internal face of the rampart on the western side of the hillfort just north of Stonehenge Road, December 2015

The face of the rampart exposed by road-widening in the 1960s and re-excavated in 1987 is still visible immediately north of (**5**) and is about 4.7m high. The rampart top has been disturbed at (**8**) by two sub-rectangular trenches, now about 0.3m deep; Hunter-Mann makes no mention of trenches here in his report (1999) or archive, so these may be the result of unrecorded antiquarian digging. Spoil from Hunter-Mann's re-excavation of the 1964 section (Trench A) possibly accounts for a bulbous projection to the rampart back at this point. Another disturbance at (**9**) might be the result of unrecorded antiquarian digging but this is uncertain; a small mound of material in the ditch below this is almost certainly related. The interior slope of the rampart is very slight for a length of about 85m south of this point, being only about1.0m high.

The rampart near the northern entrance is very badly disturbed by badger setts (**10**, **11**). A few metres to the south of this disturbance on the eastern side of the fort the rear scarp of the rampart fades rapidly. Between this point and the south-eastern corner of the site there is no sign of any back to the rampart, nor is there any trace of a ditch on the eastern side of the fort. A disturbance (**12**) takes the form of a trench, up to 0.3m deep, extending from the top of the rampart scarp across the track, with a small mound immediately to its north; this is Hunter-Mann's excavation trench B (1999), which demonstrated that a rampart did exist here and has been masked by soil washing, or being moved, down the slope (*see* Discussion). The outer face of the rampart is 6.8m high near the northern end of the site. Further to the south it is difficult to measure where it merges with the natural river cliff above the Avon; near Gay's Cave the total drop from the rampart top to the river terrace is 19.7m.

At (**13**) the rampart is interrupted by another set of earthworks running diagonally down the natural slope, a river cliff, to the north-east. This does not have the appearance of an Iron Age entrance and is almost certainly an 18th-century carriage drive, though its form is unusual (*see* below). From this point southwards there is a path along the face of the slope above the river; for the most part it appears to be modern but it does follow the line of a path indicated on Bridgeman's 1738 design and joins the level terrace which fronts Gay's Cave, 9.6m below the rampart top.

The earthworks at the eastern extremity of the fort (**14**) consist of a surviving section of rampart curving tightly to form what appears superficially to be the north side of an inturned entrance (*see* above). However, within this curve is a circular hole, currently filled with rubbish; the origins of this feature are uncertain but Bridgeman's plan indicates that he intended to construct a circular bastion or rondpoint with a small internal feature, perhaps a statue or an obelisk, at its centre on this spot. Though this bastion was clearly never created it is possible that some work was done here – certainly some of the paths leading to it seem to have been laid out (*see* below).

In 1969 the eastern rampart apparently survived well to the south of Stonehenge Road down to the extreme southern corner of the site, though aerial photographs taken in the 1920s (e.g. NMR SU1441/1, 4 and 6) seem to show some damage to the rampart in this area; Alan King recorded a profile across the rampart at (**15**) showing that the interior slope was 1.4m high (*see* Fig 4). The interior scarp now fades 75m north of this and there is only a slight scarp, no more than 0.2m high, at (**15**). King's record of a rampart 1.4m high internally agrees well with Hunter-Mann's discovery of a rampart surviving 1.0m high near the northern end of the site. Along the southern edge of the site the rampart follows the river cliff and is only an outward-facing scarp about 10m high above the river, though a continuous

ledge, running all along this scarp about 5.3m below the top, suggests the possibility that there was a ditch cut into this slope; this is slightly supported by a fragment of possible ditch at the southern extremity of the fort (16) but it was not possible to investigate this area thoroughly due to the density of the undergrowth. A well-engineered path cuts down the face of the rampart at the corner immediately south of (15). Near the south-western corner of the site (17) the ramparts have been damaged by quarrying and the passage of vehicles but the rampart top is still 10.8m above the river. North of Hunter's Lodge the rampart has been smoothed where it is crossed by the entrance into the large paddock that occupies the south-western corner of the fort but there is still a slope 2.0m high; immediately north of this again the rampart has been quarried away for more than 30m. A fragment of rampart survives well, about 1.0m high internally, in the garden of Sky House at (18) but its exterior face seems to have been considerably modified by the road junction immediately adjacent. The top of the rampart is about 6.3m above the road.
The RCHME account mentions that a 'broad shallow depression which runs immediately behind the main bank presumably provided additional material for its construction' (1979, 20). This internal quarry scoop was not seen clearly during the current survey, the area behind the ramparts on the west side of the fort being covered by a thick accumulation of leaf mould and soil. On the east side of the fort a substantial internal quarry was found in the 1987 excavation trench (Hunter-Mann 1999, 42-3, fig 3) but this had been well covered by plough wash and other deposits and no surface expression could be expected.

Internal features

The only earthwork features of possible archaeological interest recorded to the south of the road were some very slight scarps, no more than 0.2m in elevation, in the extreme south-eastern corner of the fort near (15), which might be the result of medieval cultivation but might more plausibly be due to recent activity. Geophysical survey revealed features near the centre of the southern edge of the fort, notably a large ring ditch at (19), but no earthworks are visible here, with the exception of a modern semi-circular bank at the top of a flight of steps leading down to the river (there was formerly a footbridge at this location).
To the north of the road a series of very slight lynchets are probably the remains of medieval and early post-medieval cultivation; those to the north-east (20) are spread and no more than 0.3m in maximum height while the one further south (21) is sharper and about 0.4m high. Lidar indicates that there are more lynchets running along the contours with a perpendicular bank to their north (NMR: SU 14 SW 844) on the western side of the interior at (22) but these could not be seen on the ground in the current state of vegetation.
The current vehicle tracks within the fort, which broadly follow routes established in the 18th century, are not heavily used; they betray some signs of antiquity at the extreme eastern corner of the fort near (14) where the current track is raised on a slight scarp, up to 0.4m high, and seems to overlie the slight earthworks of previous path or track alignments, perhaps those associated with Bridgeman's design for the bastion that was to have been created in this corner of the site. The north side of Stonehenge Road is marked where it passes through the fort by a very substantial lynchet, up to 3.8m high near the centre of the site and nearly 6.0m high towards

the west side, so that the interior of the fort is much higher to the north than to the south; this is due to the effects of cultivation and exaggerates the naturally gentle south-facing slope of the site. There are faint intermittent traces of a hedgebank along the top of this lynchet.

A number of prominent features occupy the summit of the site. A mound (23) is cut into two unequal parts by a carriageway that has been driven along the spine of the site towards the north entrance. This mound, which survives up to about 1.0m high, is almost certainly a barrow (and is known as Amesbury 25), and possibly the origin of some of the bronzes found in the 18th century (*see* Discussion); if this mound had been created as an integral part of the 18th-century works it would presumably have been made symmetrical with the carriage drive and in any case the mound is distinctly an earlier feature cut by the drive.

To the south of (23) is a large circular platform (24) which is undoubtedly part of the 18th-century landscaping, forming the final element in a line of features opposite the centre of the garden front of Amesbury Abbey house. The platform is about 1.0m high to the south-west but merges with the natural slope of the site and is in fact cut in to the surface by about 0.2m at the north. Its shape is not perfectly circular, though perfect circularity seems to have been intended; it has been distorted on the east side, for instance, by a vehicle track running across it. Also on the east side, just to the south of the track, it is flanked by an external ditch for about 9m; the outer scarp of this ditch turns and runs eastward for about 10m before fading into the natural slope. There is no sign of this ditch anywhere else on the circuit. It has been suggested in the past that this platform was formed out of the remains of another barrow (which was given the designation Amesbury 24) and though this is possible there is no physical evidence to support it (*see* RCHME 1979, 22); in any case, Haynes has pointed out (2012, 33) that the position of this feature is entirely dependent upon its relationship to the axis of the garden, suggesting that it would be somewhat coincidental if a barrow had been conveniently placed at this point.

To the north, beyond the mutilated barrow is a square platform at (25), a fitting partner for the round platform. The east-facing scarp of this feature is well preserved and about 0.7m high. The other sides are less obvious, though the south-west corner is visible and much of the western side survives as a very spread scarp within the pheasant feeding enclosure. Immediately to the south of this platform is another isolated length of scarp (26), perhaps a section of a slight bank, running parallel to the 18th-century garden alignment and presumably part of it.

Running downslope to the east from the round platform are two intricately shaped scarps (27, 28), up to about 0.8m high, which represent the edge of the planting scheme of 'rising terraces' that would have framed the view from the house up to the platform, as shown in Bridgeman's design. However, these scarps are not precisely symmetrical with each other and not as crisply laid out as garden aesthetics would demand; either they have been badly damaged by later activity (Haynes 2013, 160-1) or, conceivably, they are unfinished works. (This suggestion might also account for the lack of precise circularity in the circular platform and the uneven appearance of the square platform – *see* Discussion below.) Immediately below the circular platform and these scarps is Gay's Cave, with its accompanying 'Diamond' of paths (*see* below).

Hunter-Mann excavated a small trench (Trench C) in the interior of the hillfort. It is difficult to locate this from his published plan (1999, fig 1) but one of the resistivity

survey plots in the archive shows 'Suggested site of 5x5' (SBYWM.2005.82); if this was the actual site chosen for Trench C it is to the south of the square platform (25) and just to the west of the linear earthwork (26); however, it is impossible to pinpoint the precise location of the trench. The description of the trench makes no mention of stratigraphy, recording only ploughsoil above natural chalk (ibid, 43), though the archive contains more detail – *see* Discussion below.

External features

A series of springs, made famous by the recent Blick Mead excavations (*see* Jacques *et al* 2012), lie below the eastern side of the hillfort. The most prominent of these, just north of the Chinese House at (29), has caused slumping in the river cliff immediately above it and may be the origin of a shallow depression (30) further up the slope beyond the carriage drive (*see* below) A further spring issues from under the southern edge of the hillfort at (31).

The RCHME made reference (1979, 20) to a hollow way passing the south-western corner of the fort and running down to the river. This has subsequently been built over by a new property, Hunter's Lodge. Earthworks close to this house and its garage are of modern origin, connected with the construction of these buildings (Wessex Archaeology 1997), and were not surveyed.

Outside the north-western edge of the fort are several features including lynchets, trackways, a pit and mounds. These probably relate to relatively recent agricultural and other activity which is indicated by the depiction of a new track and an area demarcated by pecked lines on mid-20th-century OS map editions. The pit (32), for instance, is a very sharply defined feature, about 0.7m deep with near-vertical sides, and is clearly of recent origin. However, a very level strip, formed by one of the lynchets immediately below the counterscarp bank, might be a carriage drive; it now ends rather abruptly at a low oval mound (33) but this may be a later dump of material.

Running from the north-east side of the fort is a very large lynchet (34), about 3.7m high. This lynchet might be in origin part of a prehistoric field system but was certainly a boundary within the medieval or later landscape; however, its great height probably relates to modern activity as the area to its north was used for dumping excess material from the Amesbury by-pass cutting. To the east an avenue of trees (35), with some earthwork expression in the form of hollowing up to 0.3m deep, leads from the direction of Amesbury Abbey house towards the extended park to the north; it is now cut off by the A303 but its line to the north of the road can be seen on aerial photographs (Bowden *et al* 2015, fig 6.5). To the south of (34) a low but extensive mound (36) has the appearance of a barrow when viewed from some directions but is almost certainly a natural feature. Cutting the southern edge of this is a disused quarry (37) with a maximum depth of over 2.0m.

The carriage way (38) descending the slope from the rampart top, mentioned above, has a substantial ditch up to 1.8m deep extending parallel to it on its western, upslope, side; the original purpose of this ditch is almost certainly for drainage on what is and must always have been a wet and treacherously slippery slope. Yew trees have been planted within the ditch. Rather more than half way down the slope there is a broad shallow depression (30) opening into the north-west side of the ditch; this has a somewhat natural appearance and it may be

significant that it is almost above one of the principal springs that feed the Avon here. The carriage way meets the avenue (**35**) at the foot of the slope. At this point the ditch has been culverted under the carriage way and issues into an elongated hollow which leads down to the river; there has been some dumping of modern building waste here.

On a channel of the river immediately below the point where the carriage drive (**38**) branches from the rampart at (**13**) is the Chinese House (Bold 1988, 122-3 – Fig 7). The area immediately around the Chinese House is heavily overgrown with impenetrable undergrowth but to north and south of this are some slight but distinct earthworks, of curious form (**39**); these must be garden earthworks (*see* Discussion).

Fig 7: The Chinese House, 8th March 2016

Gay's Cave is a grotto cut into the river cliff approximately half way up the slope and on the axis of the garden established by Bridgeman's plan (Fig 8). It is approached by a path cut along the same contour (described above) which broadens into a level platform or apron in front of the grotto, and by the 'Diamond' paths rising diagonally from the river and up to the top of the rampart in a diamond shape; the 'Diamond' is clearly seen in a photographic view of 1915 (Haynes 2013, fig 4) before it was overgrown by trees. These paths do not survive uniformly; the upper southern arm has been almost destroyed by badger disturbance. The point where these paths meet at the top of the slope, giving a view back across the river to the house, is framed by a pair of yew trees.

A deliberately cut channel (**40**), originally issuing from the river and presumably controlled by a weir and sluices, follows the foot of the river cliff to the south of Gay's Cave. It is over 1.0m deep; brick and stone revetment is visible in places on its outer, eastern, side. This may be part of the park and garden design, though it cuts

across some of the paths proposed in Bridgeman's plan; more probably it may have been connected with controlling the water flow on the flood plain, as part of the system of water meadows (NMR: SU 14 SE 467) that occupy the valley floor here.

Fig 8: Gay's Cave, 9th July 2010

DISCUSSION

The barrows

There were almost certainly two and perhaps more barrows on the ridge of Vespasian's Camp itself: Amesbury 25, the ring ditch discovered in 1995 and possibly Amesbury 24. Though William Stukeley's drawing of Vespasian's Camp in 1724 and his sketch map (Haynes 2012, figs 9 and 12) show only one extant barrow within the site, this is not conclusive – the sketch map is far from accurate; there is some evidence to suggest that there were possibly at least two visible barrows within the hillfort in the mid-18th century. It is possible that other flattened barrows remain to be discovered.

The 18th-century finds of Bronze Age artefacts assigned to two barrows within Vespasian's Camp are only known from a chance discovery in the Bodleian Library by OGS Crawford, followed by a parallel discovery by Gerald Dunning. As Crawford reported to EH Goddard, he had found two drawings tacked into Gough's copy of Horsley's *Britannia Romana*, one showing a bronze dagger and pin and the other a bronze blade. The first drawing was inscribed 'This and the pin with ashes in the large barrow', the second 'Found in the lesser of the two barrows in that part of Old Ambresbury called Vespasian's Camp'. Goddard noted that the second inscription 'seems clearly to imply that both the above-mentioned barrows were within Vespasian's Camp.' Crawford's letter stated that the bronzes 'are said to have been found in 1770' but gives no reference for this statement (Goddard 1913). Twelve years later Dunning found other drawings of the same bronzes in the Society of Antiquaries Library, with a note indicating that they had been exhibited at the Society in 1771. The minutes of the meeting record that they 'were found in the two Barrows, in that part of Old Ambresbury called Vespasian's Camp. In the larger of the two, the large Spear-head and Pin were found, intermixt with Ashes; & in the smaller Barrow, the lesser Spearhead was found' (Society of Antiquaries Minute Book 12, 68). The bronzes were recorded as being in the possession of the Duke of Queensberry (Goddard 1926, 350-1). From these accounts there has arisen an assumption that the bronzes were found in 1770-1 (perhaps helped by the title of Goddard's 1913 note), whereas the evidence is only that they were exhibited in London in January 1771 (Fig 9). They may have been found at an earlier time and kept by Queensberry, and the landscaping carried out by the Duke and Duchess seems to provide the most likely context. This puts an end to the question of why disturbance of the barrows would have been happening as late as 1770, when the landscaping works were almost certainly finished by about 1748 (Sue Haynes, pers comm). It seems probable that one 'lot' of the finds came from Amesbury 25 when the carriage drive was driven through it and that the other came from a barrow that was either on the site of the circular platform, as has sometimes been assumed (Amesbury 24), or the one discovered as a ring ditch in 1995 (though that was not on the Queensberry's estate), or another barrow that is now lost.

Richard Colt Hoare and his team appear to have been unaware of more than one barrow within the fort, suggesting that in the early 19th century they had been effectively disguised by the landscaping (1812, 160 and plate opp 128).

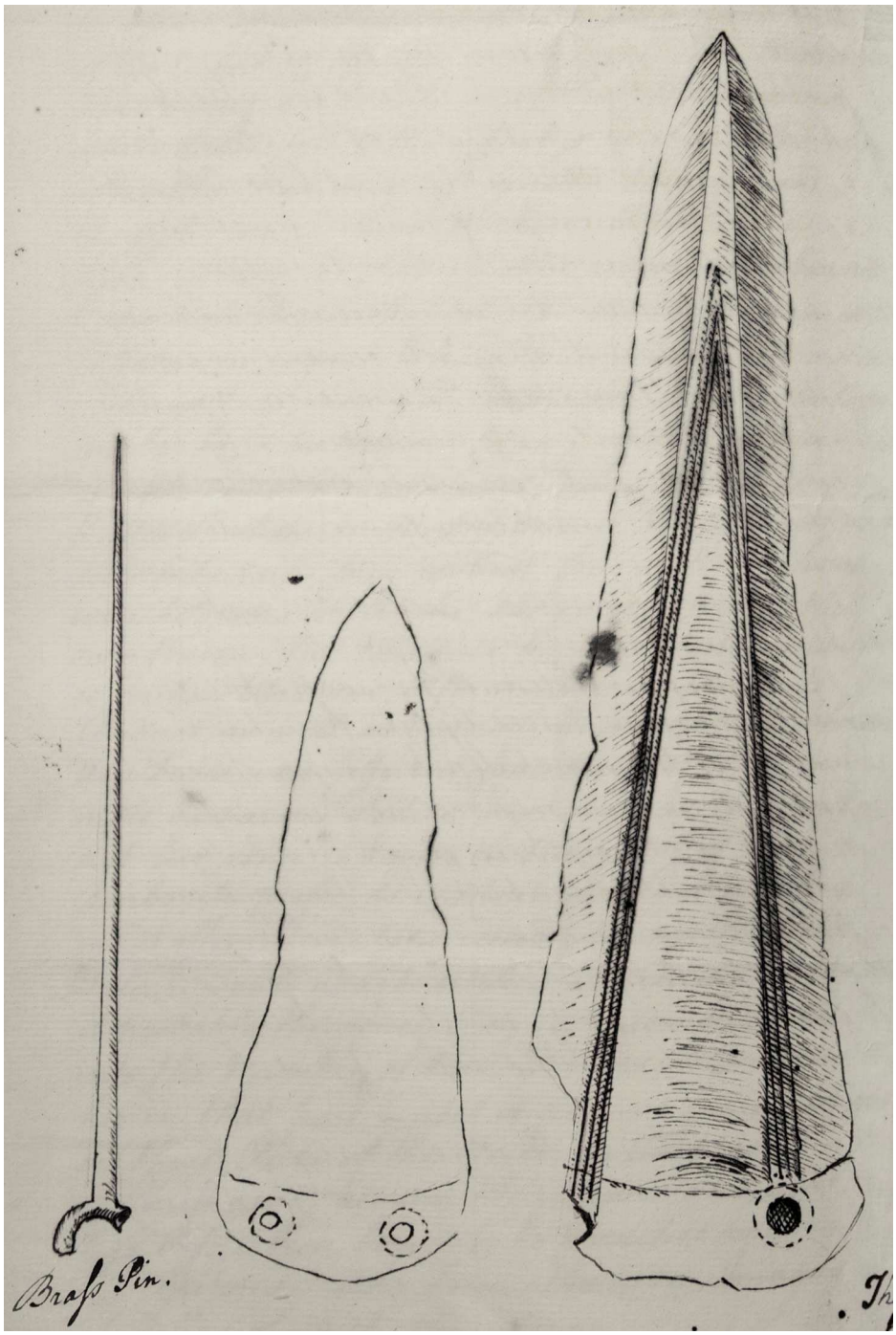

Fig 9: sketch of the bronzes from Vespasian's Camp, from the Minute Book of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 10th January 1771; the objects were traced by Thomas Pownall at 1:1, giving a length of about 14cm for the pin, 12cm for the knife and 21cm for the dagger; the Bodleian sketch of the dagger from which Gerloff took her drawing (1975, 105, no179, pl 17) clearly differs from this version in the detail of the hilt plate (©The Society of Antiquaries of London – photographer Ken Walton)

Amesbury 25 is marked as 'Tumulus' on all editions of the OS maps but the circular platform is not so labelled until 1924; one can perhaps see the hand of OGS Crawford there in his new role as Archaeology Officer at the OS, tidying up the story

of the 'greater' and 'lesser' barrow that he had himself brought to light. Grinsell apparently accepted this configuration of the evidence (1957, 150). Sabine Gerloff included the larger bronze dagger and the pin in her *corpus*, listing the dagger as a Camerton-type, with a drawing based on the Gough drawing in the Bodleian (1975, 105, no179, pl 17 and pl 48G). She described it as being from Amesbury 24; that statement is not referenced but she can only have been following Grinsell. Though it is a circular earthwork, the platform (**24**) does not in any way resemble a barrow and the short length of ditch on its eastern side is too deep and sharply defined to be a surviving barrow ditch. Whether the circular platform does conceal the former site of a barrow could only now be resolved by excavation (or possibly by geophysical survey); it is not an unlikely position at all even though, as Haynes has noted (2012, 33), the circular platform is very definitely placed in relation to two main axes through the Amesbury Abbey garden and not with reference to any ancient monument, the existence of which would only have been a coincidence. (That the axis of the garden was not laid out in relation to existing monuments can be assumed from the mutilation of Amesbury 24 and the hillfort rampart.)
In this landscape not very much can perhaps be made of the fact that the hillfort included Bronze Age barrows within its perimeter – it would be difficult to build such a large site on a ridge here without incorporating barrows, but that one at least of the barrow mounds survived until the 18th century shows that it was respected by the hillfort builders (and the medieval farmers).

The hillfort

Vespasian's Camp is one of a number of hillforts on Salisbury Plain and on the flanks of the Avon valley, the nearest being Ogbury on the east bank to the south. The other nearest neighbours are Casterley Camp and Sidbury to the north, Yarnbury and Quarley Hill to west and east respectively, Figsbury Ring and Old Sarum to the south (Fig 10). All of these sites share the basic characteristics of hillforts – a relatively large area of high ground surrounded by ramparts and ditches in the Early to Middle Iron Age – but differ from each other in positioning and form; they are not all necessarily strictly contemporary with each other but seem to be the constructions of separate local communities rather than part of a wider regional system. Casterley Camp is the largest hillfort on the Plain by area but its single rampart is relatively slight; it incorporates the head of a combe running down to the Avon, making its topographic position unusual. Sidbury is the most obviously defendable hillfort on the Plain, its substantial rampart and ditch occupying a conspicuous domed peak; like Casterley it lies at the junction of several Late Bronze Age linear ditches. Yarnbury is in a much less conspicuous topographical position and began as a small enclosure but in its 'developed' phase also has substantial ramparts. Quarley is relatively small but is another classic hilltop fort with substantial ramparts and also overlies a junction of earlier linear ditches. Figsbury Ring is a univallate hillfort on the end of a broad spur with extensive views across the Bourne and Avon valleys. Its substantial rampart and ditch enclose an inner earthwork which is possibly of much earlier date. Old Sarum's defences, overlooking the Avon, are massive but relatively little is known about this hillfort because of its comprehensive re-use in the medieval period. Ogbury is a large fort – laid out over part of a field system – but, rather like Casterley, with relatively

insubstantial defences; its topographic position is tilted slightly off the hilltop on the north-west side towards the Avon below.

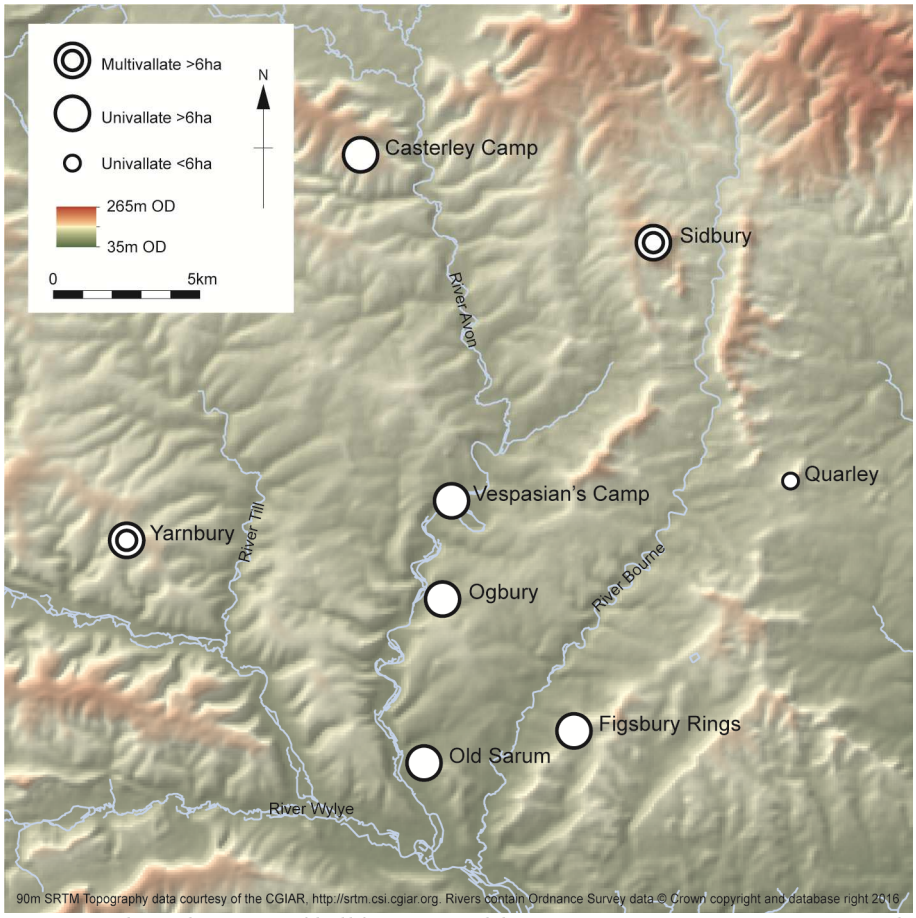

Fig 10: distribution of hillforts neighbouring Vespasian's Camp; though all are on relatively high ground in their locality they generally avoid the highest hills and most occupy positions along the river valleys

The concentration of hillforts along the Avon and its tributaries has been noted (Payne *et al* 2006, 134) but not explained. Yarnbury and Sidbury have been identified as hillforts which were potentially long-used sites, 'preferred locations' throughout the Early and Middle parts of the Iron Age, like Danebury, Maiden Castle and South Cadbury (ibid, 14, 162); Vespasian's Camp, in contrast, seems to have been a relatively short-lived site. These sites all show signs of activity in earlier periods – barrows, enclosures, linear ditches – and seem to 're-emphasise locations of ancestral activity' (McOmish *et al* 2002, 160). They also nearly all show signs of later activity – Late Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval – but in different forms; only Yarnbury and Old Sarum have evidence for extensive Roman occupation, though the finds of Romano-British pottery at Vespasian's Camp (Mepham 1999) attest to some activity here.

The ramparts of Vespasian's Camp are substantial, particularly on the west side, where they are of two phases, the secondary piled onto the back of the primary. The RCHME account (1979, 20) suggests that the two phases were separated by a 'dark soil horizon 0.3m deep [that] had developed' on the rear face of the primary rampart, implying some length of time between the two periods of construction. Hunter-Mann, however, thought that the intervening deposits represented 'the

dumping of domestic waste' (1999, 41) but also believed that this occurred over a prolonged period. The very slight dating evidence for Vespasian's Camp suggests activity in the 5th century BC but not much earlier or later, with the first phase dating to *c*500BC and the second to *c*400BC but with little sign of activity thereafter (Woodward 1999, 47; Hunter-Mann 1999, 50).

The lack of a visible back to the rampart or any sign of a ditch on the east side of the fort is a curiosity of the site. However, it is clear that the 'missing' rampart reflects modification, probably in the 18th century, because Hunter-Mann's Trench B found evidence for a rampart, probably of two phases as on the western side, and an internal quarry ditch (1999, 42-3, fig 3). (There are some problems with the detail of the stratigraphic sequence outlined by Hunter-Mann – layers 052 and 026 are conflated but in the section drawing appear to belong to different phases (ibid, 43, fig 3) – but generally the narrative is sound.) Nevertheless, the rampart here seems to have been much slighter than on the west, the first phase no more than 1.0m high internally as originally built, according to the excavator (ibid, 42), though the secondary phase was presumably higher and has been truncated; in this connection it is worth noting the OS record that the eastern rampart at the extreme southern end of the site survived to a height of 1.4m internally in 1969. The lack of evidence for an external ditch is also notable (though this too might be due entirely to later works), raising questions about the purpose of the site. It has been noted that Oldbury, the closest hillfort to the megalithic monuments at Avebury, presents a symmetrical array of massive ramparts towards the constellation of Neolithic monuments while the other sides are defended only by relatively cursory earthworks (Bowden 2004, 16). Vespasian's Camp also presents its most substantial, and remarkably straight, ramparts towards Stonehenge. This adds to the corpus of (largely negative) evidence concerning Iron Age attitudes to megalithic monuments (e.g. Bowden *et al* 2015, 76-9). Stonehenge, it should be noted, is not visible from any part of Vespasian's Camp because of the intervening higher ground of Coneybury Hill and King Barrow Ridge (ibid, fig 6.7). By the same token the barrows on King Barrow Ridge are very prominent (or would be if not masked by trees), nailing the horizon when viewed from the fort.

Medieval and early post-medieval cultivation

A long period of agricultural use in the medieval and post-medieval periods has ensured that no traces of Iron Age activity survive visibly within the fort, though at least one barrow mound was spared. The cultivation itself has left little visible trace except the slight lynchets (**20** and **21**) but Hunter-Mann's Trench B revealed a thick layer (009) of medieval plough wash against the back of the phase 2 rampart and his Trench C, according to the published account, uncovered grooves in the natural chalk surface that were interpreted as plough marks (1999, 43, fig 3). The archive reveals that there were also natural features, probably root holes, and that the 'grooves' were substantial features one of which was actually a west-facing scarp, 0.3-0.4m deep, in the chalk surface – the base of a negative lynchet (SBYWM.2005.82).

In 1921 some features were revealed during the digging of a cess pit behind the houses within the hillfort and the cutting of a new entrance for a house further down Stonehenge Road to the east; at the same time surface indications of

earthworks were noted on the north side of Stonehenge Road and at the sharp bend in the road to West Amesbury near the south-western corner of the fort (WM.MSS.2674, 49 and 49a). The earthworks on the north side of Stonehenge Road are the hollow way (**4**) while the others appear, from the surviving sketches, to be probably traces of ridge-and-furrow.

There is some correlation between the plot boundaries shown on Flitcroft's map of 1726 and the lynchets and related features surveyed on the ground or visible in the lidar data (Fig 11). The lynchet found in Hunter-Mann's Trench C might also be one of these boundaries.

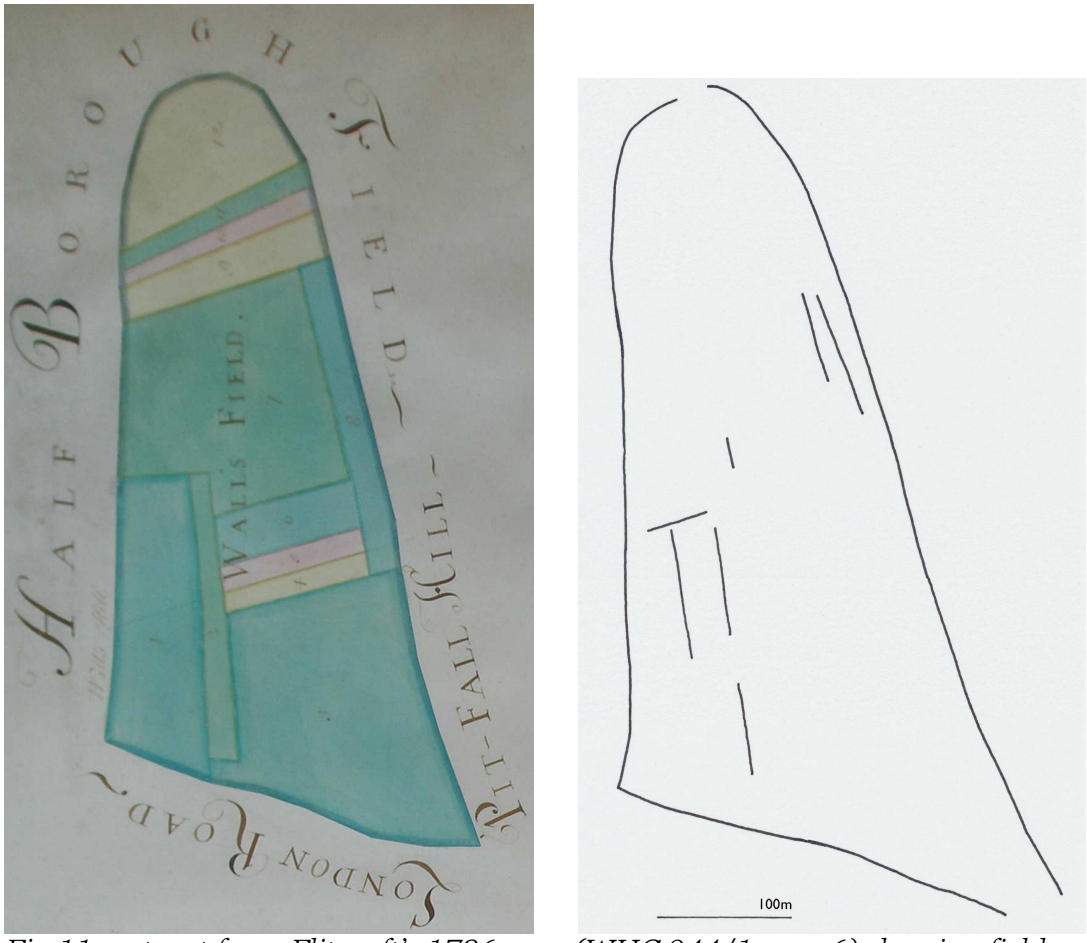

Fig 11: extract from Flitcroft's 1726 map (WHC 944/1 map 6) showing field boundaries within the hillfort, compared with lynchets recorded on the ground or in the lidar data, 2016

Emparkment

The mid-18th-century landscaping, by Charles Bridgman for the Duchess of Queensberry, was the last major episode of change on the site (Bowden *et al* 2015, 96-9; Haynes 2012; 2013). The circular platform, the mutilated barrow and, of course, Gay's Cave and its attendant paths are all well recorded. The square platform, the scarps below the round platform and the modifications to the rampart, north entrance and counterscarp, which might include the total levelling of the rampart all along the eastern side of the fort, were recorded in part by Haynes

(2012, 18ff, map 9; 2013, fig 2) and have been newly surveyed here. The possible garden earthworks close to the Chinese House also appear to be a new discovery but they may be evidence of later landscaping – in the late 18th or 19th century. A water garden was created when the Chinese House was restored in 1986-7 (Amesbury Abbey List Entry Description 1000469) but this was on the east bank of the river. There is an open question as to the extent to which Bridgeman's proposals for the garden were carried out. He had almost certainly been involved at Amesbury since at least 1730, though probably on the east side of the river – the Duke and Duchess did not acquire all the land to the west until after Bridgeman's death in 1738, which is also the date of his plan for the park (Haynes 2013, 163). The circular and square platforms, the rising terraces, Gay's Cave and the Diamond were all created, though not necessarily all precisely as shown on Bridgeman's plan (ibid, fig 1). There is a suggestion that the bastion or rondpoint at the eastern extremity of the hillfort (**14**) was begun, or at least that some landscaping took place there. However, the state of the earthworks, especially the two platforms and the rising terraces, suggest either that the design for these features was left unfinished or that they were later 'degraded' (ibid, 161). The latter interpretation finds support from the account by Lady Sophia Newdigate in about 1747 that 'there is a high hill in the Garden in a very stiff formal taste at present but going to be altered' (quoted by Haynes ibid). The earthworks of the rising terraces in their current state would bear the interpretation either that they are works abandoned in the course of construction or that they have had their rigid right-angles smoothed at a later date. Other aspects of Bridgeman's design, such as the southern vista, seem not to have been created, or at least did not take a physical form recognisable today. Later map evidence shows that a 'softened' version of Bridgeman's design did exist in the later 18th and 19th centuries (e.g. Andrews and Dury 1773; Hoare 1812, opp 128; early OS editions; *and see* Fig 3).

Another aspect of the 18th-century landscaping is the possibility that the eastern rampart of the hillfort was levelled along almost its entire length at this time. The evidence of Hunter-Mann's Trench B is that the thick ploughsoil (009) was overlain by a thin layer of silty loam with chalk flecks (052) separating it from a further thick deposit of loam (006) which he interpreted as further ploughsoil. An alternative interpretation is that this soil is a deliberate deposit levelling up the interior of the fort to the crest of the surviving rampart, which may also have been reduced at the same time, to create a carriage drive along the dramatic edge of the fort, as part of the garden design; such a major task would certainly be within the scope of Bridgeman's ambition, as he was renowned for his extensive earth moving (Haynes 2013, 157-8). The only dating evidence from layer 006 is a sherd of glazed earthenware, possibly of Crockerton type (Mepham 1999, 48); the date range of this pottery stretches from *c*1600 for over 250 years (Lorraine Mepham pers comm), so this does not resolve the issue of whether this soil is the result of pre-1742 ploughing or post-1742 gardening. On balance it seems likely that it is part of the landscaping, as the ramparts were in the sight line of the house from the round and square platforms and adjacent carriage drives (Sue Haynes pers comm). This would also fit with Richard Colt Hoare's statement that the rampart had been 'much mutilated on the east side in forming the pleasure grounds of Amesbury park' (1812, 160). It also receives support from the fact that to the south of the road, which was not part of the Queensberry property, the rampart survived until the mid-20th century.

The central axis of Bridgeman's design, running through Gay's Cave and the rising terraces to the building on the circular platform now also passes through the centre of the garden front of the house. However, as originally conceived it passed to the north of the then-existing 17th-century house; the house re-built in 1824 was shifted slightly to the north from the original footprint.

20th-century developments

The part of the hillfort south of the road remained a single open field until the beginning of the 20th century. In the period before the Second World War the northern section adjacent to Stonehenge Road was divided into plots and several of them were developed, beginning with a scatter of modest buildings towards the eastern end and centre of the fort. By 1939 there were twelve houses within the fort, including Sky House and the building that is now the Mandalay Guest House; there had also been some re-arrangement of boundaries, with several properties at the eastern end of the site extending back to the river. After the War there was some further development and re-building of existing houses on new footprints. Development included the insertion of two new houses on former back gardens and another outside the south-western corner of the fort. As noted above, a section of the eastern rampart has been virtually levelled since 1969.

In the early 1970s the construction of the new A303 Amesbury by-pass resulted in the excavation of a massive cutting immediately outside the northern entrance of the hillfort, altering the landscape significantly.

These developments have resulted in surprisingly few archaeological discoveries but that may reflect the fact that much of the work was done without any archaeological overview. In 1968 Major and Mrs Vatcher undertook a watching brief on behalf of the Ministry of Works when a new bungalow (13 Stonehenge Road) was built, replacing an earlier building, close to the inside of the eastern rampart; the following year they watched the construction of the new accommodation track along the western edge of the fort but found nothing; again in 1971 they had a watching brief when 16A Stonehenge Road was built (SBYWM.1996R.517). The Vatchers were also responsible for archaeological oversight of the A303 cutting where they recorded a Neolithic pit somewhere on the ridge (Richards 1990, 66) but apparently nothing else near the hillfort. A watching brief was undertaken in 1997 when a new garage was built at Hunters Hill outside the south-western corner of the fort (Wessex Archaeology 1997). Few of these opportunities resulted in any significant discoveries but they represent only a small proportion of the ground disturbances that have taken place. The Vatchers recorded their frustration in a letter to the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in 1969: 'One is continually trying to do all one can to preserve our monuments, and it is heartrending that it is such a losing battle' (SBYWM.1996R.517.b.2). As noted above, English Heritage (EH) attempted in 1995 to extend the Scheduled area to protect the whole of the fort but the move proved controversial and EH attempted to back up its argument with a geophysical survey; when this proved largely negative (Cole 1995) EH not only withdrew the proposal but agreed to a reduction in the Scheduled area, despite the lack of corroboration from other techniques and the maxim that 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence' (Canham 1996, 18).

One architectural curiosity is the small cob-and-thatch outbuilding that fronts the road at 1 Sky Meadows. Though it has an appearance of antiquity, map evidence suggests that it was not built before 1919, when it was in the corner of the property belonging to Sky House. Sky House itself has a date stone of 1925 on the rear elevation.

Condition

The monument is generally in good condition though there is very extensive damage from badger setts, especially near the north entrance. Tree throws have undoubtedly caused some minor damage and there is potential for further damage as the mature or veteran trees, especially those planted on the ramparts, reach the end of their natural lives; several of these trees have already been felled, avoiding any disruption to the earthworks. A dense planting of box obscures the earthworks in some areas; a photograph taken in 1987 indicates that there was much less box at the northern entrance than there is today (SBYWM.2005.82, VCP87 2.28). Other areas are obscured by thick ground cover.

To the south of the road the threats are different; considerable development has taken place during the 20th century and building has been permitted up to a very recent time. An area around the building line has been excluded from the Scheduled area of the monument since 1995. The eastern rampart has been levelled for a distance of 75m north of (15) since 1969 but the damage appears to have been done soon after that date.

METHODOLOGY

The dense woodland cover precluded the use of Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) for surveying, except that five control points were fixed by Trimble R8 survey-grade GNSS receiver in open areas to north and south of the site to tie the survey into the National Grid. Survey control was established by Trimble 5600 total station theodolite to create a closed traverse, two linked traverses and three spur traverses totalling 84 stations, marked by wooden pegs. Detail control points supplied from the stations were temporarily marked by plastic pegs and nails. All detail to the south of the road was supplied as part of the control survey in one job, to minimise disruption to the individual owners. Detail survey over the remainder of the site was undertaken as a separate task and completed by tape-and-offset and by plane tabling with a Wild RK1 self-reducing alidade.

APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO 'THE WALLS'

The earliest surviving mention of The Walls is in a lease of 21st May 1397 which refers to an acre in 'Litellowalles' and also to 'la Dene by Walledych',an acre in 'Muchelewalles', 'Walyate' and 'lez Walles' and a small drove of pasture '½ac by Broukforlong, ½ac in the end of the walls' (Pugh 1947, 15). A document of 15th January 1428 mentions 'Lytillwalles', 'le Gretwalles', half an acre 'at Gretewalles called Hedehalve by the cross', an acre 'called Boroweacr upon Gretewalles', and half an acre 'called Hedehalve by Clyve at Gretwalles extending to the cross' (ibid, 18-19). On 3rd February 1479 a lease referred to an acre 'within Litylwallys', 7 acres 'in la Denne ... by Waldyche', 'also on Mochewall 1 ac by itself; also in the middle of Mochelwallys 5 ac lie together ..... also by Walleate 1 ac by itself; also under les Wallys 1 large ac called le Whyte Acre otherwise Geredacr ;..... also one small drove of pasture ... in the end of the walls by Brokfurlong' (ibid, 30). A document of September 1502 referring to the lands of the 'late Thomas Hobbys' mentions parcels 'Upon the litull wallys next the drove land', 'Upon the lytull wallys by twene Bedulles ij acr', 'Upon the same wallys goyng up at the towns end' and then 'Upon the grete wallys lying by Acr Mele', 'j halfe lying in the medyll of the grete walles', 'Upon the gret wallys with in the hyll and Bedulles Acr', 'in Northam furlong acr callyd Whyte showtyng est and west up to the wallys', 'Upon the gret walle within the hill', 'Upon the gret wallys', and 'Upon the lytull wallys' (ibid, 34-6). On 19th January 1614 Sir Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, leased to his servant Henry Alexander 4 acres including two parcels 'lying upon a place in a field of Amesbury called The Walles' (ibid, xxviii, 99). On 29th November 1621 Robert Newdyk transferred West Amesbury manor to his brother-in-law Sylas Tyto, including land 'in Great Walles' and 'Litle Walles' (ibid, xvi-xix, 109).

Pugh was cautious about identifying the 'walls', stating that 'it must be left to the prehistorians to pronounce which (if any) of the surviving enclosures the phrases denote' and noting that the Stonehenge Avenue, Vespasian's Camp and both cursus monuments lay within Amesbury parish while Ogbury and Durrington Walls were only just outside (ibid, xxxi). The RCHME were in no doubt that Vespasian's Camp was the correct identification because the part of the fort to the north of the road is named 'Walls Field' on Flitcroft's map of 1726 (1979, 22; WHC 944/1 and 2, map 6; *see* Fig 11) and is also named as such by Stukeley – 'overagainst it [Amesbury Abbey] on this side of the River is a large & strong Roman camp calld the Walls' (Burl and Mortimer 2005, 27). In any case Vespasian's Camp seems by far the most likely candidate, with Durrington Walls (also with a road running through it dividing it into unequal parts) being the only other possible contender, if it were part of the Amesbury manors.

This collection of documents all relate to the Amesbury Priory estate but that estate had been formed out of four separate manors and other properties (Pugh 1947, vii). The 1614 document relates to the manors of Amesbury Earls and Amesbury Priors; most of the others apparently relate to the little-understood manor of Souths and to West Amesbury (ibid, viii-xxii). One document, the 1479 lease, cannot be assigned to any of the manors definitely (ibid, xxii) but it seems to refer, in part at least, to the same parcels of land as the 1397 lease.

The acreages involved in all these deeds are not large but of course they only represent some of the holdings within and around The Walls. There is close

agreement between the documents of 1502 and 1621, which involve the largest figures for acreages within The Walls: in 1502, 5acres are specified and another 2acres can be inferred in Little Walls and 8.5acres with another 1 acre inferred in Great Walls; in 1621, 4.5 acres are mentioned in Little Walls and 8.5acres in Great Walls. By modern measurement the total internal acreages of Little Walls and Great Walls (excluding the road) are 7.6acres and 26.2acres respectively (3.1ha and 10.6ha).

The division into Little Walls and Great Walls as early as 1397 implies the presence of the road through the site by that date. The 'wall gate' might also refer to that road, rather than to an entrance. This road, now Stonehenge Road, was previously known as London Road (*see* Fig 11). The mention of a cross in 1428 is interesting; it may not be too speculative to suggest that this might have stood somewhere alongside the road, as a counterpoint to the cross that stood beside the Winterbourne Stoke crossroads at the other side of Stonehenge Down. The 'drove of pasture', which seems to have been about half an acre, was at the end of the fort but which end is not specified, though it was next to Brouk furlong or Brok furlong. The latter name perhaps relates to 'Half Borough Field' on Flitcroft's map (*see* Fig 11), with 'Borough' referring to the hillfort. The reference to 'Boroweacr' in 1428 may also be a direct reference to the hillfort.

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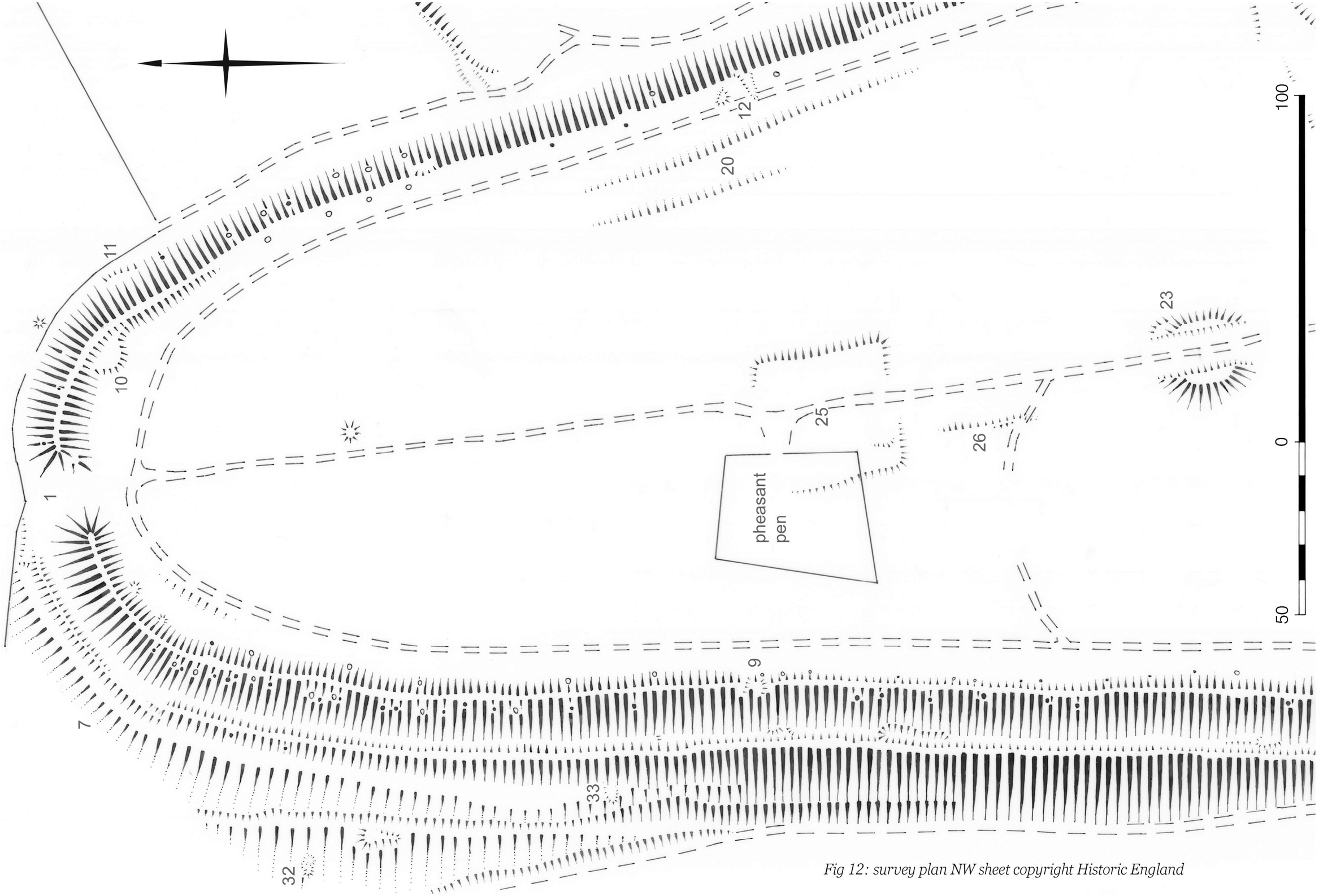

Fig 12: survey plan NW sheet copyright Historic England

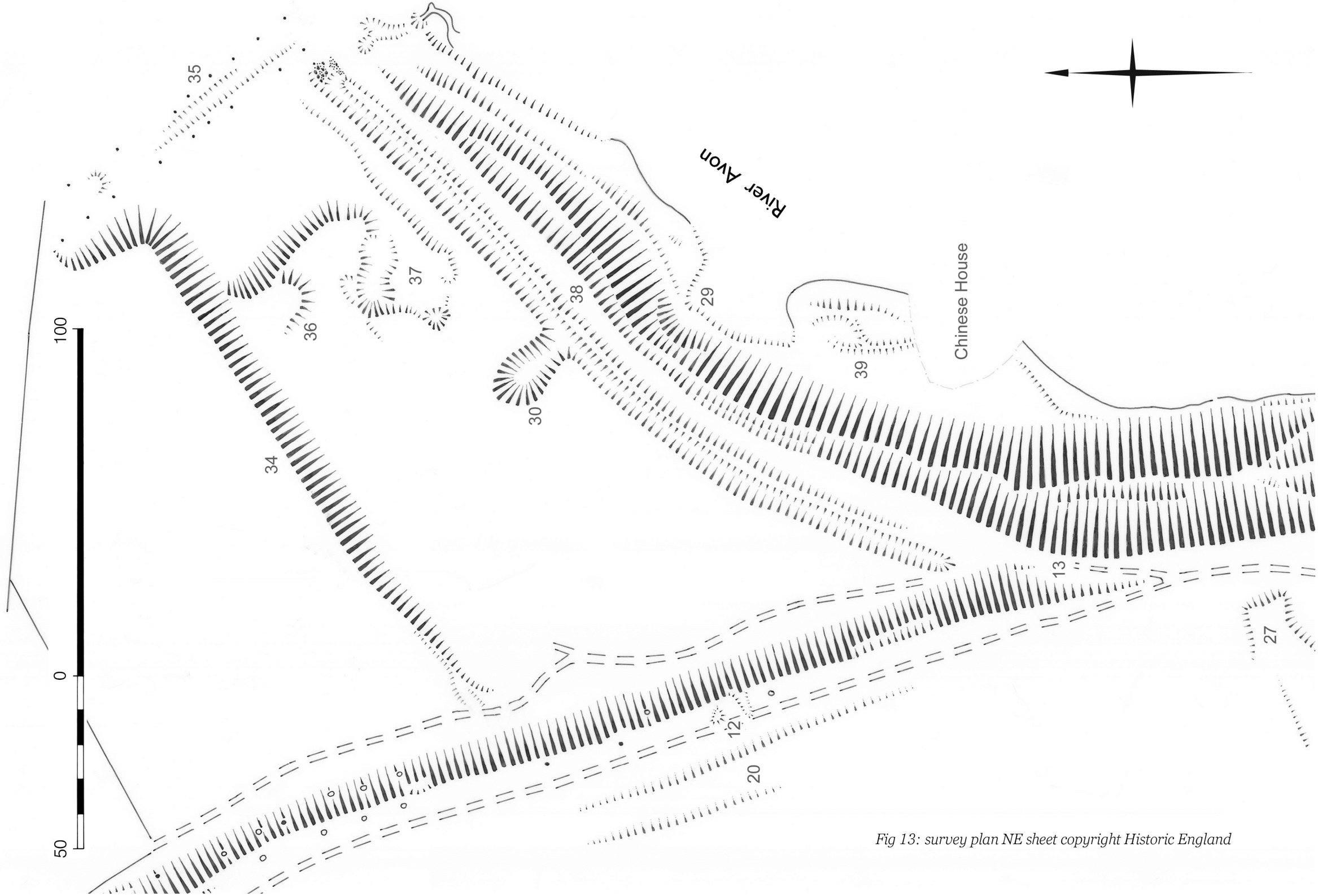

Fig 13: survey plan NE sheet copyright Historic England

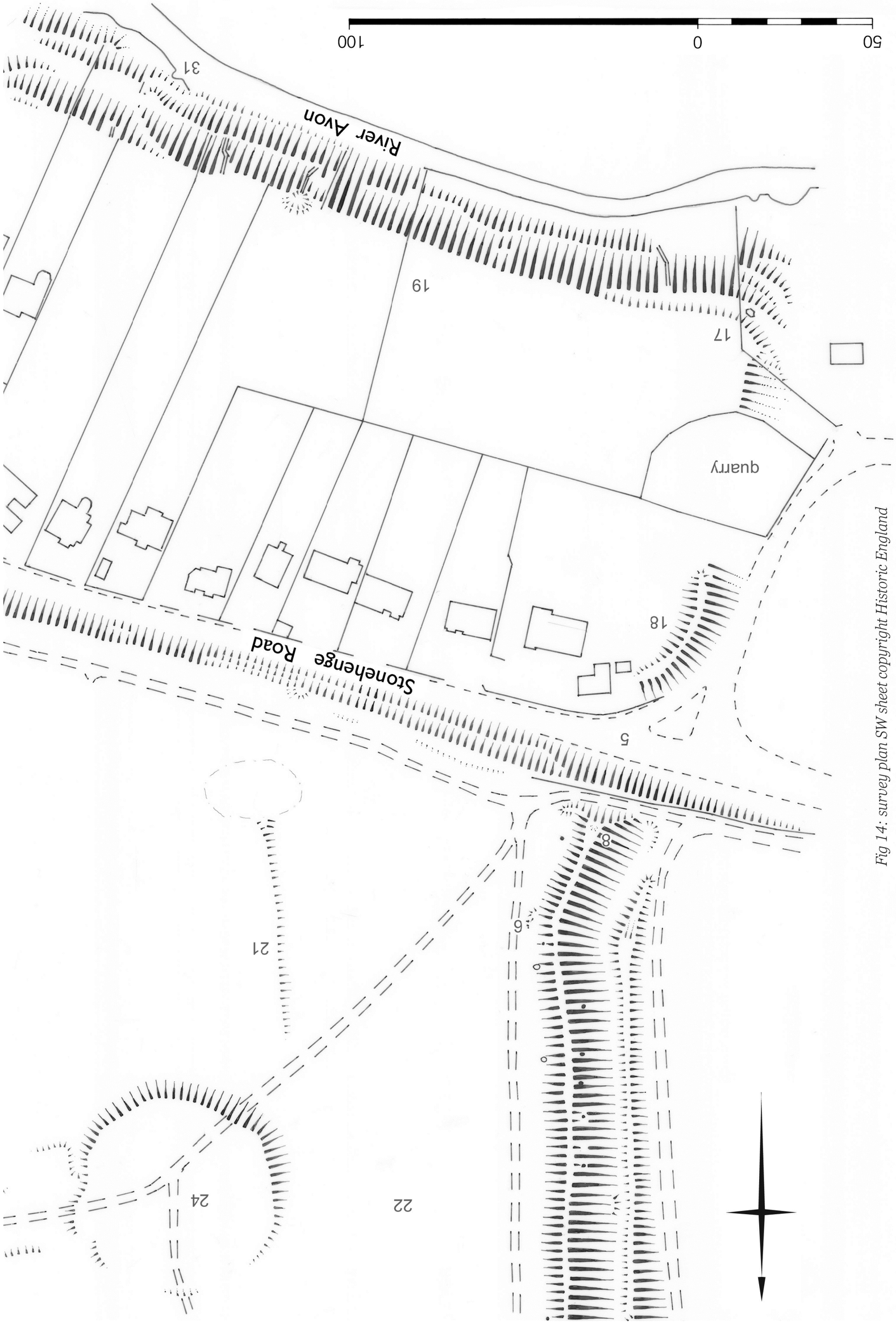

Fig 14: survey plan SW sheet copyright Historic England

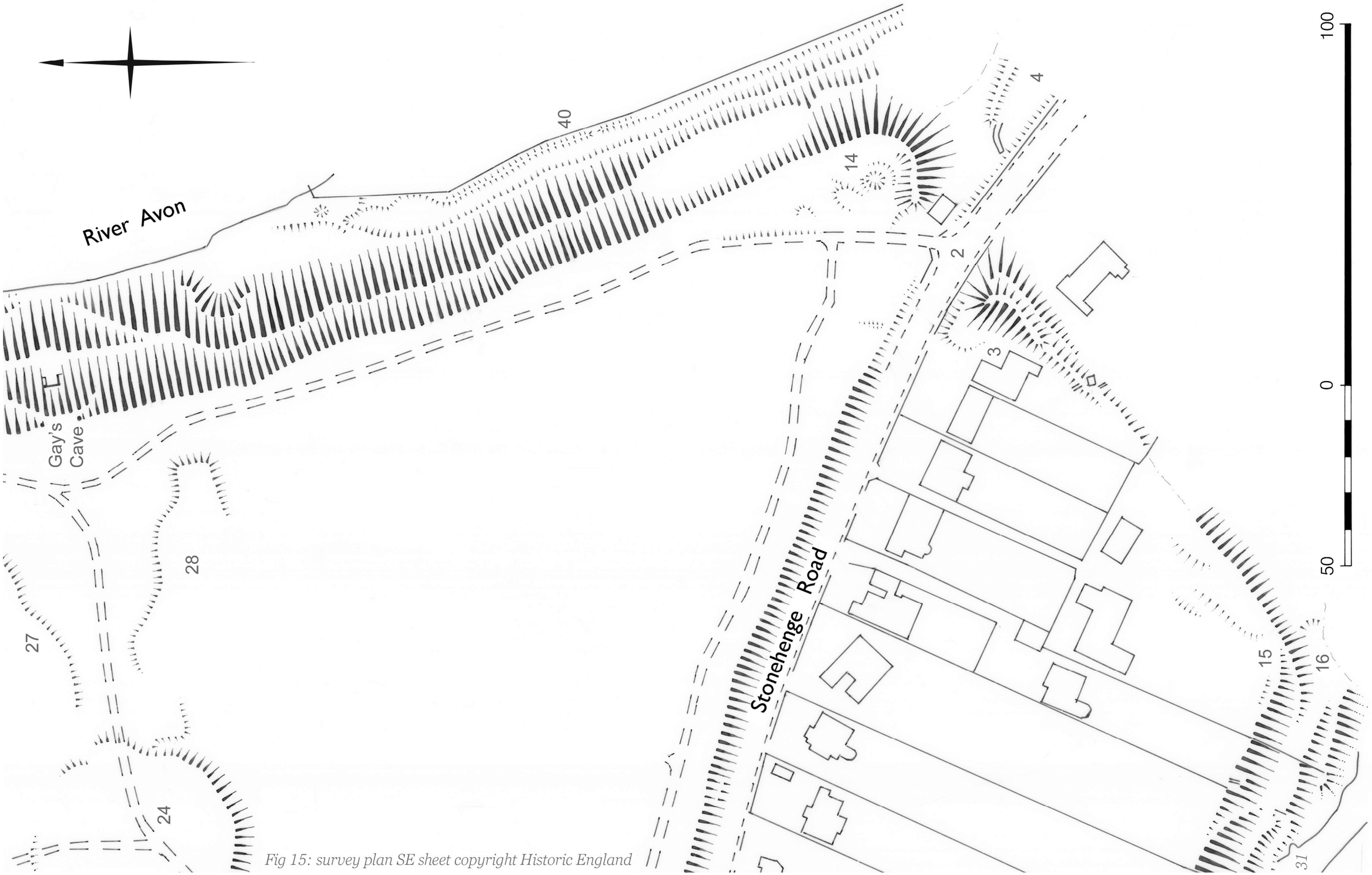

Fig 15: survey plan SE sheet copyright Historic England

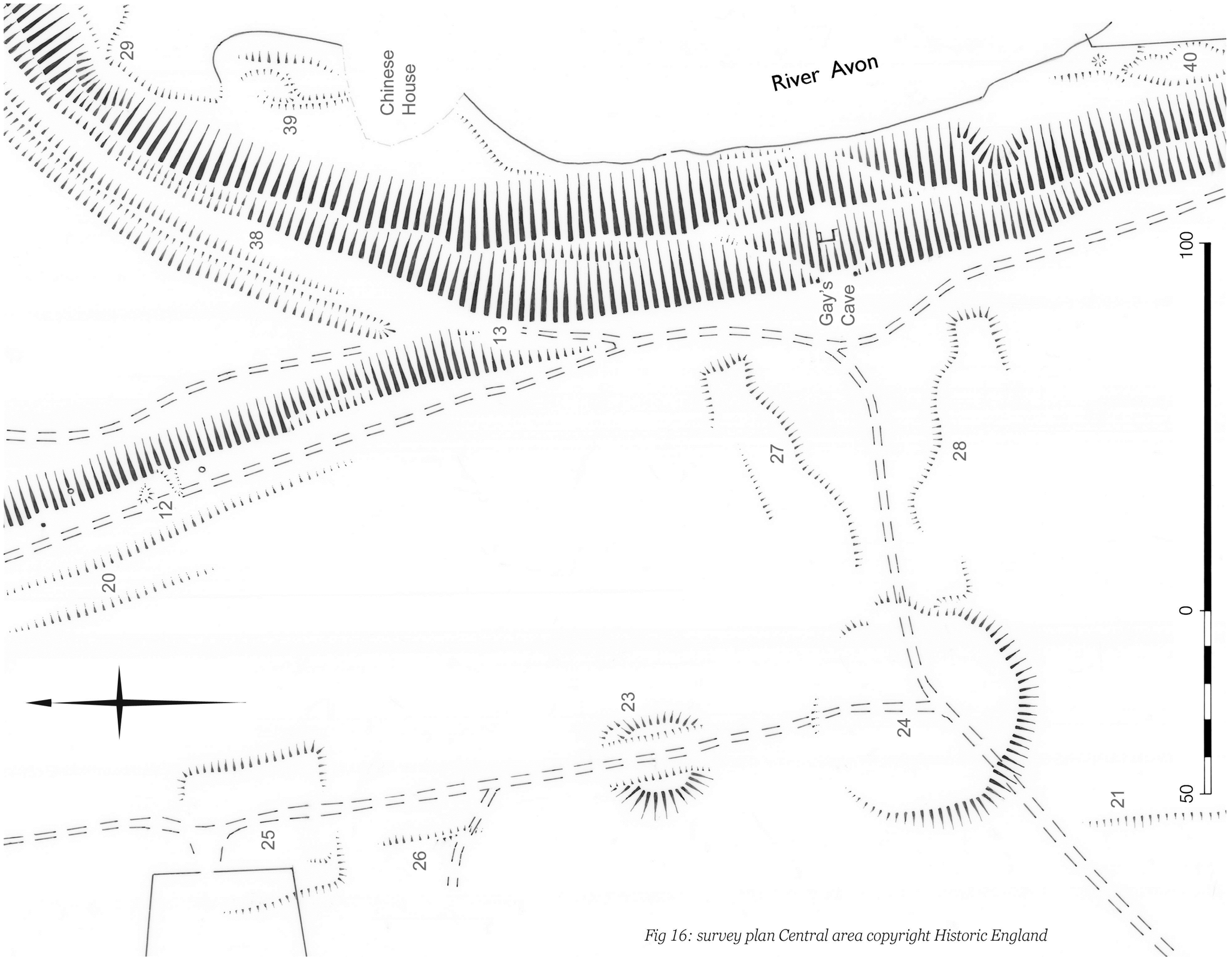

Fig 16: survey plan Central area copyright Historic England

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ISSN 2398-3841 (Print)
ISSN 2059-4453 (Online)