



Historic England

Bulldown Camp, Bramley, Hampshire: Analytical Earthwork Survey

Olaf Bayer

Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment



Bulldown Camp, Bramley, Hampshire: analytical earthwork survey

Olaf Bayer

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Cover image: Bullsdown Camp from the south-west, 7th April 1934.
ANAllen.1066 Major G. W. G. Allen, 'Sherfield, Bulls Down. Iron Age multivallate hillfort'
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SUMMARY

A Level 3 analytical earthwork survey of Bullsdown Camp; hillfort, Bramley, Hampshire was undertaken by Historic England as part of the Silchester Environs Project in early 2017. Enclosing an area of 3.4ha, with a total footprint of 7.3ha, and defined by two sets of banks and ditches, Bullsdown Camp is a medium sized, multivallate hillfort. It occupies a slight rise in a locally prominent plateau, and has a broadly level interior. The hillfort's ramparts have an unusual configuration. It is enclosed by a slight inner bank, substantial inner and outer ditches, and a substantial outer counterscarp bank. The inner and outer ditches are separated by a berm up to 8m wide on which is a slight and intermittent inner counterscarp bank and a more continuous outer bank. The ramparts are well preserved on the eastern and southern sides of the hillfort, have been partially levelled on the western side, and have been flattened on its northern edge. Two possible original entrances were recorded on the hillfort's north-west and north-east sides. A number of other breaches in the ramparts are considered to be post-medieval in date. No surface traces of Iron Age activity were recorded in the interior of the hillfort.

A curving boundary linking the hillfort to Bullsdown Copse 200m to the south may be associated with a medieval deer park. Several woodland banks and boundary ditches of presumed post-medieval date were recorded overlying or cut into the hillfort's ramparts. Two early 20th century trackways were recorded in hillfort's interior. Two small brick buildings to the north of the hillfort probably date to the Second World War.

CONTRIBUTORS

Survey was undertaken between January and February 2017 (with a brief visit in April 2017) by Olaf Bayer, Mark Bowden and Sharon Soutar of Historic England with the assistance of Daniel Wheeler and Kryisia Truscoe (staff, University of Reading), and Leah McKay and Thomas Mills (students, University of Reading), and Steve Craig (student at Oxford University Department for Continuing Education). All photographs and illustrations were taken/prepared by Olaf Bayer. Mark Bowden commented on, and made several additions to, the final text.

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Jan-Feb 2017

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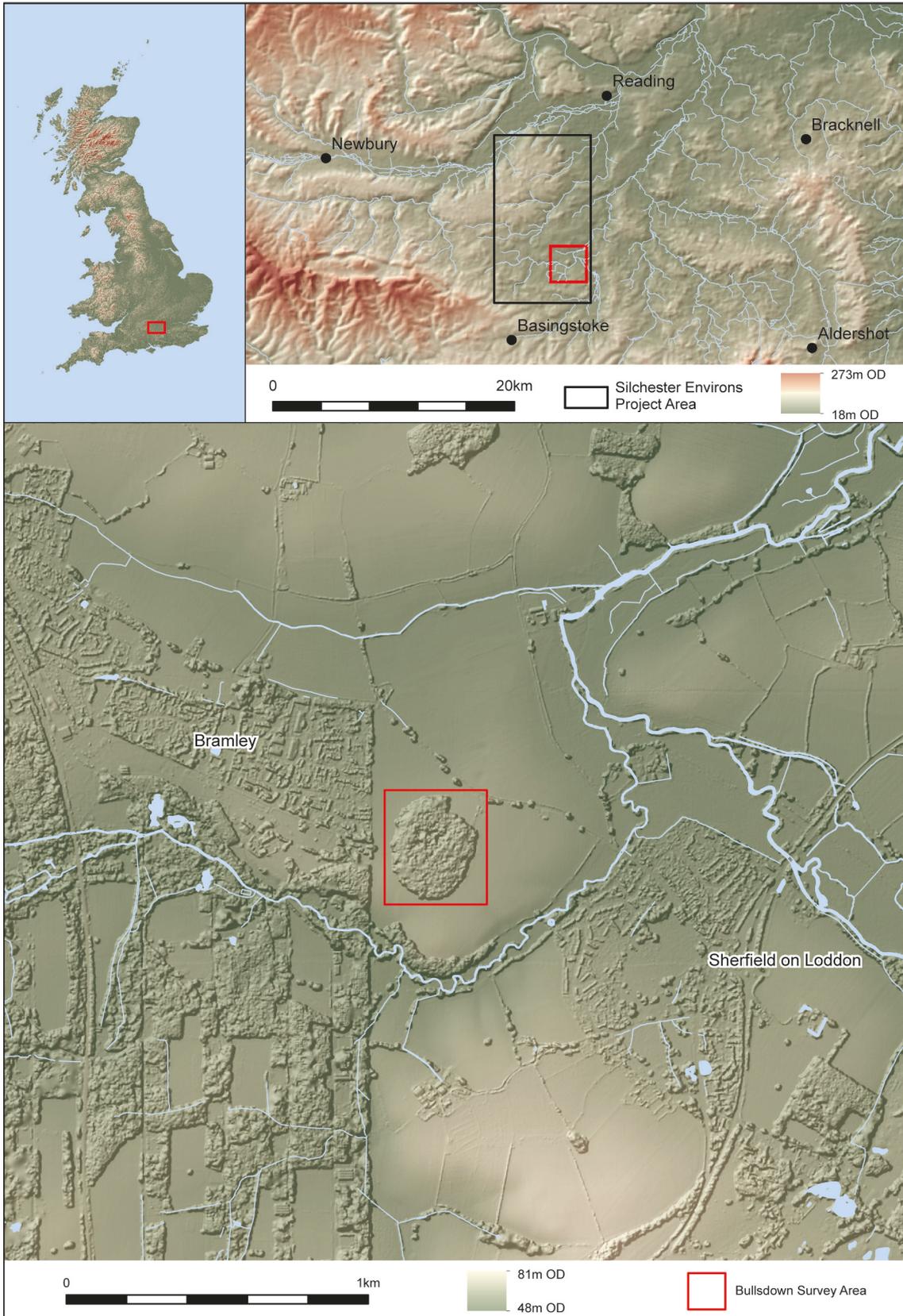


Figure 1: Bullsdown Camp location. Contains digital surface model data derived from 90m SRTM topography data courtesy of CGIAR <http://srtm.csi.cgiar.org>; and 2m photogrammetry ©Bluesky International Ltd; Getmapping PLC. Rivers data derived from OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900.

INTRODUCTION

Survey context

A Level 3 analytical earthwork survey (Historic England 2017) of Bullsdown Camp (NRHE number 240247; List Entry Number 1001944), Bramley, Hampshire was undertaken in January/February 2017 by Historic England's Historic Places Investigation Team (West), with the assistance of staff and students from the University of Reading. The survey was carried out as part of the Silchester Environs Project run by the University of Reading's Department of Archaeology (Barnett and Fulford 2015).



Figure 2: Bullsdown Camp topography. Derived from 1m lidar digital terrain model © Environment Agency copyright/database right 2018. All rights reserved.

Geology, topography and landuse

Centred on SU 671 584, Bullsdown Camp lies at between 60 and 67m OD on a locally prominent plateau. It is surrounded on the southern and eastern sides by the confluence of the Bow Brook with the River Loddon, and is approximately 5km south-east of Calleva (Figs 1 and 2). Solid geology comprises clays, silts and sands of the London Clay Formation (BGS 2018), overlain by loamy clay soils of the Wickham 4 series (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983). The site is currently planted with mature deciduous trees and surrounded by arable fields on all sides (Fig 3).



Figure 3: Bullsdown Camp land use. Contains 1999 25cm vertical aerial photography © Bluesky International Ltd; Getmapping PLC. .

Historic mapping and previous archaeological investigation

Ordnance Survey Surveyors Drawing (1808)

The first cartographic depiction of Bullsdown Camp is on the 1808 Ordnance Survey Surveyor's Drawing for Odiham by Robert Dawson. Due to its small scale, and damage to it, the map is difficult to read, and is therefore not reproduced in this report. The hillfort is depicted as a 'c' shape of woodland overlying the ramparts with a gap in its north-eastern side. No detail of the ramparts is shown. The interior of the hillfort is clear of trees, and it is surrounded by open fields, apart from on its south-western corner where it is joined to a strip of woodland running west towards Bullsdown Farm.



Figure 4: Extract of Ordnance Survey One Inch map (1816-17). © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018). Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

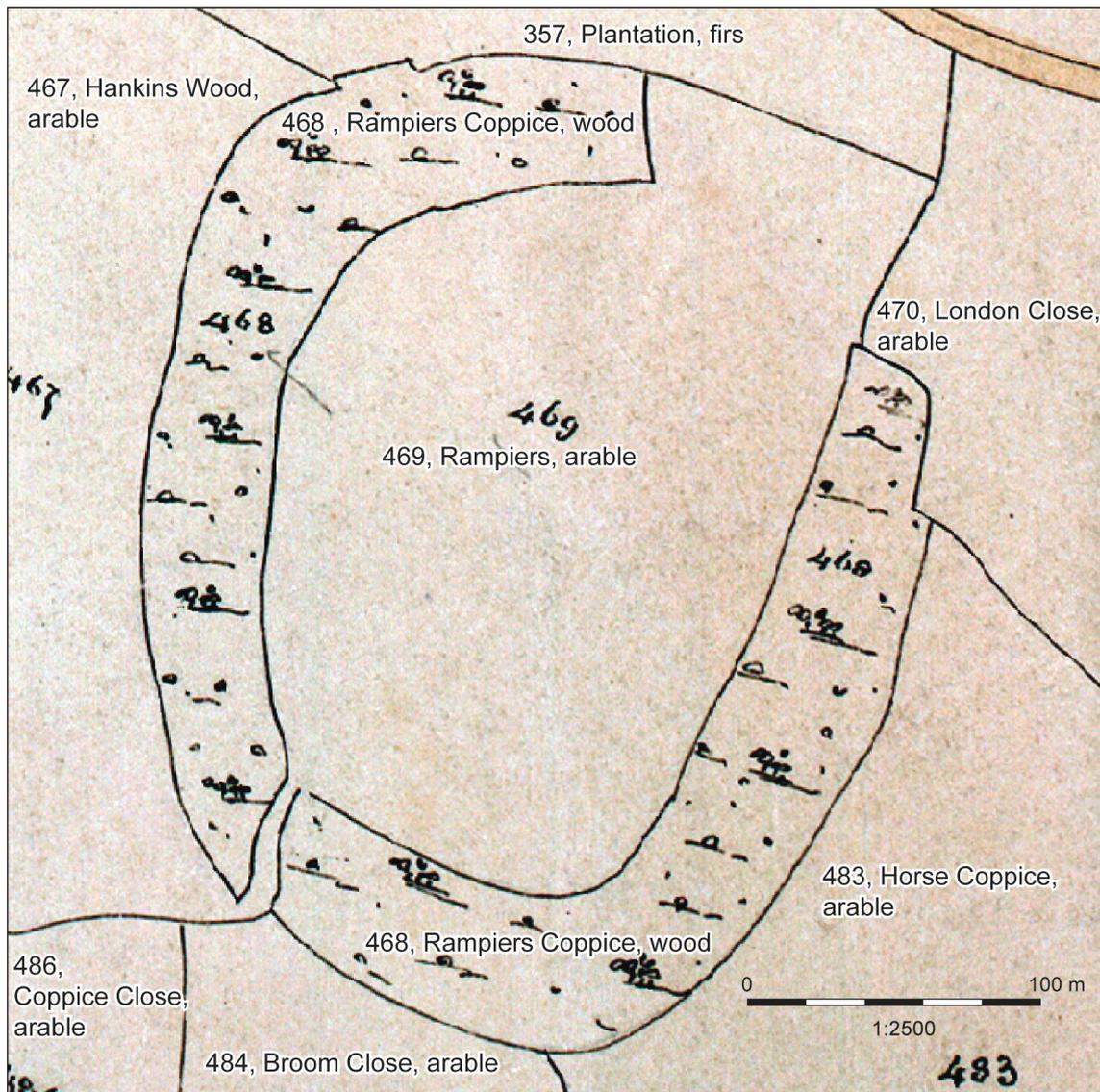


Figure 5: Extract of 1838 Bramley tithe map with additions. Hampshire Record Office: 21M65/F7/31/2.

Ordnance Survey One Inch (1816-17)

The 1816-17 Ordnance Survey One Inch map (Fig 4) shows Bullsdown Camp in the same state as the 1808 Surveyor's Drawing.

Tithe Map (1838)

The 1838 Bramley parish tithe map (Fig 5) shows Bullsdown Camp and its surroundings in greater detail. As the map only shows property boundaries, no detail of the hillfort's earthworks is depicted. As with previous maps the area of the hillfort's ramparts is shown as an oval 'c' shape of woodland, with an open interior and surrounded by open fields. A field boundary closes the north-eastern gap in the hillfort's ramparts, probably reflecting the position of their original outer face. Two further changes from previous mapping are in the south-west corner of the hillfort. Here the ramparts are breached by a trackway linking the interior of the

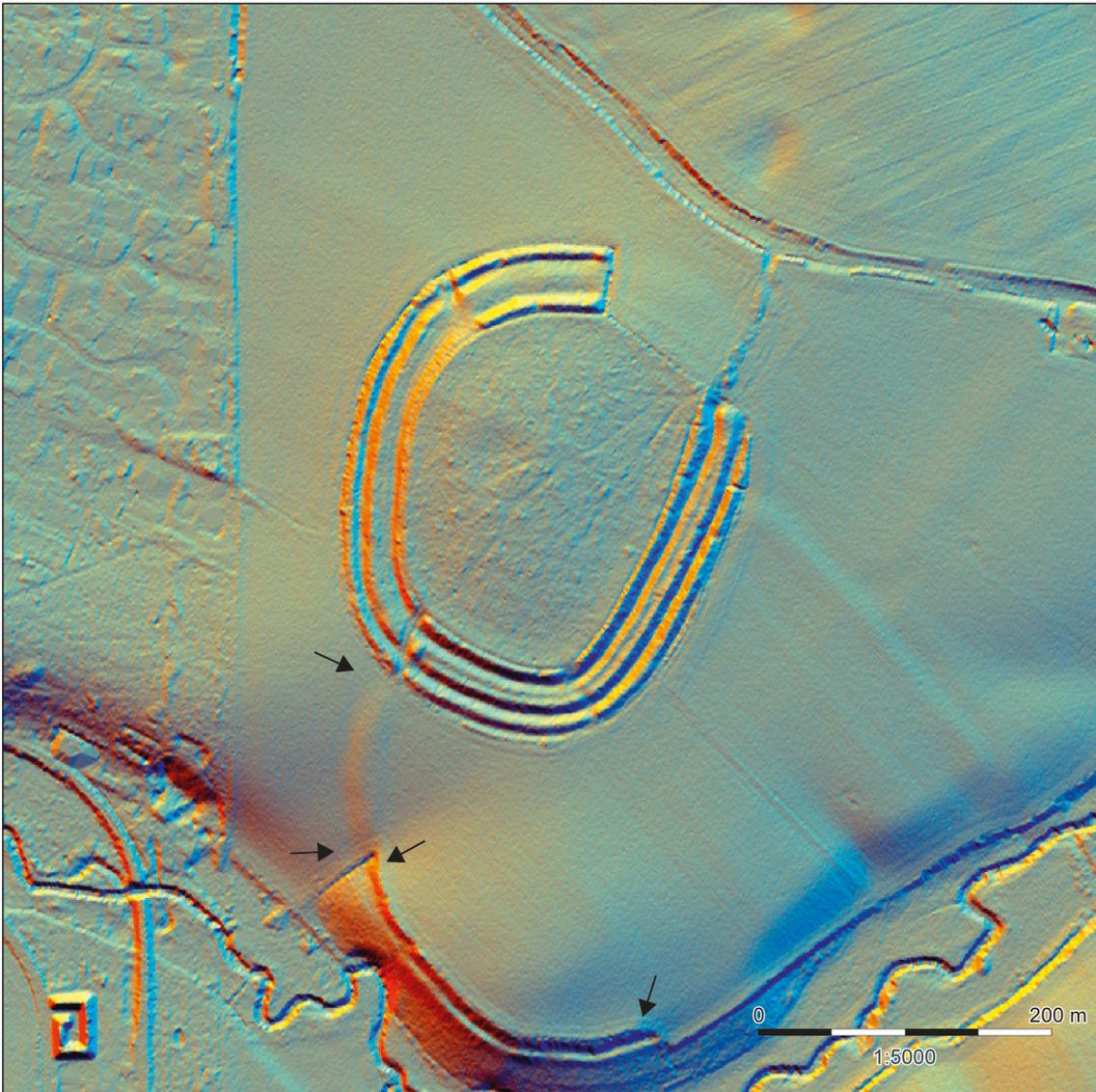


Figure 6: Multi directional hill-shade model showing curvilinear boundary to the south of Bullsdown Camp. Derived from 1m lidar digital terrain model © Environment Agency copyright and/or database right 2018. All rights reserved.

hillfort to the surrounding fields, and the adjoining strip of woodland to the west has been removed.

Although just outside the current survey area, examination of lidar data drew attention to the curving southern and western edges of tithe plot 484 to the south of Bullsdown Camp (Fig 6) which stand out against the pattern of otherwise straight boundaries. Today this boundary survives as a low spread earthwork in the fields to the south of the hillfort (Fig 7), and as a pronounced bank and external ditch within woodland (Bullsdown Copse) overlooking Bow Brook (Fig 8). The origin of this feature remains unclear. No close parallels could be found for hillforts with substantial annexes in central southern Britain. It is therefore considered unlikely to be contemporary with the hillfort. It might possibly relate to ‘Bullesdens’ or (Bullsdown) deer park (Anderson 2004, 13; Bilicowski 1983, 34; Brough 1911, 143,



Figure 7: Curving boundary as a low earthwork under cultivation looking north towards Bullsdown Camp (© Historic England).right 2018. All rights reserved.

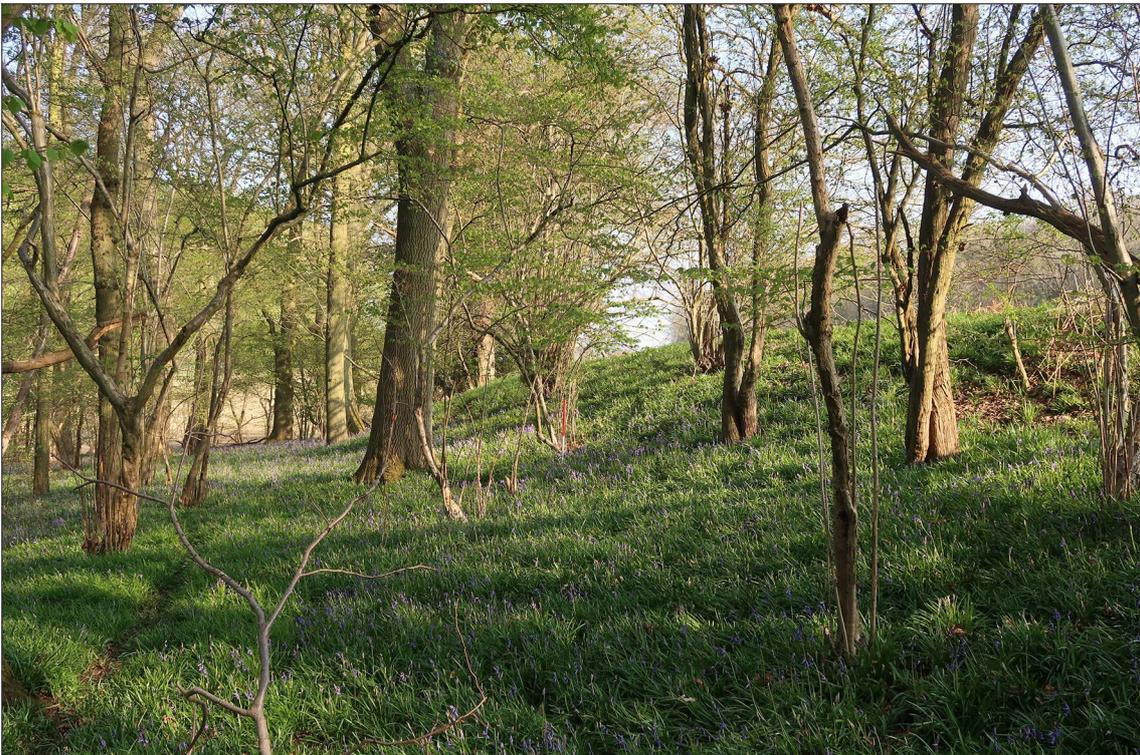


Figure 8: Curving boundary as a pronounced earthwork within Bullsdown Copse to the south of Bullsdown Camp, looking north-west. (© Historic England).

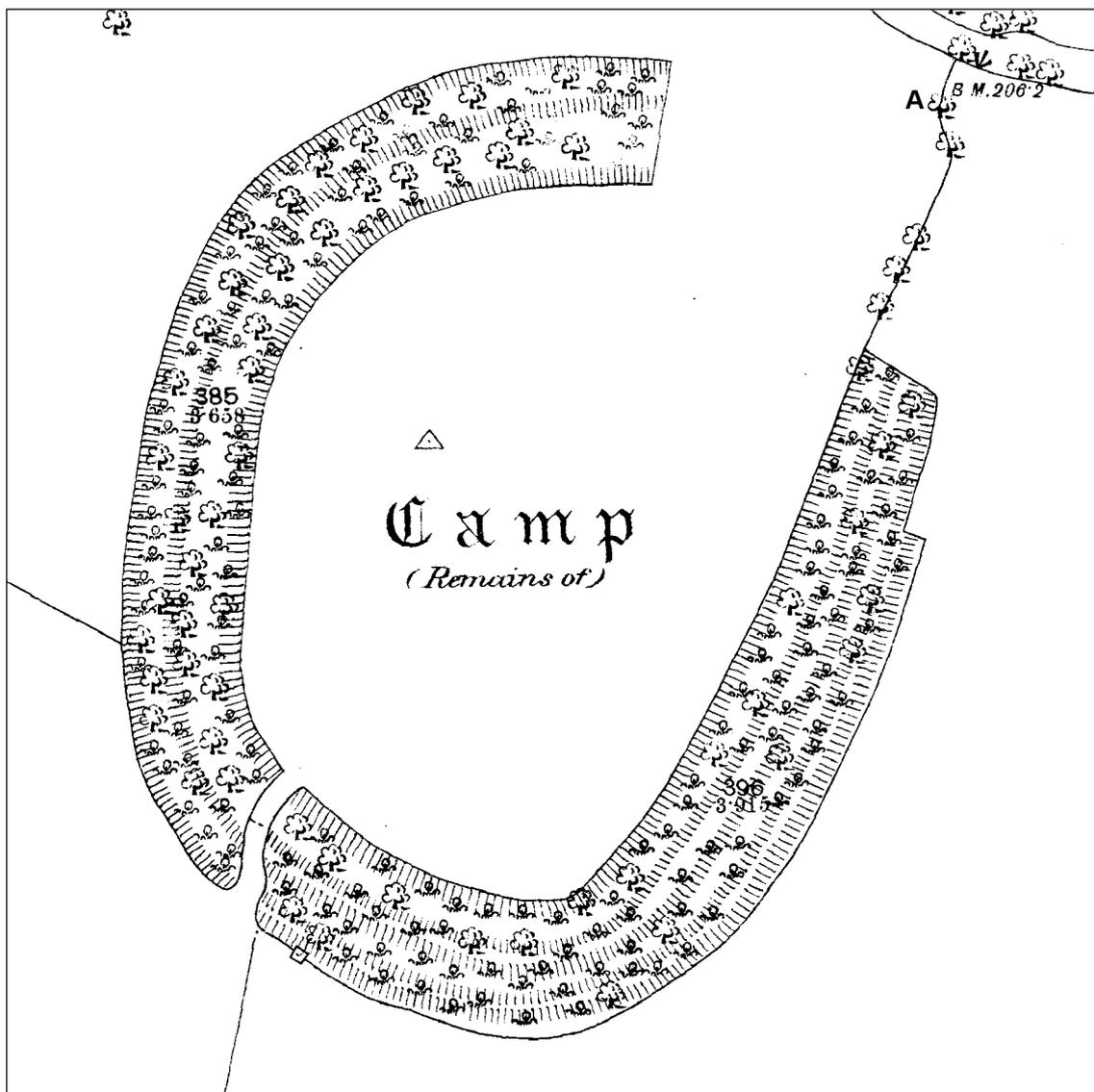


Figure 9: Extract of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping, 1873. © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018). Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.

Truscoe 2017, 131-2); however, its interpretation as a park pale is problematic as the ditch is external to the bank.

Ordnance Survey Six Inch (1873)

Ordnance Survey mapping of 1873 (Fig 9) is the first detailed depiction of Bullsdown's defensive circuit. On the eastern and southern sides an inner ditch, outer ditch and outer bank are shown. This changes on the western side where only the outer face of an inner bank and the outer ditch are shown. Other than the south-western trackway, and the large gap to the north-east, no breaches are shown in the ramparts. The western side of the northern breach is squared off, whereas the eastern side is staggered, first cutting squarely across the inner and outer ditches, with the final cut across the outer bank offset approximately 50m to the south.

The rampart earthworks are tightly bordered by field boundaries. The map shows significant changes to the surrounding fields whose boundaries have been variously removed, straightened and moved since 1838. On the eastern and southern sides of the hillfort the plots 470, 483 and 484 are combined, and the boundary between plots 484 and 486 straightened. On the western side the plot 467 is split in two by the insertion of a new boundary slightly to the south of its former centre line. The southern part of plot 467 is combined with plot 486, and the northern part with plot 357. The only change to the hillfort itself is the removal of the boundary on its

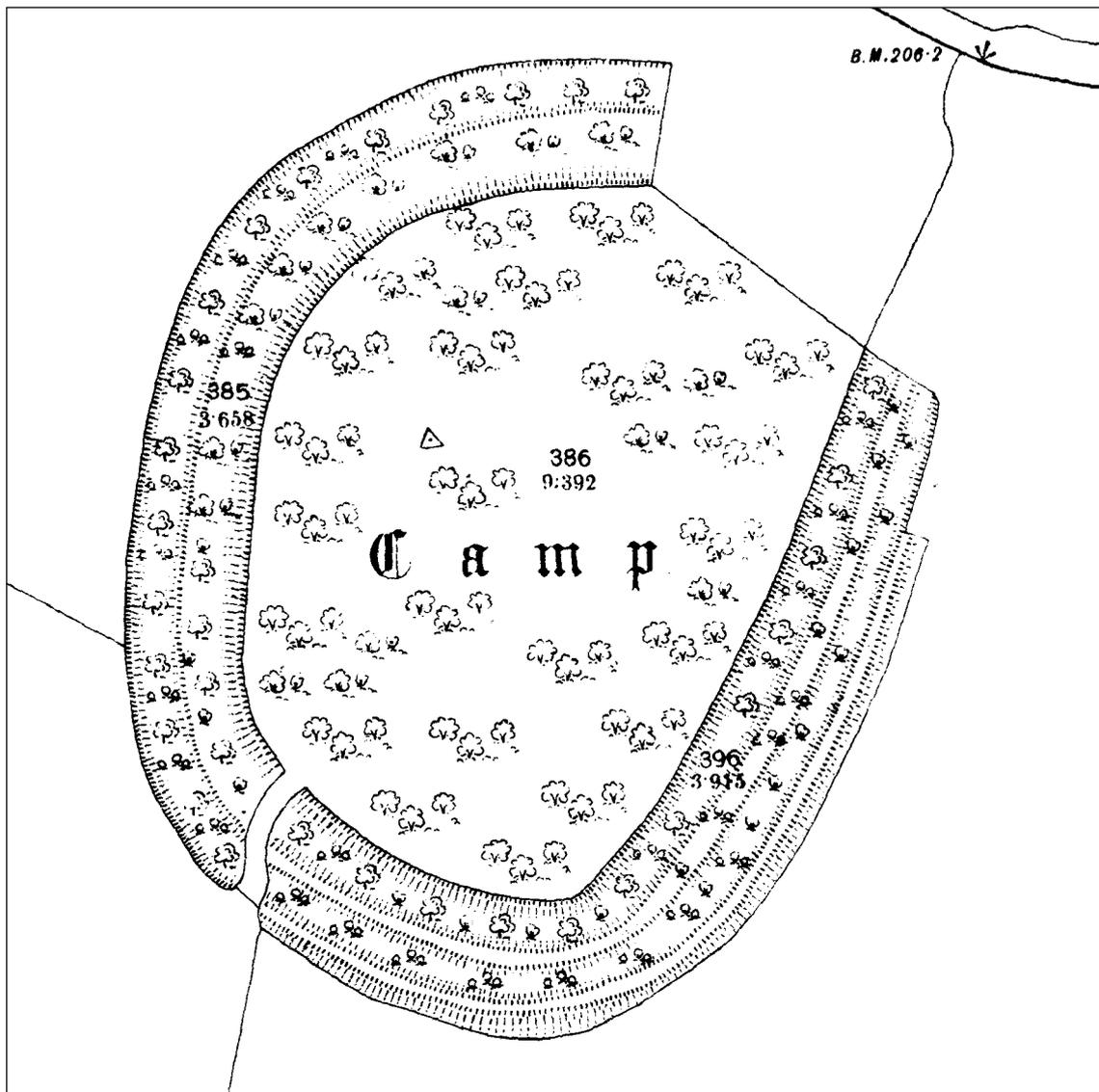


Figure 10: Extract of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping, 1896. © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018). Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.

northern edge, combining plot 357 with the hillfort's interior, plot 469. A pronounced kink (Fig 9 point A) is shown in the boundary running north from the eastern ramparts at its former junction with the now removed northern field boundary, possibly reflecting the original continuation of the ramparts to this point.

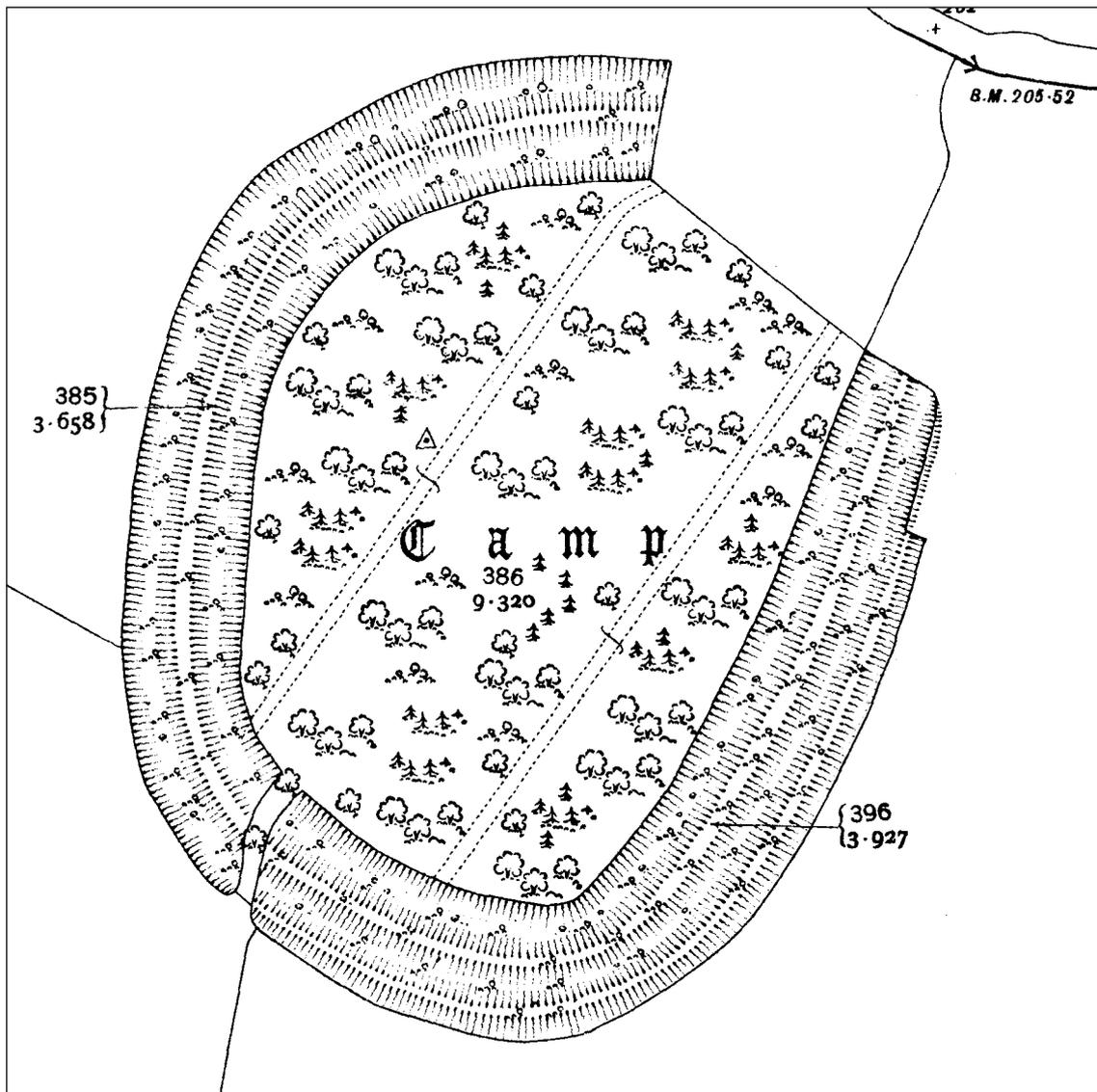


Figure 11: Extract of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping, 1911. © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018). Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.

A survey marker is shown as a triangular symbol slightly to the north-west of the centre of the hillfort. This symbol also appears on the 1896 and 1911 revisions of the six inch mapping, but is absent from all post Second World War 1:2500 mapping. No trace of this marker was found during the current survey.

Ordnance Survey Six Inch (1896)

The depiction of the hillfort remains substantially the same in the 1896 Ordnance Survey mapping (Fig 10). Two changes are the insertion of a field boundary joining the inner edges of the breach in the northern side of the rampart (re-separating the interior of the hillfort from its surrounding fields), and the planting of the interior with deciduous trees.

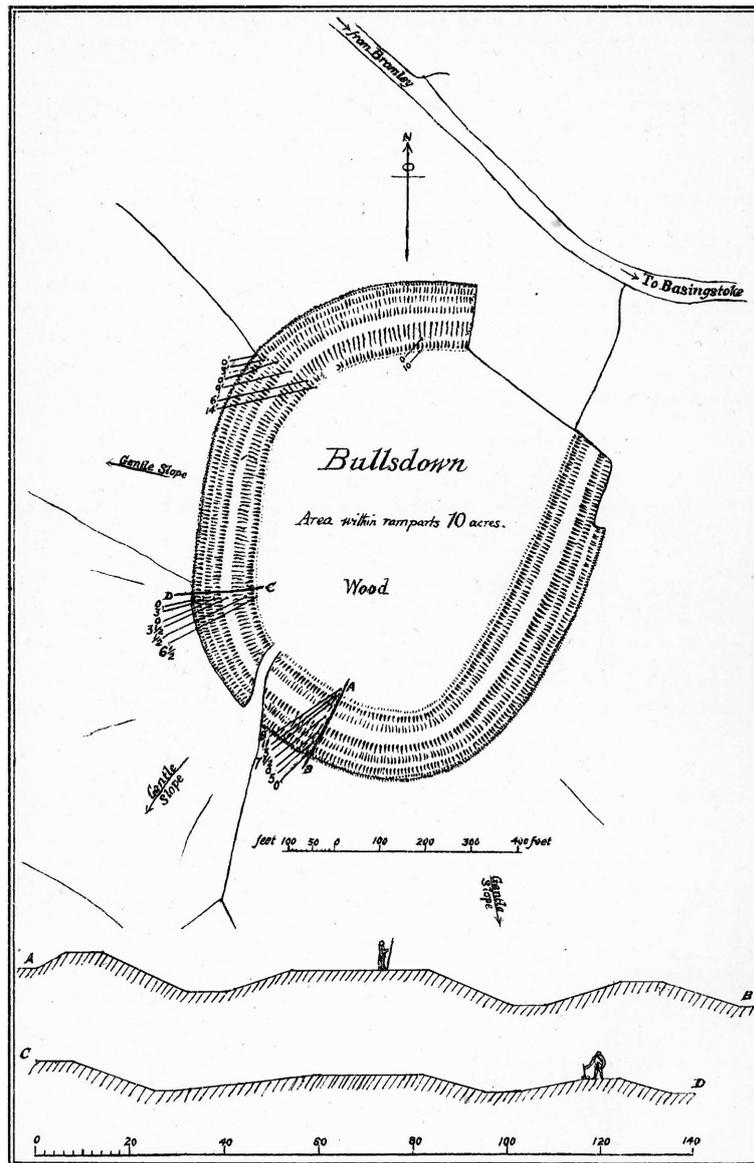


Figure 12: Williams Freeman's 1915 plan of Bullsdown Camp

Ordnance Survey Six Inch (1911)

Two changes are shown on the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1911 (Fig 11). The major change is the insertion of two straight parallel tracks running across the interior of the hillfort from its open north-eastern side, to the back of the inner rampart on the south-western side. In addition to this, a small number of coniferous trees have been planted in its interior.

Williams-Freeman (1915)

Williams-Freeman's surveys consisted of annotation and amendments to existing Ordnance Survey mapping (1915, vii). His survey of Bullsdown (Fig 12) adds substantial detail to previous mapping. His plan shows the entire surviving defensive circuit as consisting of an inner bank, inner ditch, outer ditch, outer bank, and traces of a further narrow outer ditch. Williams-Freeman's plan hints at a breach

in the north-west corner of the rampart, where he shows a gap in the inner bank. He describes this as “*an undefended gap in the valla*” and a possible “*lesser gate*” (1915, 351). He identifies the south-west entrance as “*modern*”, and suggests that the original entrance is likely to be in the area of removed rampart in the north-east corner (1915, 361). He also notes that the removed rampart can be traced as a “*slight undulation*” in the field to the north (1915, 351).

Variability in the morphology of the ramparts is better shown in two profiles across the ramparts. Profile A-B on the southern side of the hillfort broadly reflects the sequence shown in plan, but emphasises a wide berm separating the inner and outer ditches. In his accompanying text attention is drawn to this feature as a “*broad platform about 27 feet in width, which forms the summit of the middle rampart throughout its whole length. It is slightly worn down in the middle, and is in part occupied by a cart track*” (1915, 361). Profile C-D on the western side is much gentler. Here there is no back to the inner bank, the outer edge of the inner ditch grades gently towards an ill-defined central berm, followed by a shallower outer ditch and a slighter outer bank.

Ordnance Survey Archaeology Division field visit (1956)

The site was visited by Ordnance Survey Archaeological Investigator Vivian James Burton in January 1956, who made the following observations:

“[the site is] so heavily overgrown that it has never been thoroughly examined and its original entrance has escaped notice. On the east the ground is level and the ramparts consist of an inner bank (mutilated by the construction of a boundary bank at its inner edge), ditch, a wide berm with a bank on its outer lip, a deep ditch and an outer bank. On the west, however, the natural slope falls over 3m across the ramparts and here the defences consist of a wide terrace with upper and lower scarps, made by levelling the natural slope, and a comparatively feeble ditch and outer bank. Around the surviving part of the northern side there is an inner bank above the terrace. There is no other earthwork of this type in Hampshire but its profiles, though not its plan, are very similar to those of the earthworks in Hammer Wood, Sussex. The only surviving original entrance is at the north-west. It is a simple gap with the outer bank inturned across the line of the ditch: a circular mound in the centre of a gap may, or may not, be an original feature. The modern boundary banks, which run around the inside and the outside of the ramparts, are not interrupted at this entrance. The interior of the earthwork is woodland and no occupation debris was found” (NHRE 240247)

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 (1968)

No separate Antiquity Model exists for Bullsdown. Additions are made to the 1:2500 mapping in 1968 (Fig 13); this revision is based on observations made during the 1956 visit, and confirmed during a further visit by Archaeological Investigator Cyril Wardale. The revised mapping adds further detail in its depiction of the ramparts.

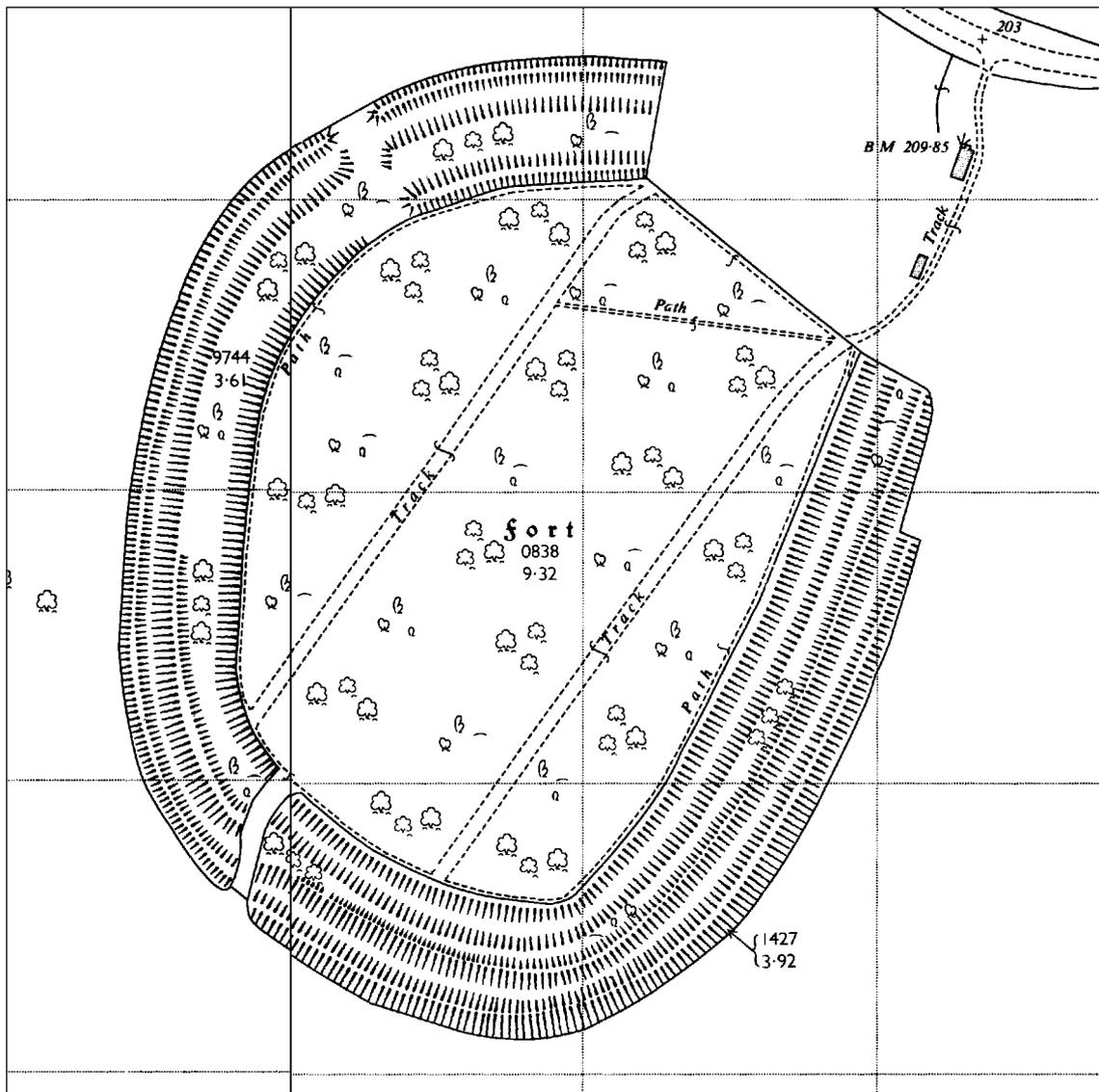


Figure 13: Extract of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping, 1968. © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2018). Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.

For most of the surviving circuit the inner face of the inner bank shown in Williams-Freeman's plan is no longer depicted, being shown only in the north-west corner of the site. To the east of the south-west trackway the circuit consists of inner and outer ditches separated by a berm and a substantial outer bank. The significant change to previous mapping in this area is the addition of a slight bank on top of the outer edge of the berm (the inner edge of the outer ditch). This feature does not continue to the west of the south-west trackway.

To the west of the south-west trackway the inner bank is shown as a pronounced outward facing scarp. Slight traces of the inner ditch are shown for approximately 100m to the west of the trackway before fading into a broad, flat terrace. The outer ditch and bank survive along the entire western side of the ramparts. The north-west breach in the ramparts identified by Williams-Freeman is shown as a more substantial feature with aligned gaps 17m wide in the inner bank, and 10m wide in

the outer ditch and bank. To the north of this breach the inner bank is shown with a well-defined inner edge.

Beyond the ramparts all of the field boundaries shown in the 1911 Ordnance Survey mapping have been removed. A widely spaced line of trees is the only trace of the field boundary on the western side of the hillfort. To the north a short length of boundary survives against the road. Immediately to the east of this, a trackway now connects the eastern of the internal trackways to the road. Two rectangular buildings are shown on the track's western edge.

Later phases of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping in 1976 and 1992 add no further detail to the hillfort and its immediate surroundings.

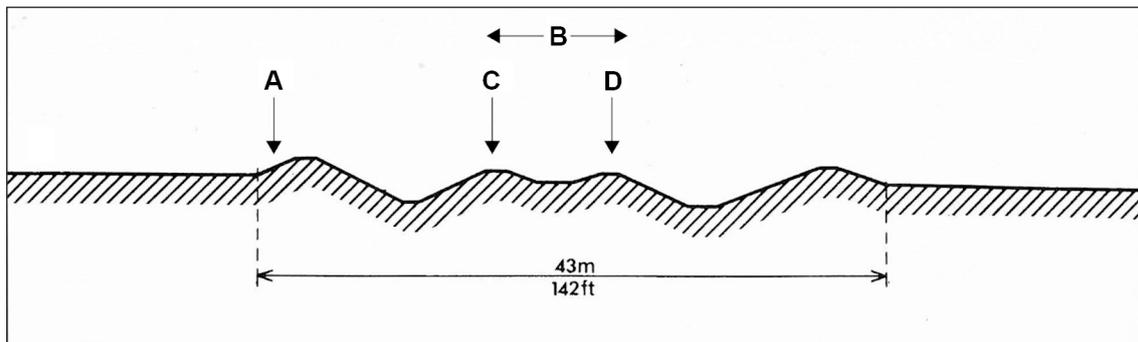


Figure 14: Profile across the western ramparts of Bullsdown Camp (after Forde-Johnston 1976, fig 76d).

Forde-Johnston (1976)

Forde-Johnston includes Bullsdown in his 1976 publication on hillforts in England and Wales. His plan of the site adds no further detail to existing mapping; however, his profile across the eastern rampart (Fig 14) clearly shows an inner face to the inner bank (A), and two slight banks on top of the berm (B), on the outer side of the inner ditch (C), and (D) on the inner side of the outer ditch. Forde-Johnstone (1976, 150-1) sees these features as two separate banks rather than a flat berm whose centre has been worn down by a cart track (cf Williams Freeman 1915).

National Mapping Programme 2015-18

As part of a wider aerial investigation and mapping project for the Silchester Environs Project, Truscoe (2017) reviews all available aerial photographic and lidar evidence for Bullsdown Camp (Fig 15). Mapping of the ramparts shows an inner bank and ditch, a central bank, and an outer ditch and bank. In addition to the previously recorded breaches in the ramparts on the south-west, north-west and north-east sides, an additional breach is shown in the eastern part of the outer bank. An additional length of bank and ditch is recorded on the southern (outer) edge of the ramparts. Several linear features are recorded in the hillfort's interior, the most prominent of which is a central north-east to south-west running ditch. Two ditches run broadly perpendicular to this central feature, and a further short length of curvilinear ditch lies to its north-west. An approximately 40m length of



Figure 15: Aerial Investigation and Mapping of Bullsdown Camp (after Truscoe 2018). Figure 15: Aerial Investigation and Mapping of Bullsdown Camp (after Truscoe 2018).

bank is recorded in the north-west quadrant of the interior. Externally three linear features converging on the ramparts from the north-west, east and south-west are all removed field boundaries shown on historic mapping (see Figs 5 and 9).

DESCRIPTION AND PHASING

Results of the 2017 survey are presented as four principal drawings at the end of this report. Figure 29 gives a detailed view of the survey area at a scale of 1:1250. Earthwork features are depicted with hachures and a series of additional lines and polygons showing fences, tracks and buildings. Figure 30 comprises two profiles across the survey area (A-B and C-D). Both are drawn at a horizontal scale of 1:1000 and a vertical scale of 1:500.

For ease of reference earthwork features are grouped together into two phased and annotated plans (Figs 31 and 32), and are presented below as text descriptions. All bracketed numbers refer to annotated features on Figures 31 and 32. All feature numbers with a '1' prefix refer to figure 31, all feature numbers with a '2' prefix refer to figure 32.

The hillfort

The hillfort is the earliest phase of activity recorded by the survey (Fig 31). It is sub-oval in form, measuring 320m north – south by 250m west – east. It encloses an area of approximately 3.4ha, and has an entire footprint of approximately 7.3ha. Nearly 90% of the hillfort's defensive circuit survives as extant earthworks. Approximately 85m of the ramparts have been removed in the hillfort's north-east corner (see discussion of feature (2.26/2.27) below). The ramparts are defined by an inner bank (1.1), inner ditch (1.2), with intermittent counter scarp (1.3), outer bank (1.4), outer ditch (1.5) and outer counter scarp bank (1.6). The character of the ramparts is noticeably different on the western side of the hillfort between breach (2.19) and possible entrance (1.8). Here the central portion of the ramparts between the outer face of inner ditch (1.2) and the inner face of outer ditch (1.5) appears as a substantially flattened terrace (Fig 16). It is suggested this is the result of deliberate levelling of the earthworks after the Iron Age and does not reflect their original form.

Inner bank

Traces of a slight bank form the innermost element of the ramparts (Fig 17). This feature is most pronounced along the eastern and southern sides of the hillfort where it survives to a width of between 5 and 10m and a maximum height of 0.35m above the interior. To the north and west of breach (2.19), caused by trackway (2.33), this inner bank is broader and more diffuse, surviving to a width of between 7 and 10m and up to 0.1m above the hillfort interior. The inner bank is consistently cut by post-medieval ditches (2.1) and (2.7).

A more pronounced inner-bank (1.7) was recorded to the east of possible entrance (1.8). This feature is between 2 and 2.5m wide, and stands up to 0.5m above the interior of the hillfort.



Figure 16: Looking west across levelled ramparts on the western side of Bullsdow Camp (© Historic England).



Figure 17: Inner bank (1.1), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).



Figure 18: Inner ditch (1.2), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).



Figure 19: Slight traces of inner counterscarp bank (1.3) on inner edge of central berm, view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England)..



Figure 20: Outer bank (1.4) on outer edge of central berm, view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).



Figure 21: Outer ditch (1.5), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).



Figure 22: Outer counter scarp bank (1.6), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).

Inner ditch

An inner ditch (1.2) is visible around most of the defensive circuit (Fig 18). This feature is most prominent on the southern and eastern sides of the hillfort where it measures between 12 and 18m wide by up to 2.1m deep. To the north and west of breach (2.19) the inner face of ditch (1.2) consistently presents as a well-defined outward facing scarp between 1.1 and 1.5m high. In this area the outer face of ditch (1.2) becomes increasingly ill-defined, surviving as a slight depression up to 0.2m deep, before disappearing altogether to the east of possible entrance (1.18).

Counterscarp bank

Traces of a very slight counterscarp bank (1.3) up to 0.15m high and 2m wide were recorded on the outer edge of ditch (1.2) (Fig 19). Counterscarp (1.3) is only visible in the south-east of the site.

Outer Bank

A small outer bank (1.4) was recorded at the inner edge of outer ditch (1.5) (Fig 20). To the east of breach (2.19) this is a well-defined feature between 2 and 4m wide and up to 0.5m high. To the west of breach (2.19) bank (1.4) is often much broader (up to 6m wide) with a generally shallower profile (0.25m) and a less defined inner edge.

Outer Ditch

An outer ditch (1.5) is recorded around the entire surviving ramparts (Fig 21). The ditch is up to 14m wide and ranges between 1.6 and 2m deep. To the east of possible entrance (1.18) the outer ditch (1.5) is shallower at approximately 0.75m.

Outer Counterscarp Bank

The outermost component of the ramparts is an outer counterscarp bank (1.6) (Fig 22). The outer bank is between 1 and 4m wide, and ranges between 0.75m high on the southern and eastern sides, and 0.4m high in places on the western side.

Entrances

There are 9 gaps in the hillfort's defensive circuit (Fig 28). Of these only two features (1.8) and (1.9) are considered as potential original entrances. The remaining breaches (2.17), (2.18), (2.19), (2.21), (2.22), (2.23) and (2.24), can all be seen to slight elements of the pre-existing ramparts, and are therefore considered to be post-Iron Age in date. The only earthwork feature which potentially indicates an original entrance is a series of aligned gaps (1.8) in the ramparts on the north-west side of the hillfort. This feature consists of a 10m wide gap in the outer bank, an 8m gap in the central bank, and a 10.5m gap in the inner bank. A 4m diameter, 0.35m high mound (2.25) sits centrally within the gap in outer bank (1.6). It is considered likely that this feature post-dates the construction of potential entrance (1.8). Entrance (1.8) is constructed at a point where the outer edge of the hillfort's interior is nearly 4m higher than its exterior. As a result, the pathway through the ramparts at (1.8) is on an incline with two slight steps as it crosses the central and inner banks. These steps temper the straight-forward interpretation of gap (1.8) as an original entrance, intimating that it may be a later insertion breaching and in part riding up and over the ramparts.

Very little surface trace of the ramparts survives between points (2.26) and (2.27) (see Fig 6). Two geophysical surveys by the University of Reading indicate the sub-surface survival of elements of the defensive circuit in this area. Results of a gradiometer survey (Fry forthcoming A) carried out to the north and west of the hillfort show three curvilinear magnetic anomalies marking the continuation of inner ditch (1.2), outer ditch (1.5) and a boundary ditch (presumably akin to ditches (2.2), (2.6) and (2.8)), from breach (2.26) to within approximately 5m of removed field boundary (2.36). No clear eastern terminals are apparent on any of these features due to highly magnetic anomalies associated with removed field boundary (2.36) and buildings (2.34) and (2.35). As such, it is probable that these features continue further to the east. A smaller area of earth resistance survey (Fry forthcoming B) was carried out to the east of trackway (2.33). A curving high resistance anomaly at the southern edge of this survey is likely to indicate the continuation of outer bank (1.6) in this area.

The question of whether an entrance to the hillfort existed in the area of point (1.9) remains open. A gap of approximately 22m exists between the eastern limit of inner

ditch (1.2), as shown by the gradiometer survey, and its northern limit at point (1.9) as shown by the earthwork survey, a wide enough gap to easily accommodate an entrance. This possibility is reinforced by the position of the present-day trackway (2.33) entering the hillfort in this location.

After the hillfort

All phases of post-Iron Age features are summarised in figure 32.

Woodland banks and boundary ditches

On the southern and eastern sides of the hillfort two boundaries comprising a combination of ditches and/or woodland banks, enclose the rampart earthworks. Boundary ditch (2.1) cuts through the inner edge of inner bank (1.1). Ditch (2.1) is up to 3m wide by 0.5m deep, and occasionally has short lengths of woodland bank up to 0.5m wide by 0.2m high on its inner edge. Woodland bank (2.2) wraps around the eastern side of breach (2.19) and encloses the outer edge of the ramparts sitting just outside the base of outer ditch (1.6). Bank (2.2) is particularly pronounced on the southern edge of the hillfort, and it is this feature that is recorded as the additional external bank by Truscoe (2018) (see Fig 15). It measures approximately 0.5m wide by between 0.75 and 0.15m high. Several shorter lengths of bank and ditch (2.3), (2.4), (2.5) and 2.6) surround the north-eastern edge of the rampart between points (2.27) and (2.28).

On the western and northern sides of the hillfort, the ramparts are enclosed by boundaries (2.7) and (2.8). Boundary (2.7) consists of an external ditch and near continuous inner woodland bank wrapping around the western side of breach (2.19), marking the crest of inner bank (1.1) and enclosing breach (2.26). The bank typically measures 0.5m wide by 0.4m high, and the ditch 2m wide by 0.4m deep. Boundary (2.7) blocks the inner edge of potential entrance (1.8). It continues only as a ditch to the east of this point. Boundary (2.8) is a combination of internal woodland bank and external ditch enclosing the outer edge of outer bank (1.6). The bank is typically 0.5m wide by 0.3m high, and the ditch 2m wide by up to 0.5m deep. Boundary (2.8) formerly sealed breach (2.19).

First shown on Ordnance Survey mapping in 1896 (Fig 10), ditch (2.9) closes the north-eastern corner of the hillfort's interior between breaches (2.26) and (2.27). It measures 2m wide by up to 0.5m deep. Ditch (2.9) is breached at its western end at point (2.40) by a narrow footpath.

Ditches and drains

Several ditches drain an area of wet ground on the eastern side of the hillfort's interior into the hillfort's inner ditch (1.2). Ditches (2.10) and (2.11) run east from trackway (2.32), cutting through inner bank (1.1) and drain into inner ditch (1.2). A shorter length of ditch (2.12) breaches the inner bank (1.1) in the south-east corner of the hillfort. All of these ditches measure approximately 0.25m wide by 0.10-0.25m deep. They are all also cut by boundary ditch (2.1).

Two lengths of ditch (2.13) and (2.14), with similar proportions to those outlined above, were recorded towards the northern end of the eastern ramparts. Ditch (2.13) runs along the top of inner bank (1.1) before turning through 90 degrees and running into the base of inner ditch (1.2). Unlike ditches (2.10), (2.11) and (2.12) ditch (2.13) does not cut through inner bank (1.1) into the hillfort's interior. Ditch (2.14) runs along the base of inner ditch (1.2) close to (2.13).

Ditch (2.15) drains the northern end of the hillfort's eastern outer ditch (1.5). It is approximately 0.30m wide and up to 1m deep and becomes an outer ditch to external woodland bank (2.2). Feature (2.16) is a small cut into the hillfort's outer bank (1.6) immediately to the west of the south-western breach in the ramparts (2.19). Feature (2.30) is an approximately 30m length of shallow ditch (c.0.2m wide by 0.15m deep) running north to south on the very northern edge of the hillfort's interior close to gap (2.40).

Gaps/entrances

Other than possible entrances (1.8) and (1.9) the remaining seven breaches in the ramparts are not thought to be original and are probably post-medieval in date (Fig 28). An 85m wide gap in the earthwork ramparts exists in the north-east corner of the hillfort. The breach is defined on its western edge by an abrupt near 90 degree cut through the ramparts at point (2.26). A mound (2.29) measuring approximately 7m in diameter by 1m high which sits on top of outer bank (1.6) is probably derived from upcast created when the ramparts were breached at this point. The eastern edge of the breach (2.27) is defined by a staggered cut through the inner bank (1.1), inner ditch (1.2), central bank (1.4) and outer ditch (1.5). The final cut (2.28) through outer ditch (1.6) is approximately 50m to the south.

The remaining breaches, features (2.17), (2.18), (2.19), (2.21), (2.22), (2.23) and (2.24) can all be seen to slight elements of the hillfort's ramparts, and are therefore considered to be post-Iron Age in date. Features (2.21), (2.22) and (2.23) on the western side of the hillfort only breach outer bank (1.6); feature (2.24) breaches only inner bank (1.7); whilst features (2.17) and (2.18) on the eastern side breach outer bank (1.6), outer ditch (1.5) and central bank (1.4); none of these breaches fully link the hillfort's interior and exterior.

Feature (2.19) at the hillfort's south-western corner is a full breach of the defensive circuit. However, trackway (2.33) which runs through gap (2.19) can clearly be seen to ride up and over the denuded remains of all elements of the ramparts. Mound (2.20) on the eastern edge of gap (2.19) is likely to be derived from upcast material created by the breaching of the ramparts.

Levelling of the western ramparts

When compared with the location of boundaries of earlier and later nineteenth century date, each of the breaches appears to give access from a surrounding field to the wooded ramparts (Fig 28). The area of levelled or removed ramparts on the western side of the hillfort coincides with the extent of tithe plots 467 (Hankin's

Wood) and 357 (Plantation) indicating that modification of the ramparts may be linked to activity in these fields (see Fig 5).

Trackways

Two parallel trackways shown on Ordnance Survey mapping since 1911 (Fig 11) are discernible running north-east to south-west across the hillfort's interior.



Figure 23: Looking south-west along the southern end of the eastern trackway (2.32), (© Historic England)

Trackway (2.32) to the south-east is more obvious (Fig 23). It can be traced both as an approximately 10m wide gap in the mature woodland, and as a slightly sunken earthwork at its north-eastern end becoming less distinct to the south-west. The course of trackway (2.31) to the north-west is less distinct. Only a short length of this

feature was traced as a linear gap in mature woodland at its north end (Fig 24); no traces were observed further to the south-west.

Trackway (2.33) bisects Bullsdown camp running between the eastern edge of breach (2.26)/(2.27) to the north-east and breach (2.19) to the south-west. To the north-east trackway (2.33) connects the hillfort with the present-day Sherfield-on-Loddon to Bramley road. Whilst the trackway outside the hillfort has been shown on Ordnance Survey mapping since 1968 (Fig 13), the interior portion of the trackway is not depicted. It is first shown mapped from lidar data by Truscoe (2018) (Fig 15).



Figure 24: Looking north-east along the northern end of the western trackway (2.31), (© Historic England)..

Buildings

Two small brick-built single storey buildings (2.34) (Fig 25) and (2.35) (Fig 26), measuring 8m by 4m and 11m by 5.5m respectively, were recorded on the western side of track (2.33) to the north of the hillfort. They are both built against the line of removed field boundary (2.36). Both have enclosing baffles (blast walls) at their entrances. The buildings are not shown on 1934 aerial photography (see cover photograph), but appear on 1947 RAF vertical area photography, and are considered likely to represent outlying Second World War military buildings associated with Bramley Ordnance Depot (Truscoe 2018, 183) less than 1km to the south-west.



Figure 25: Building (2.34), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).



Figure 26: Building (2.35), view to west, scale 1m (© Historic England).

Removed field boundary

An approximately 40m length of slight linear earthwork (2.36) running north from the north-east corner of the hillfort, and in places under track (2.33) and buildings (2.34) and (2.35), is the remains of a field boundary removed between 1911 and 1968 (see Figs 11 and 13). A low oval earthwork (2.37) immediately to the south of building (2.34) measuring approximately 10m long by 0.25m high probably results from modern material dumped against boundary (2.36).

Pheasant pen

A post and wire mesh pheasant pen (2.38) was recorded on the northern edge of track (2.33) approximately 70m inside the hillfort from breach (2.27). A short length of scarp (2.39) immediately east of this feature is probably the result of recent wheel ruts leading from track (2.33) to the pen.

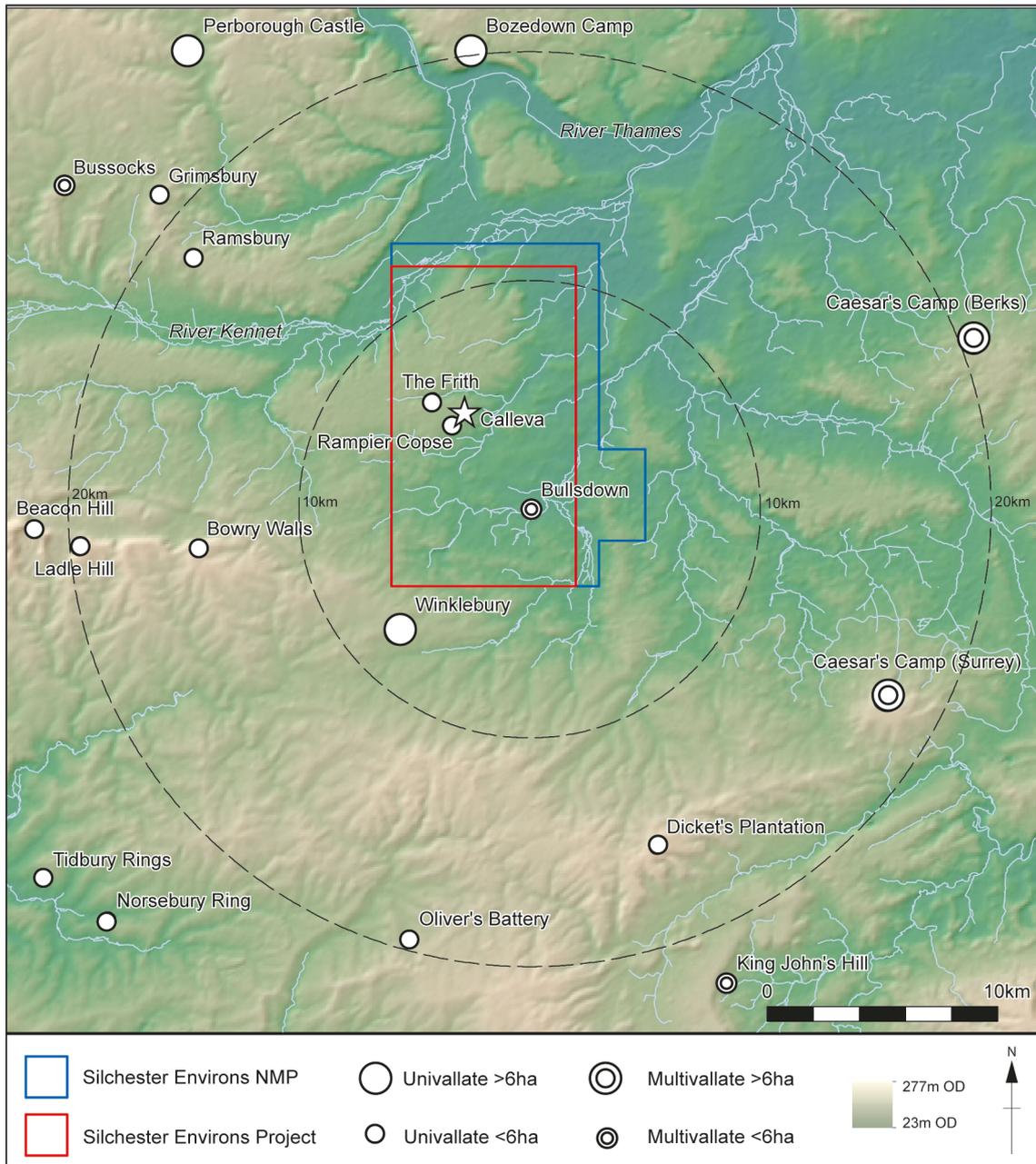


Figure 27: Hillforts in the wider Silchester Environs. Contains digital surface model data derived from 90m SRTM topography data courtesy of CGIAR; rivers data derived from OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900. Hillfort locations after Lock and Ralston 2017.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The hillfort

Enclosing an area of 3.4ha and defined by two sets of banks and ditches, Bullsdown Camp is a medium sized, multi-vallate hillfort (cf Ordnance Survey 1962, 13; Forde-Johnston 1976, 8-11). It occupies a slight rise in a locally prominent plateau, and has a broadly level interior. It is enclosed by a slight inner bank, substantial inner and outer ditches, and a substantial outer counterscarp bank. The inner and outer

ditches are separated by a gap, or berm, up to 8m in width. On this berm are a slight and intermittent counterscarp bank (on the outer edge of the inner ditch) and a more continuous outer bank (on the inner edge of the outer ditch). The hillfort has two probable entrances, to the north-west and north-east. No surface traces of Iron Age activity were recorded in the interior of the hillfort.

Figure 27 shows the distribution of hillforts within a 20-25km radius of Bullsdown. The Silchester Environs is an area with comparatively few hillforts (Lock and Ralston 2017). The area is distinct from the line of hillforts along the northern edge of the Hampshire Downs between 10 and 20km to the south and south-west and loose groupings of sites on the Berkshire Downs between 10 and 20km to the north-west, and on the southern edge of the Chilterns between 15 and 20km to the north.

Bullsdown is distinct in size, morphology and topographic location from its three nearest neighbours. The Frith, approximately 6.5km to the north-west, is a small univallate hillfort enclosing an area of approximately 1.6ha, at the eastern end of a low ridge (Bayer and Bowden 2016). The possible hillfort at Rampier Copse, approximately 5km to the north-west, is a small univallate enclosure, approximately 3ha in extent on the edge of the Silchester plateau (Bayer forthcoming). Winklebury Camp, approximately 8km to the south-west of Bullsdown, is a much larger univallate hillfort enclosing an area of approximately 7.6ha (Smith 1977). The site occupies a hilltop on the edge of the Hampshire Downs, overlooking a tributary of the River Loddon.

The berm separating Bullsdown's inner and outer ditches is an unusual feature without close parallels. Williams Freeman (1933, 99) compares the "*broad middle bank*" at Bullsdown, with the separation between the inner and outer ramparts at Buckland Rings and Whitsbury, both in Hampshire. Although very different in overall plan to Bullsdown, the berm at Buckland Rings is broadly comparable. It exists around the entire defensive circuit, is similar in width (up to 9m), and has a bank on its outer edge. The comparison with Whitsbury is less close; here a substantial gap between the inner and outer ditches is only present on the southern and western sides of the hillfort, and is smaller in size at approximately 5m wide. Burton, following the 1956 Ordnance Survey field visit, makes a comparison between the berm at Bullsdown and that seen at Hammer Wood, West Sussex. However, here the berm exists only on the hillfort's northern edge and at up to 15m across is substantially wider than that at Bullsdown.

Examination of profiles A-B and C-D (fig 30) suggests that there was never a central bank on top of the berm at Bullsdown. Approximately the same volume of material created by the excavation of the inner and outer ditches seems to have been used to make the inner and outer banks and counterscarps. The creation of an 8m wide gap, albeit one crowned by the slight outer bank (1.4) and even slighter inner counterscarp (1.3), between the inner and outer ditch circuits appears to have been a deliberate act. The purpose of this strip of dead-space remains elusive; it is difficult to see it as a defensive feature, and it seems too narrow to have been used as any form of stock enclosure (the survival of slight earthworks on its surface would seem to preclude this use) or for any similar purpose.

The number of original entrances at Bullsdown remains open to question. The majority of the breaches in the hillfort's ramparts are post-Iron Age in date. The only two serious contenders for original entrances are the breach in the north-west corner (1.8), and the easternmost extreme edge of the more substantial breach in the northern side of the hillfort close to point (1.9). Hillforts in southern England usually have one or two entrances and it would be usual for a hillfort of Bullsdown's size and character to have two. Almost inevitably one entrance (the principle one) faces to the east; an entrance at the eastern edge of breach (1.9) would fulfil this requirement.

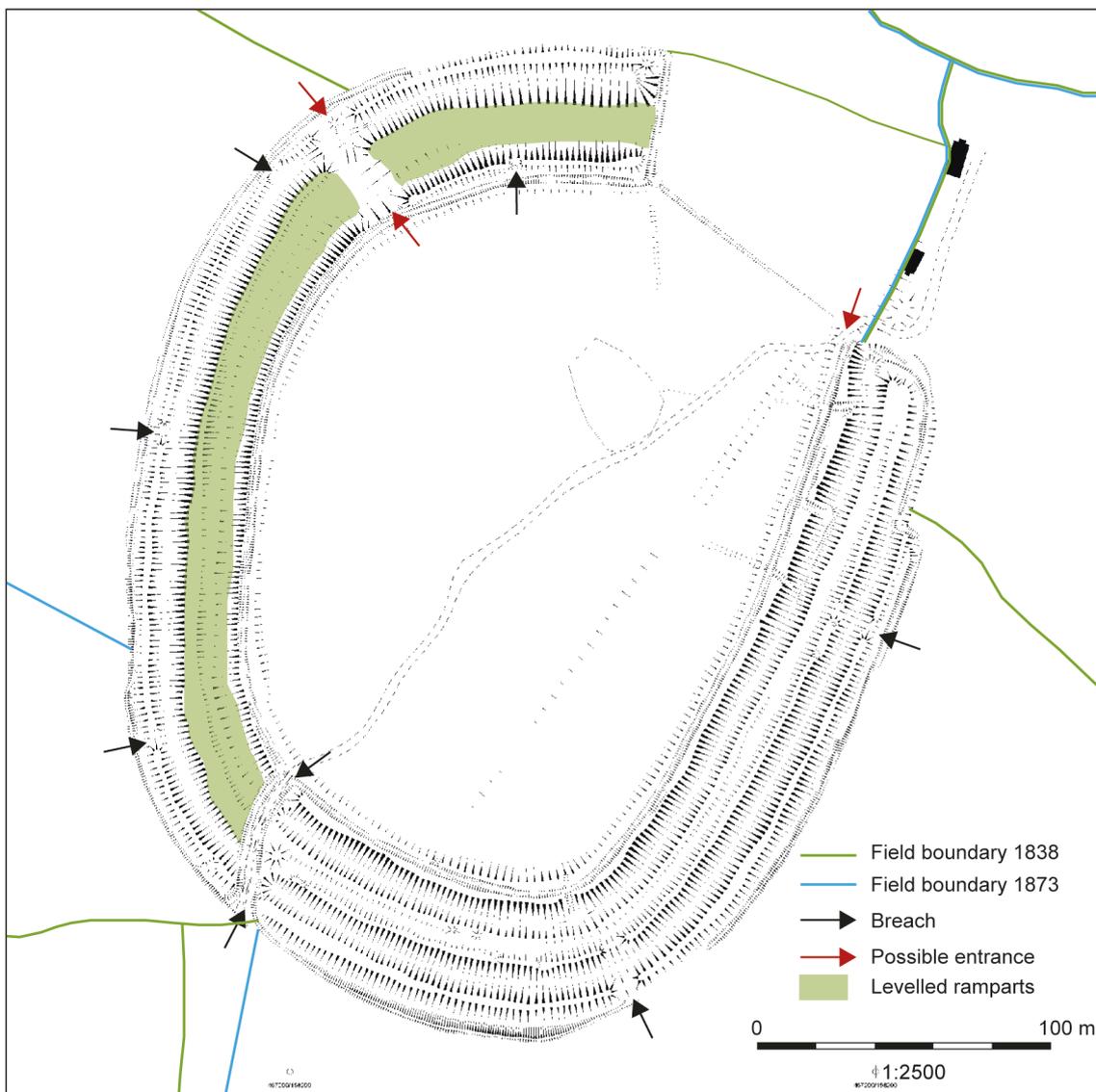


Figure 28: Location of possible original entrances, post-medieval breaches, external field boundaries and area of levelled ramparts.

The second entrance is usually in an opposing position to the west. The entrance or entrances at Bullsdown are slightly unusual in being positioned towards the northern end of the fort rather than being centrally placed.

Bulldown is undated but can probably be attributed to the middle centuries of the Iron Age (700 to 100BC). It is likely that, in common with many southern hillforts, Bulldown was abandoned about 100BC, at the end of the middle Iron Age. Here there may be a clear relationship with the founding of the late Iron Age oppida at Calleva.

After the hillfort

The curving boundary that once linked Bulldown Camp with Bulldown Copse 200m to the south is the only potential evidence for medieval activity. It is possible that this boundary and the hillfort itself once formed part of the southern limit of the medieval deer park associated with the manor of Bullesden (Bulldown). The name Bulldown is derived from 'Bullesdon', the family name of the owners of the manor (Brough 1911, 143).

By the early nineteenth century Bulldown Camp exists as a crescent of woodland covering the hillfort's ramparts surrounded by cultivated rectilinear fields. It is linked by its south-western corner to a strip of woodland. There is a substantial breach in its northern edge, and an open cultivated field in its centre. The removal of the northern side of the ramparts occurred prior to the first available mapping of the site in 1808. It is suggested that the substantial levelling of elements of the western ramparts occurred prior to the completion of the 1838 Bramley Tithe Map. Several smaller breaches were made to link the wooded area of the ramparts, and in one case the interior of the hillfort, with its surrounding fields probably prior to the removal of their boundaries during the twentieth century (Fig 28).

The woodland banks which enclose the wooded areas on the hillfort's ramparts appear to have been constructed prior to the 1838 Bramley Tithe Map.

By the end of the nineteenth century the centre of the hillfort was planted with trees, and by 1911 two parallel trackways had been inserted across its interior, possibly to allow access for forestry management. By the end of the Second World War two brick-built buildings had been constructed immediately to the north of the hillfort. It is likely these buildings were linked to nearby Bramley Ordnance Depot, and it is possible that the wooded interior of Bulldown Camp, as with much woodland in the area (Truscoe 2018, 186-7), was used for dispersed ordnance storage during the war.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

The following recommendations are made for further work at Bullsdown Camp:

- The location of the hillfort's original entrances is still open to question. Next steps should include an increased area of earth resistance survey combined with ground penetrating radar survey in the area of the postulated north-east entrance (1.9), to the south and east of building (2.24). This should be carried out in optimal weather conditions and after the clearance of vegetation in this area. Short of speculative excavation it is hoped that this would provide the best opportunity to locate, define and characterise archaeological features in this area, and establish the presence or absence of an entrance.
- Similarly ground penetrating radar survey within the area of the postulated north-west entrance (1.8) would help to establish whether or not this is an original entrance, or a later insertion overlying and slighting the defensive circuit in this location.
- At present the construction and use of Bullsdown Camp is dated only by analogy with morphologically similar sites. Establishing a more refined chronology for the hillfort will only be possible through coring and or excavation. It is suggested that due to the scale of the earthworks, and the wooded cover on most of the site, that any intrusive work is initially targeted on the area of levelled ramparts on the northern edge of the site between breach (2.26) and removed field boundary (2.36).
- Outside the hillfort further gradiometer survey followed by targeted excavation would help to clarify the date and nature of the curving boundary running south from the hillfort.

METHOD STATEMENT

Due to the mostly wooded nature of the site field survey utilised a combination of digital and analogue techniques. The majority of the survey was conducted using a combination of a survey grade Global Satellite Navigation Survey System (GNSS) receiver and a robotic Total Station (TST). A Trimble R8 survey-grade GNSS receiver connected to the Ordnance Survey's GNSS correction network (OSNet) via the Trimble VRS Now service was used to establish the location of two control points relative to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The location of each point was adjusted to the OSTN02 National Grid Transformation with a final accuracy of +/-0.01-0.015m. These points were then used to locate a closed ring traverse of 18 survey stations within the hillfort's ramparts using a Trimble S7 TST (Historic England 2016, 19-20). A closed link traverse spanned between stations 2 and 9 of the main traverse. Over 95% of earthwork features were mapped using the TST referencing these survey stations. In the few areas where dense vegetation precluded the use of digital survey techniques, detailed survey was completed using standard tape and offset techniques (Historic England 2018, 7-15), referencing temporary control pegs previously located with the TST.

Digital survey data was adjusted, and field codes processed, in Trimble Business Center software before being exported to AutoCAD and combined with digitised field drawings. The principle survey plan for this report was completed at a scale of 1:1000 using digital drawing techniques in AutoCAD and Adobe CS6 software. Additional report illustrations were prepared using ArcGIS 10.3.1.

Profiles A-B and C-D (Fig 30) are derived from a combination of survey data (for the hillfort ramparts) and Environment Agency 1m Lidar DTM (for the hillfort interior). Profiles were created using ArcGIS 10.3.1. and Adobe CS6 software.

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Hampshire Record Office

Bramley tithe map and apportionment, 1838. ref 21M65/F7/31/2

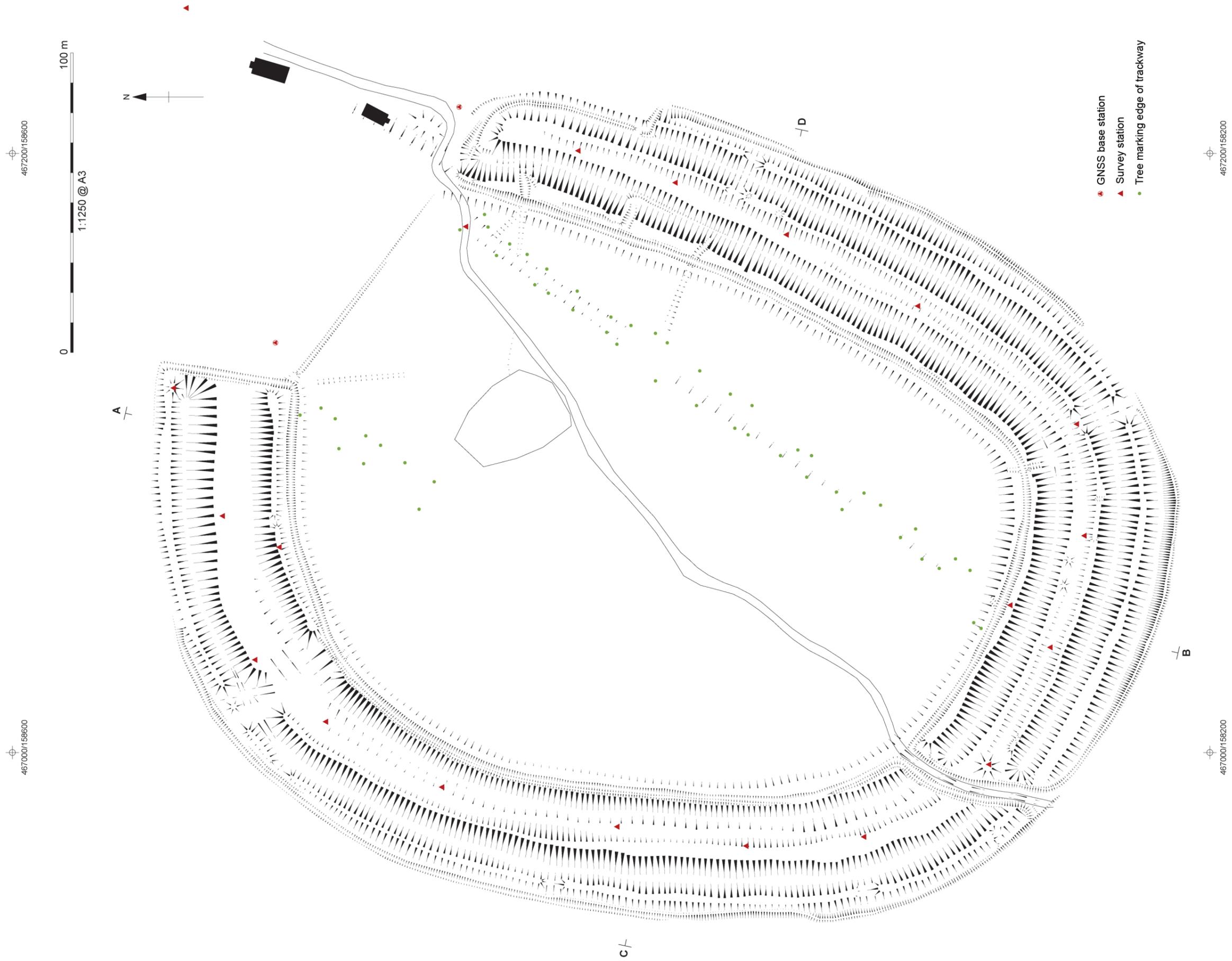


Figure 29: Analytical earthwork survey of Bullsdown Camp (reduced to 1:1250 from original survey drawing at 1:1000).



Figure 30: Profiles A-B and C-D across Bullsdown Camp (1:1000 horizontal axis and 1:500 vertical axis).

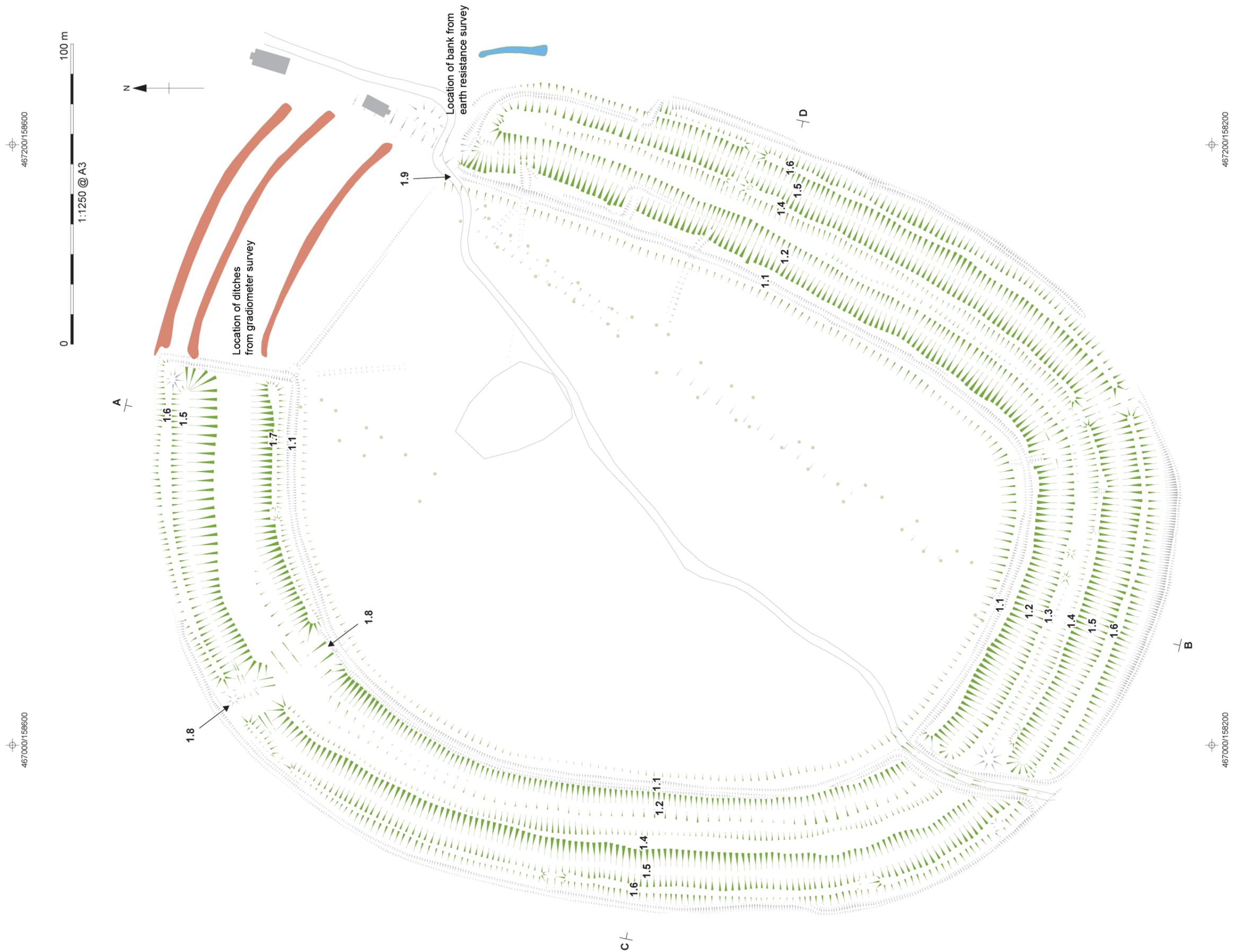


Figure 31: Iron Age features at Bullsdown Camp (reduced to 1:1250 from original survey drawing at 1:1000).

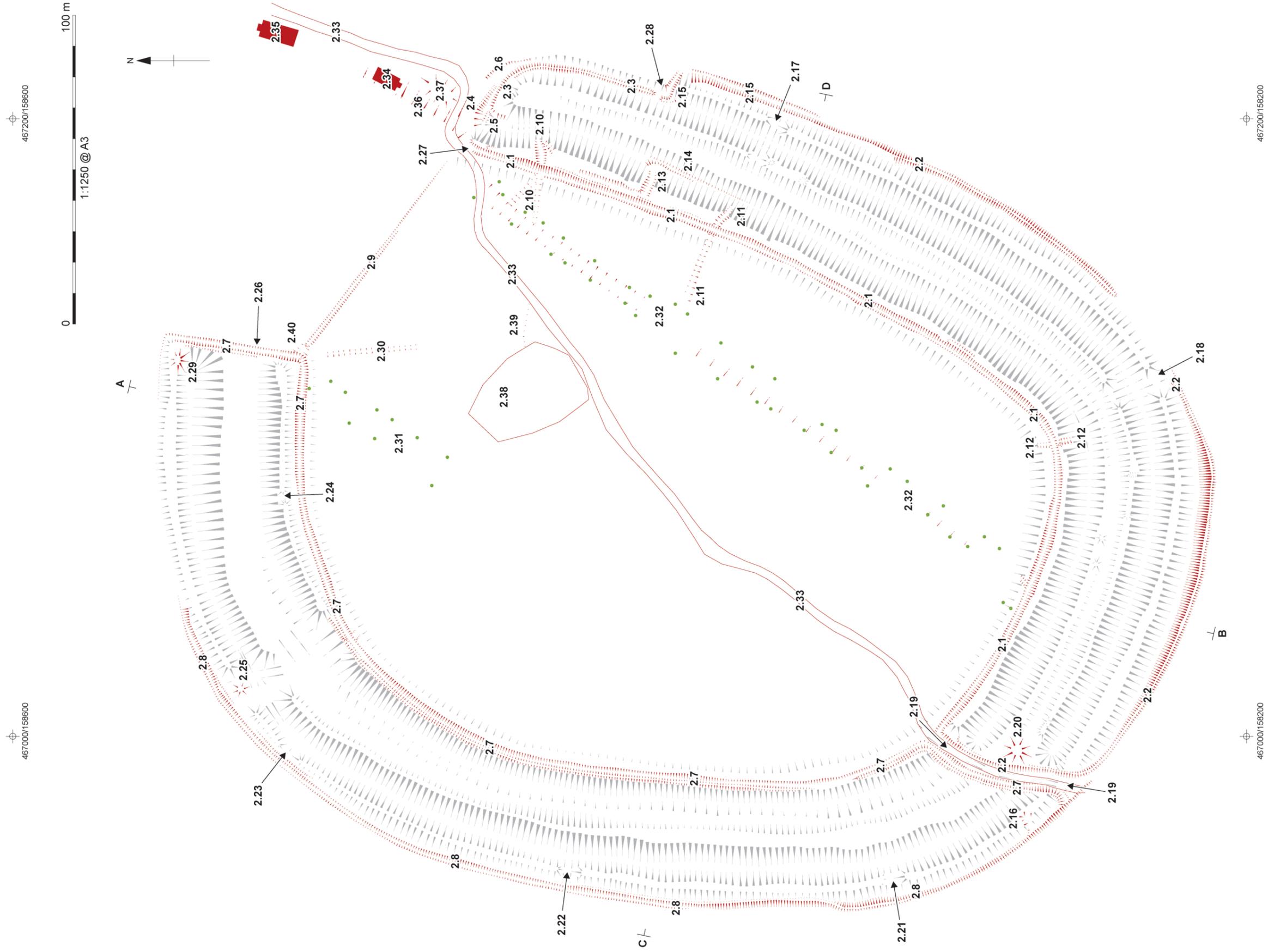


Figure 32: Post-Iron Age features at Bullardown Camp (reduced to 1:1250 from original survey drawing at 1:1000).



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