

STONEHENGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE LANDSCAPE PROJECT NORMANTON DOWN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

Kate Barrett and Mark Bowden



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND
INVESTIGATION


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STONEHENGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE LANDSCAPE PROJECT

NORMANTON DOWN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

Kate Barrett and Mark Bowden

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SUMMARY

The Normanton Down Barrow Group is one of the most prominent Neolithic and Bronze Age cemeteries in the Stonehenge environs, occupying an east-west ridge to the south of Stonehenge itself. It includes long barrows, bowl, bell and disc barrows, amongst them the famous Bush Barrow and several other mounds containing rich burials which helped to define the 'Wessex Culture'. Unfortunately, extensive arable agriculture in the later 20th century has not only damaged some of the barrows but levelled other historic features of the landscape, including linear ditches, former field boundaries and a dew pond. Though access was restricted much of the Group was surveyed as part of the Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project in 2010.

CONTRIBUTORS

Survey was undertaken by Elaine Jamieson and Kate Barrett, and this report prepared by Kate Barrett and Mark Bowden. The site plan was drawn by Deborah Cunliffe.

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ARCHIVE LOCATION

NMRC, Swindon

DATE OF SURVEY

April 2010

CONTACT DETAILS

NMRC, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ

Cover image: Normanton Down from the south, 2005, with Stonehenge in the top left hand corner (© copyright English Heritage, NMR 24127/27)

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Table 2: Concordance of references for the Normanton Down Barrow Group: those not surveyed April 2010.

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INTRODUCTION

An analytical earthwork survey of part of Normanton Down in the parish of Wilsford-cum-Lake, Wiltshire, was undertaken over a period of nine days in April 2010 by one member of English Heritage's (EH) Archaeological Survey & Investigation Team, and a placement student undertaking an MSc in Professional Archaeology (University of Oxford). This assessment forms part of EH's Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project.



Fig 1: Map of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, with the Normanton Down survey area highlighted.

In the wider geographical context, Normanton Down is approximately 11km north of Salisbury and 20km east of Warminster. The group lies 1km south of, and has a clear line of sight to, Stonehenge. The barrow group is one of many within the World Heritage Site (WHS) (Fig 1) and has received much antiquarian attention. Several well known monuments are located across the Down, principally along the ridge, most of which are contained within the Normanton Down barrow group. This is a roughly linear set of

earthworks, aligned west-north-west to east-south-east with the central point of that line resting at SU 120 412.

This report has been created to fulfil several criteria set out in the Project Design (Bowden and Field 2009). This investigation specifically fulfils the aims and objectives relating to the analytical survey of the entire WHS in an attempt to elucidate the chronology of the earthwork sites across the landscape and how they relate to each other, which will identify how land use has changed over time. This in turn fulfils the overarching aim of the project which is to improve the understanding of the landscape setting of Stonehenge and the WHS for academic, management, presentational and educational reasons.

Normanton Down is private land but most of the earthworks can be seen from public rights of way.

GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND USE

Normanton Down forms part of a strip of land farmed from Normanton in the Avon valley. Formerly a detached part of Durnford parish, Normanton was incorporated into Wilsford in 1885 (Stevenson 1995, 79). The land rises dramatically from Stonehenge Bottom and forms a ridge or spur of Cretaceous Upper Chalk defined by tributary valleys to north and south; it is likely that these were formed by water and the southern one in particular may have carried a winterbourne stream in the past – at its north-western end is the Wilsford shaft (Ashbee *et al* 1989), dug in the Bronze Age, possibly to reach the water table. Stonehenge Bottom may also have supported a winterbourne or stream; Lake Bottom, its southward extension, is supposed to have had a stream in the 19th century (Watts 1962, 213). Opportunities for settlement, agriculture and stock raising may therefore have been greater in the past than is apparent today. Soils range from Icknield Association flinty calcareous silts at the base of the slopes of Stonehenge Bottom to Andover Association shallow, well drained calcareous silts on the summit (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: South West England sheet). The Down commands a sweeping view of the majority of the WHS at 100m-105m OD, excepting the most northerly areas and the Great Cursus, which are just out of sight; indeed there are views beyond the WHS, especially to the north-east.

Two long established tracks cross the Down from north-north-east to south-south-west, part of a route from Netheravon to Wilton; they were less well defined before the recent erection of fences. These tracks divide the Down into three land units.

The area surveyed for this report lies across the two more easterly fields, each of which is currently in different use, though both are inaccessible to the public. The western half of the surveyed area is situated within a nature conservation area with controlled numbers of livestock; the earthworks are not currently fenced in, though they once were. The nature reserve area is currently being used as part of a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) project to encourage several species of rare birds to breed, with special concern for stone curlews. In contrast with this, the eastern half of the cemetery lies within farm land; these barrows were also previously fenced in. At the time of the survey this farmland was under permanent pasture, and contained many grazing sheep which had free access to all of the barrows.

The advantages and disadvantages of the different land uses and their effects upon the barrows and other archaeology will be discussed below, but it must be noted that until the late 19th century, and more particularly until the 1950s, these downs were not heavily cultivated, so the majority of 'improvements' to the landscape which allowed for its cultivation have taken place in recent history.



Fig 2: Normanton Down vertical aerial photograph, Christmas Eve 1943. The mortuary enclosure is visible bottom left, as is a square dew pond close to it that has subsequently been levelled; ploughing in the later 20th century has left little trace of the historic landscape of the Down (US 7PH GP LOC122/1022) English Heritage (NMR) USAAF Photography.

THE EARTHWORKS

Most of the barrows in the Normanton Down group are included in this report, although it was not possible to survey all due to some areas of land being inaccessible. All of the earthworks surveyed for this report are classified as barrows, though the types of barrow differ, as specified below. For the various reference details relating to each barrow including their group details, and the listings according to this report, please refer to the plan (Fig 18) and the concordance tables below. For the purposes of analysis during the field project the surveyed barrows were temporarily lettered (A-BB – see Table 1) but in this report they are listed under the numbers given by Goddard (1913) and Grinsell (1957). They are described generally in geographic order from south and west to north and east.

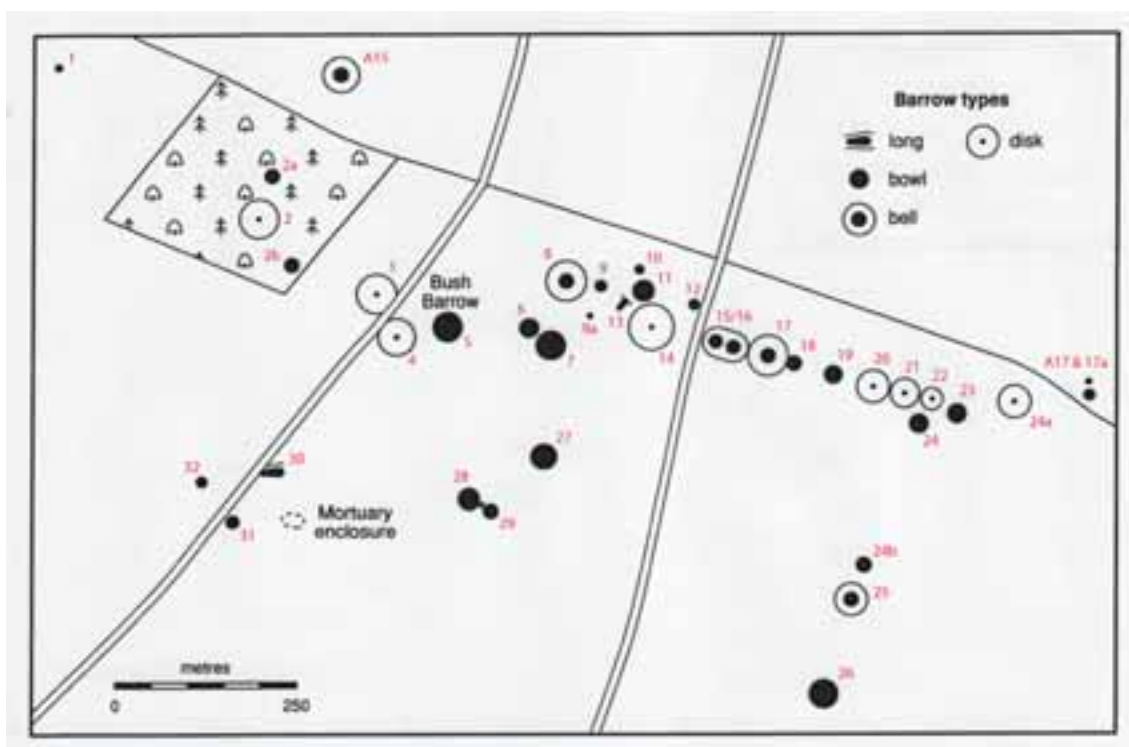


Fig 3: outline plan of the Normanton Down Barrow Cemetery (after Grinsell 1978, fig 4, and Exon *et al* 2000, fig 8.8, with alterations and additions).

The central group of barrows is now situated within a nature reserve; their current state is less disturbed than the eastern barrows which lie in farm land grazed by sheep. This had a minor but still notable impact on the completion of the survey as the more heavily grazed land was much more disturbed and eroded at the time of recording. The nature reserve barrows are sometimes grazed by sheep to prevent vegetation overgrowing, though this is strictly controlled and the livestock within that field are much fewer in number than those found in the eastern field. All of the barrows have been enclosed with fencing, sometimes repeatedly and in varying positions, as part of the arable regime of the second half of the 20th century. This has inevitably impacted upon the outer areas of some

barrows and on any slight features which might have existed between them, such as satellite graves or avenues. These issues will be commented upon in the descriptive accounts below, as well as more generally in the Discussion.

Barrow Wilsford 31

Barrow **31** (Figs 4 and 5) is situated at the south-westernmost extent of the surveyed group. It is a roughly circular bowl barrow with a diameter of 21m and a height of 1.4m. A break in slope half way down the monument suggests it was built in two phases as the break runs almost the entire circumference except for a gap of approximately 8m on the northern face. At this point can be found another small mound (approximately 4m in diameter) tucked against the bottom of the barrow, though the chronological relationship between the two cannot be determined.

At the top of the barrow mound there appears to be evidence of disturbance, probably from excavations recorded historically (Hoare 1812, 206), but possibly also from livestock activity prior to the central part of the barrow group being enclosed within the nature reserve. The barrow lies just to the east of the more westerly road across the Down, now a track running south-west to north-east, which is enclosed by post-and-wire fences.



Fig 4: Barrows 31 and 30 with the mortuary enclosure centre; the dew pond is visible at right; the reason for the loss of the southern ditch of Barrow 30 is evident (CAP 8148/74 NMR 1141/24: 27th March 1954: original photography held at the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography)

Barrow Wilsford 30

This barrow (Figs 4 and 5) is the first of two long barrows within the surveyed group, positioned to the north-east of **31**. It measures approximately 2.3m in height, 20m in width and 43m in length, though its western end appears to have been heavily eroded by the positioning of the track running south-west to north-east. This appears to have worn

away the western base and part of the ditch. At the eastern end of the long barrow there is evidence for a second phase of construction, where a small mound has been placed on the top. This feature measures 21m in diameter, and in some parts appears to have slumped slightly (especially on the northern side), making the eastern end of the earlier long barrow appear wider than the western end, and causing the slope from the top of this mound to run directly down without a break.

There is evidence for a ditch, 4m wide and 0.7m deep, along the northern side of the barrow displaying a clear terminal at its eastern end and truncated by the track-way to the west. There is no ditch to the southern side of the long barrow, though this may have been eroded by agricultural activities (Fig 4).

There has been clear disturbance in two areas of the barrow, one at the centre of the mound at the eastern end, and one in the centre of the lower long barrow. These probably reflect excavations carried out in the 19th century under Richard Colt Hoare and William Cunnington (Hoare 1812, 206). There also appear to have been smaller disturbances within the northern ditch area and to the north-west of the eastern mound which may also reflect excavations, though they may be the result of livestock activity prior to the establishment of the nature reserve.

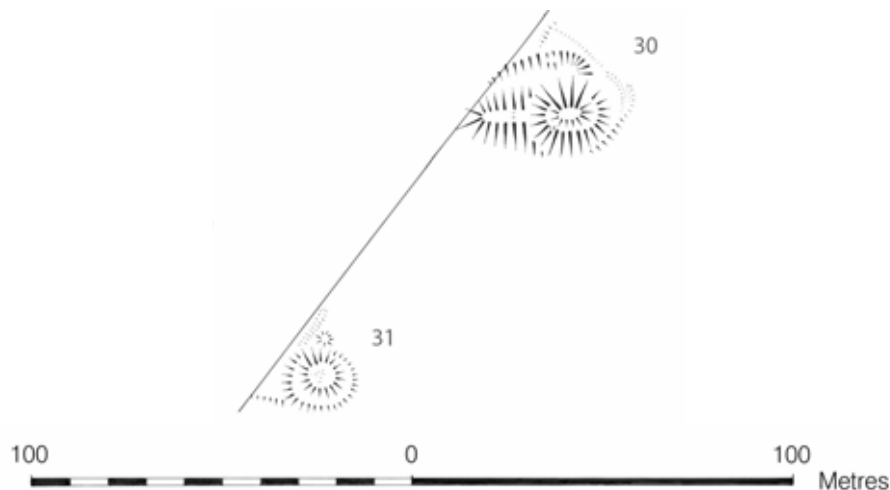


Fig 5: Barrows 30 and 31; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 28

This barrow (Fig 6) is located to the east of **31** and **30**. It is a bowl barrow with a clear break in slope half way down its face, which follows almost the entire circumference of the monument. At its eastern point there is a smaller mound attached. The barrow measures 2.2m in height, 22m in diameter, and presently has remains of a shallow ditch and outer bank around its southern and north-eastern sides. The ditch and bank terminate on the south-eastern side of the main barrow where the smaller mound lies. This mound measures approximately 16m in diameter and has a maximum height of

0.6m. At the south-eastern side of this smaller mound there protrudes a small causeway connecting with Barrow **29**.

In regards to the phasing of this monument and the associated mound, it is difficult to be certain as the remains are very disturbed. However, the smaller mound appears to overlie the eastern side of the barrow, and the break in the surrounding ditch is likely to be the result of the later placement of the smaller mound in this area which created a 'bullnose' effect. A possible scenario may be that a burial was placed in the ditch and the mound was then constructed over it. Alternatively, the orientation of the break in the ditch raises the possibility that this was originally a hengiform ditch.

Barrow **28** has had much disturbance on its top, probably mainly resulting from excavations under Hoare in the 19th century, for which there is historical documentation (1812, 206). There is also some disturbance to areas on the south and south-eastern slope of the barrow, probably sheep or cattle scrapes, prior to the barrow being enclosed within the boundaries of the current nature reserve. Fencing once existed, running very close to the base of the barrow especially on the north-western to north-eastern face of the monument, meaning the ditch and bank which were likely to have continued around this area have been eroded away by agricultural activities. There appears to be only one clear sign of disturbance on the top of the smaller mound, and it is documented that Hoare carried out excavations here too (ibid).

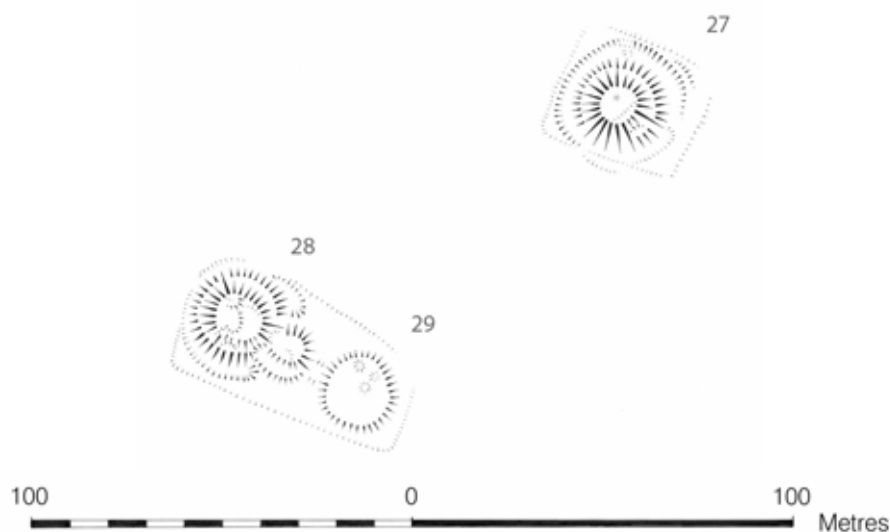


Fig 6: Barrows 27, 28 and 29; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 29

This is a bowl barrow (Fig 6) adjacent to and south-east of **28**, measuring 22.5m in diameter with a height of just under 1m. The shape remains almost perfectly round, and the barrow appears not to have been erected with any outer ditch or bank. A short bank

approximately 4m wide extends from the north-western side of the barrow to join with the south-western side of the smaller mound associated with Barrow **28**. This may imply that Barrow **29** and the smaller mound associated with Barrow **28** were built together or close in time, and have a specific relationship to each other denoted by the adjoining bank.

The fencing around this barrow does not appear to have affected its shape at all; however, there is clear disturbance upon its upper surface. It seems that two interventions of approximately 3-4m in diameter were made in the northern area of the top of the barrow, with a spoil heap being created nearby from the earth removed. Cunnington excavated here (Hoare 1812, 206-7), so this is the most likely reason for the disturbance.

Barrow Wilsford 27

Barrow **27** (Fig 6) lies north-east of barrows **28** and **29**, between them and the main Normanton Down barrow cemetery. This bowl barrow mound has a diameter of 25m, and a height of 2.8m. It is surrounded by a ditch and outer bank with a diameter of roughly 33m, though it breaks for 3m on the south-eastern side. There appears to be some evidence for another ditch beyond this one, though any recordable remains have been eroded away, excepting a small section on the north-east side of the barrow. This erosion probably occurred through agricultural activities, and multiple fence erection has caused much disturbance too. There are traces of an almost square fence around the monument, which appears to have cut through the south-west side of the barrow's outer ditch and bank, and fence lines on the north-west and north-east seem to have distorted the shape of the monument slightly.

At the top of the barrow, just north of the centre, there is evidence for ground disturbance of a shallow cut 2.5m in diameter. This probably represents an excavation by Cunnington which is documented (Hoare 1812, 207) and there is also a small mound adjacent to this disturbance, which may represent the spoil from this excavation. A cut in to the south-east side of the mound probably indicates evidence of livestock activity (sheep or cattle scraping), which also seems to have happened on the inner face of the outer ditch at its northern point.

Barrow Wilsford 4

Barrow **4** (Fig 7) is a large disc barrow, with an overall diameter of 56m. The bank is up to 0.4m high. At the centre of the monument is a small mound with a diameter of 10m and a height of 0.3m, cut by a round pit 4m in diameter and 0.2m deep – this could be of a later phase of construction.

Barrow **4** has been cut on its north-westerly side by the present fence line of the track way running from south-west to north-east, which as noted also affects Barrows **31** and

30. This has affected that side of the monument quite heavily, eroding and dragging the outer bank further west and deforming the otherwise almost perfectly round shape of the barrow. There is also evidence for further enclosing fence lines which have since been removed. These appear not to have encroached too much upon the monument, though they were placed very close and re-erected several times, disturbing the surrounding ground around the entirety of the barrow.

The upper surfaces of the barrow appear not to have been disturbed too heavily, though historical accounts suggest that two periods of excavation occurred here, one under Stukeley and the Earl of Pembroke, and one under Hoare and Cunnington (Hoare 1812, 205). These may account for the anomalies on the south-west and north-east areas of the platform, although it might be argued that these could represent locations of further burials.

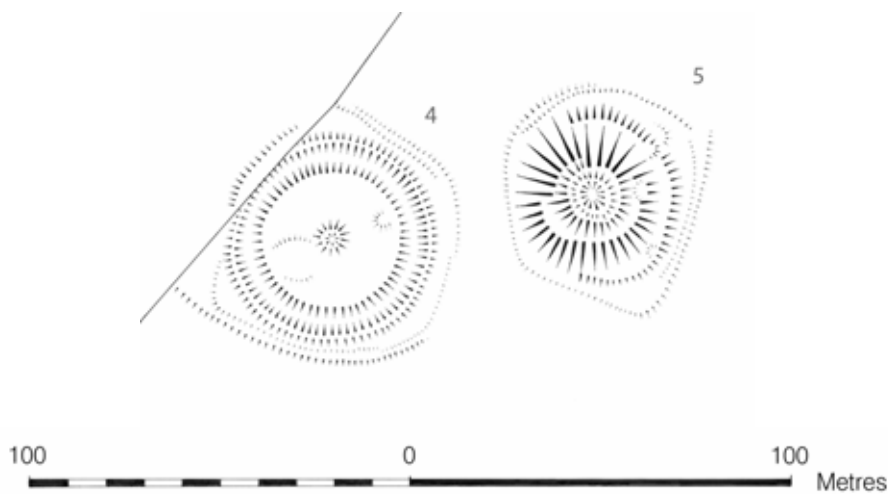


Fig 7: Barrows 4 and 5; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 5 ('Bush Barrow')

This bowl barrow (Figs 7 and 8), historically recognised as 'Bush Barrow' from the existence of trees on the mound in the 18th century, is situated approximately 20m north-east of Barrow 4. This barrow has received much antiquarian attention, and therefore its surface is extremely disturbed and irregular. However, it was possible to identify three phases of development. The first phase barrow appears in plan to be a slightly flattened circular mound, with its widest diameter measuring 49m and its smallest 43m. The break in slope visible on the eastern face implies a secondary phase of construction. At the centre of the secondary platform a third construction phase is represented by a mound measuring approximately 14m in diameter, and bringing the highest point of the barrow to 3.3m above ground level; given the known post-medieval use of this barrow, some of these phases may be of relatively recent date. This smaller central mound has a circular cut in to its top of 6m in diameter, and 0.7m deep.

The mound has three clear breaks in slope but there is no sign of an outer ditch. There is evidence for disturbance on the east side of the barrow, half way down the slope, as well as on the south-east side of the barrow near the bottom of the slope. These small areas (approximately 4m in diameter and roughly oval in shape) may be due to livestock activity prior to the barrow being enclosed within the wildlife reserve, though the excavations undertaken by Cunnington in 1808 (Hoare 1812, 202-5) may also be an explanation. Cunnington's excavations produced one of the most spectacular grave assemblages ever found in Britain (see below – Discussion).

This barrow is situated at a very slightly higher elevation than those in the rest of the group, giving it the greatest inter-visibility with Stonehenge, though it is not the highest barrow in the group.

Barrow Wilsford 6

Barrow 6 (Figs 8 and 9) has historically been recorded as a bowl barrow though there is a slight berm, which suggest it might be classified as a bell barrow. The monument comprises a ditch and bank encircling the entirety of a central mound. The mound has a diameter of 15.5m and a height of 1.3m. It has a break in slope approximately 5m out from its top, which represents original ground level. At the centre is a circular cut in to the top with a depth of 0.4m and a diameter of 2m. The diameter of the outer bank is approximately 30m, and though it does not fully break at any point there is a clear lowering of a 5m stretch on the south-eastern side, facing the adjoining Barrow 7. The ditch is unusually wide in proportion to the mound but survives to only about 0.2m deep.

There is evidence of some disturbance to the central platform of the north-east face in two areas. This may be evidence of sheep scraping prior to the barrow's being enclosed within the nature reserve, though it was also noted by Hoare that it 'had a prior opening' (1812, 202). However, no documentary evidence about that possible intervention has been found. There is evidence of fence lines running extremely close (less than 1m away in some places) to the monument. Although they do not appear to have damaged the barrow they are noted here for future reference.

In terms of phasing, Barrow 6 post-dates Barrow 7, as its outer elements overlies Barrow 7, cutting the outer lip of its ditch.

Barrow Wilsford 7

Barrow 7 (Figs 8 and 9) is a bowl barrow with a ditch circling almost the entirety of it, and an outer bank remaining visible on its north and north-eastern aspect. The central mound has a diameter of 29.5m at its base, and features a break in slope approximately half way down from the top platform, itself 10m in diameter and representing possibly a secondary

phase of construction. The height of the central mound is 2.9m above ground level. The outer ditch and bank have an approximate diameter of 38m.

The surface of the barrow is somewhat disturbed. At the top of the central mound, and slightly to the north-east of it, there is clear evidence of probably three excavation trenches, varying in width from 1.5 – 5m. These comply with the historical record of Hoare's investigation of this mound, which produced many finds and an interment (1812, 202). In the eastern arc of the outer ditch there also appears to be evidence of disturbance, which may be the result of antiquarian investigation, or possibly livestock damage prior to the barrows being fenced within the wildlife sanctuary. At the south-eastern point of the ditch there is a rise in the floor, implying that there was a small causeway, though it is difficult to tell today where this led to as the disturbance from closely positioned fences has obliterated the majority of the outer bank in this area.

In regards to discernable phasing features, this barrow predates Barrow **6**, which overlies part of the outer bank and ditch on this barrow's north-western extremity.

Barrow Wilsford 8

Barrow **8** (Figs 8 and 9), a bell barrow, has a central mound with a base measuring 33.5m in diameter and an overall diameter of 40.5m. At some point after the initial construction of the mound a secondary mound was added, this with a base diameter of 24m, bringing the present height of the central mound to 3.2m. The barrow has a surrounding ditch approximately 1.5m wide at its base and 0.6m deep but does not have an outer bank. At the north-western point of the ditch the floor level rises to create a causeway approximately 7m wide.

At the top of the mound there is much evidence of disturbance. There are also three smaller areas of uneven ground, two on the north-west slope of the main mound, and one to the south-east – each area measuring 3-5m in width. These areas may represent excavation trenches of the early 19th century, when it is documented that Cunnington extensively investigated this barrow, with extremely productive results (Hoare 1812, 201-2).

Evidence of two fence lines is present, one running directly around the outer edges of the barrow on the western aspect, within 1m of it, and a later one which encompassed the group of Barrows **8, 9, 9a, 11, 13** and **14**. The earlier, closer fence line appears to have shaved off a length of 12m of the northern side of the outer ditch scarp of the barrow, though the more carefully positioned later fence does not appear to have affected the condition of the barrow directly.

Barrow Wilsford 9

Barrow 9 (Figs 8 and 9) is a small misshapen bowl barrow with a maximum diameter of 17.5m. The top of the main mound lies off centre, slightly to the west, with a platform diameter of 7.5m, and a height of 0.7m. To the east of this is a break in slope and a flattened area approximately 1.5m wide and 9m long. In plan, this looks as though it might represent two building phases, with a lower, flatter oval mound having a later rounder mound placed upon it, though this is uncertain given the shallow elevation of the barrow.



Fig 8: The western barrows, looking east – monumental islands in a sea of arable: Bush Barrow in the foreground, Barrow 27 to the right with the southern sector of its ditch being over-ploughed and small Barrows 10 and 12 at top left being encroached upon (NMR 1865/217 12th November 1980. © Crown copyright NMR)

There are some remains of a ditch on the northern and southern sides, with deliberate terminal endings on the western side, about 5m apart. The southern ditch segment only

spans a distance of 11.5m, returning into the base of the mound. The northern ditch is 10m long and is cut off by the remains of a former fence.

The top of the barrow has some evidence of disruption, possibly resulting from its recorded excavation in the early 19th century by Cunnington – though Hoare states that he believed the barrow had been opened before (1812, 201). There are also some fence line remains to the east and south-west of the barrow.

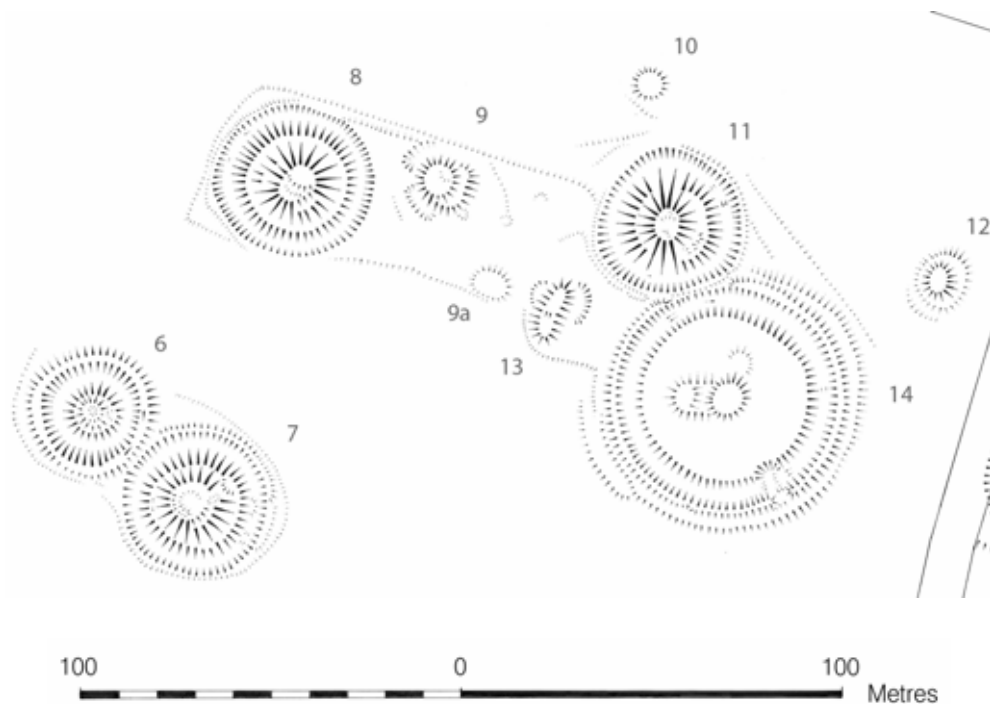


Fig 9: Barrows 6-14; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 9a

Barrow 9a (Fig 9) is a small, shallow mound, possibly a bowl barrow without an outer ditch or bank. The mound is presently oval, 12m at its widest point and 9m at its least wide point, with a height of 0.1m. The misshapen appearance may be the result of a fence line cutting in to the southern face of the mound, effectively shaving that aspect away.

There do not appear to be any disturbances to the surface of the mound, which tallies with a lack of documented excavations.

Barrow Wilsford 13

This small long barrow (Figs 9 and 10) has dimensions of 21m x 10m at its base, with a height of 0.7m. The platform at the top of the barrow dips down in height slightly towards the south at the midway point. This barrow has the remains of two side ditches,

to west and east, both of which have terminals against the base of the barrow at its northern end. The western ditch is approximately 14m long. Though the eastern ditch mirrors the western one, its outer scarp comes to an end approximately 1m away from the mound base.

There are no recorded excavations of this barrow, and the surface appearance seems to confirm this.

Barrow Wilsford 10

Barrow 10 (Figs 8 and 9) is the most northerly of the barrows in the group. It is a small bowl barrow, measuring 9.5m in diameter at its base, and 0.2m high. There does not seem to have been any disturbance to the surface of the barrow. The remains of a fence line, 12m in length, run north-east to south-west approximately 1m south of the barrow, but this does not seem to have affected its shape. There is no record of any antiquarian investigation.

Barrow Wilsford 11

Barrow 11 (Figs 9 and 10) is a bowl, or possibly bell, barrow with a ditch and outer bank. The overall monument diameter is 38.5m, with the height of the mound 2.5m. The top of the mound is oval, with measurements of 8.5m by 6m, and is slightly off centre given the presence of a berm on the eastern face of the monument; there is also a break of slope on the western face. The base of the surrounding ditch is approximately 1.5m wide and 0.4m deep. The outer bank is 0.4m high. At the north-east and south are raised areas in the base of the ditch, the first with a width of approximately 6m, and the second 13m. This southern raised area aligns with one in the ditch of Barrow 14.

There is much in the way of surface disturbance to this barrow, at three places on the top platform, as well as one on the south-eastern slope of the mound. These probably represent antiquarian investigations on two separate occasions, first under Hoare (1812, 201) who found nothing and secondly under Thurnam who unearthed an interment (Thurnam 1869, 543; Blore *et al* 1995, 183).

There is a relationship between Barrow 11 and Barrow 14, which rest up against each other, affecting both their formations. This relationship will be discussed below in the description of Barrow 14.

Barrow Wilsford 14

Barrow 14 (Figs 9 and 10) is a large disc barrow, with an overall diameter of 64.5m. A 2.5m wide ditch, 0.4m deep, encircles the entirety of the main platform, and has an outer bank. The bank, 0.4m high, encircles most of the barrow and ditch, except for a clearly

'bullnosed' break at the northern point, where this barrow adjoins Barrow 11. At this point, between the two terminal endings of the encircling bank, the ditch floor rises, aligning with the raised area in the ditch of Barrow 11, creating a clear link between the two monuments.

Upon the central platform is a mound, probably of two phases. It is eccentric to the main barrow platform, oval, and appears to comprise two separate mounds which have been placed next to each other, with an outer scarp surrounding both. The height of this mound is approximately 0.2m above ground level. It seems that a single mound was placed in the centre of the disc barrow, and then an adjoining second mound was positioned to the west. There is also evidence to suggest a possible third mound here, just to the north of the central one, though these earthworks were comparatively slight and had clearly been disturbed.

At the south-east side of the barrow there is evidence of disturbance at the side of the central platform, extending south through the ditch and the outer bank. There is, however, no evidence of the documented antiquarian investigation undertaken by Stukeley in the first quarter of the 18th century (Hoare 1812, 201; Grinsell 1957, 220; Burl and Mortimer 2005, 103).

In regards to the phasing of Barrows 11 and 14, the evidence is conflicting. On one hand it can be argued that Barrow 14 predates Barrow 11, as Barrow 11 appears to overlie the north-eastern bank of Barrow 14. It could also be argued that the terminal ends of the bank of Barrow 14 imply that they were purposefully created in this way, around the already positioned Barrow 11 but this is a relatively weak argument and the former suggestion, that Barrow 11 post-dates the construction of Barrow 14, is preferred. Fig 10 certainly suggests that the outer bank of 11 is riding up over the bank of 14. (It is also possible that the barrows were constructed in overlapping phases.)



Fig 10: The central barrow group in the 1930s. The Down was still under pasture, with corrugations of a wide track passing through; Barrow 17 (right foreground) shows extensive damage from burrowing animals and 12 has been truncated but otherwise the barrows are in good condition (NMR SU 1241/5 © Ashmolean Museum)

Barrow Wilsford 12

This is a small bowl barrow (Figs 9 and 10). There is a very clear break in slope running the entire circumference midway up the main slope of the barrow, implying it to be a two phase monument, or reflecting structural detail or weathering. The overall base diameter of the roughly circular monument is approximately 15m, with a centrally positioned top platform with a diameter of 5.5m and a height of 0.45m. There is slight evidence of a ditch to the southern aspect of the mound. It is documented that Hoare excavated this barrow, though it proved unproductive (1812, 201). Historical aerial photographs (eg Fig 10) show a small hollow in the top, the ditch surviving around the western arc of the mound but also that the eastern flank of the barrow had been truncated by the adjacent migrating track before that time.

Barrow Wilsford 15/16

Barrow 15/16 (Figs 10 and 11) has been recorded as a twin bell barrow. It is the most westerly of those enclosed within working farmland, upon which sheep were grazing at the time of survey. The pair of mounds rests on a kidney-shaped platform 57m long and 37m wide at its base, aligned lengthways west-east. This in turn is enclosed almost entirely by a ditch except at the eastern end where it breaks for 25m between this pair and Barrow 17.

Connecting the mounds is a causeway, approximately 6m wide. The westernmost of the two mounds is heavily disturbed and very roughly circular with an approximate diameter of 19.5m. It has a height of 3.3m above ground level. The disturbance is focused upon the upper areas of the mound and the southern sloping face. The easternmost mound is not as heavily disturbed, but nevertheless has had much interference on its uppermost area. It has a height of 3.4m and measures approximately 19.5m in diameter. The disturbance includes some modern sheep scrapes, though it is likely that the turf-covered surface irregularities at the top of the mounds all represent antiquarian investigation. It is documented that Lord Pembroke and Stukeley excavated here in the 18th century, as well as Cunnington in the 19th century (Burl and Mortimer 2005, 95, 104; Hoare 1812, 200-1).

Barrow Wilsford 17

This large bell barrow (Figs 10 and 11) measures approximately 50m in diameter within the ditch, and has a maximum height of 4.2m. It has a ditch approximately 5m wide and 0.7m deep, enclosing almost the whole of the mound except for a break of 22.5m at its western point, which coincides with the break in the ditch of the twin bell barrow, Barrow 15/16. The mound has possibly three phases of construction, shown by tiered breaks in

slope. The ditches of **15/16** and **17** are intercutting; arguably the ditch of **17** encroaches on and cuts through the ditch of **15/16** but has also been sculpted to north and south so that it forms a complete entity.

There is clear disturbance to the topmost area of the barrow, where a triangular intervention appears to have occurred, with the spoil creating up-cast shallow banks around it. This may be the result of antiquarian excavations; Hoare believed that Stukeley had excavated this barrow (Hoare 1812, 200) but Stukeley does not seem to mention it. There are also two large sheep scrapes, one in the south face of the mound, and one in the north. Each of these scrapes measures approximately 4m in diameter. Old fence lines to the north and south of the barrow appear to have caused a slight shaving to the roundness of the barrow edges at these points.

There is no clear relationship between Barrow **17** and Barrow **15/16**, as it seems that a deliberate gap in both sets of ditches was left to allow a clear passageway between them. It is possible that the low area between the two barrows is a natural hollow, such as a swallow hole. Because the area between Barrows **17** and **15/16** is reasonably broad and flat, it is difficult to imply phasing, as neither monument has directly affected the construction of the other. However, it may be possible to argue that they were created closely in time, in order to explain the apparently deliberate breaks in the outer ditches, and construction phases were interleaved.

Barrow Wilsford 18

Barrow **18** (Fig 11) is a bowl barrow with a diameter of 24m and a height of 0.7m. Its top platform has a diameter of 8.5m, and there is a break in slope approximately half way down the barrow face, which continues around the entire monument, suggesting the possibility of two phases of construction. This barrow does not have a surrounding ditch or bank and there is no clear relationship with Barrow **17**.

There is evidence of disturbance in the top of the mound, off centre to the south. There is a shallow circular dip in the surface of the barrow, with a diameter of 4m. This is likely to be the result of an intervention by Cunnington in the early 19th century (Hoare 1812, 200).

Barrow Wilsford 19

This barrow (Figs 11 and 12) is positioned 30m west of Barrow **18**. It has a base diameter of 31m and an overall height of 1.1m. Its south-western face has been shaved due to a former fence line being placed across the base. There is a small secondary mound placed upon the main platform, positioned slightly off centre to the south-east. It is nearly circular and has a base diameter of 10.5m, with the diameter of its top being 4.5m. Upon its top is a cut into the surface of the barrow, measuring 3m in diameter and 0.1m deep. This may

reflect the investigation carried out by Cunnington in the early 19th century (Hoare 1812, 200).

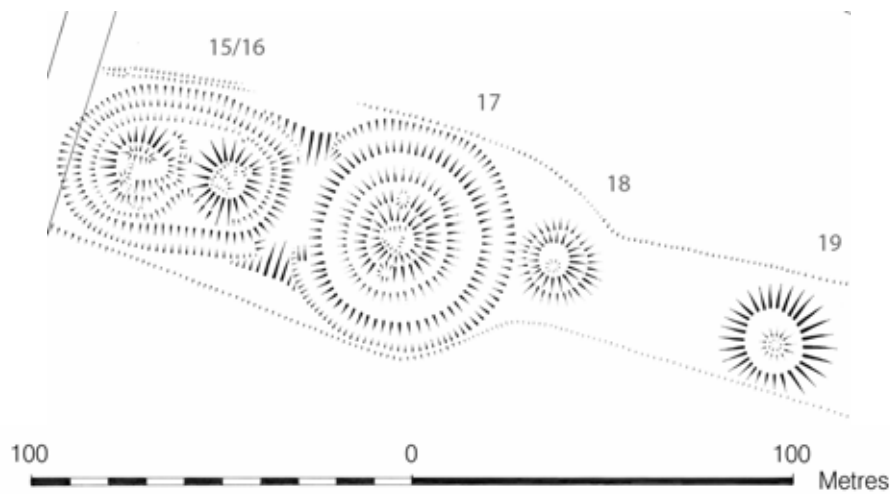


Fig 11: Barrows 15/16-19; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 20

Barrow 20 (Figs 12, 13 and 16) is the first of a linear set of three disc barrows, all of which had been 'explored by the neighbouring farmers' (Hoare 1812, 200), and it is positioned 15m east of Barrow 19. It has been heavily misshapen on its southern face due to the former placement of fencing across this area, which has allowed ploughing to occur over the outer barrow sections. This monument is a classic example of a disc barrow, with a central ground level platform being surrounded by a ditch and bank. This example also has a mound placed at the centre of the platform, which has a diameter of 11.5m at the base, and a height of 0.6m above ground level. The central platform has a diameter of 29.5m. The overall diameter of the monument, at the outer bank base, measures 47.5m. The ditch is 0.2m deep and the outer bank 0.2m high from ground level.

There are three defined causeways across the base of the barrow ditch, two on the north and one on the east. They each have a width of approximately 3m, and join the bank and the inner platform at ground level. Upon the inner slope of the outer bank at the west is a tree, and evidence of ground disturbance to its immediate south. At the top of the central mound there is also evidence of disturbance, probably a result of the intervention by Hoare (1812, 200). However, the area of disturbance to the south of the current tree may be the result of sheep scraping.

Barrow Wilsford 21

Barrow 21 (Figs 12, 13 and 16) is a disc barrow. There is a gap of only 1m between this and Barrow 20. Like Barrow 20, it has been heavily eroded by fencing and ploughing on

its southern face, but unlike Barrow **20** it is also damaged in this way on its northern side. This has dramatically affected the shape of the monument; however, some measurements can still be deduced.



Fig 12: The eastern barrows. The plough is encroaching badly on the southern flanks of Barrows 19, 20 and 21 (CAP 8154/39 NMR SU 1241/22: 22nd April 1954: original photography held at Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography).

The overall diameter of Barrow **21**, at the base of the outer bank, measures approximately 42m, with the inner main platform having a diameter of approximately 28m. The base of the ditch has an average width of 1.8m and is 0.1m deep. The mound, which lies at the centre of the main platform, has a base diameter of 8.5m, and is 0.5m high. Like Barrow **20** there are some raised causeway-like areas in the bottom of the ditch connecting the outer bank to the inner platform; one to the west (6m wide), one to the north-east, one to the north-west and one to the south-east (each 3.5m wide). To the north-west is a small mound, with a base diameter of 3m, in the base of the ditch.

At the south-eastern side of the monument the bank is clearly overlapped by the bank of Barrow **22**, for a length of 16m, showing that Barrow **21** predates **22**. There is no clear evidence of excavation on the monument though, as noted above, exploration is documented by Colt Hoare (1812, 200).

Barrow Wilsford 22

The third of the line of three disc barrows (recorded as a saucer barrow by Grinsell (1957, 224)) is smaller than the others (Figs 12, 13 and 16). It has a diameter of 31m at its widest point at the base of the outer bank, which is only visible on its north-west side,

where the monument overlaps the south-east side of Barrow **21**. The monument's originally circular shape has been severely compromised by the laying of fence lines upon its northern side (and the south-eastern side, though the actual remains of a fence line on this side were not noted during the current survey). The placing of these fence lines has allowed plough damage to occur on the northern and south-eastern faces of the monument. The diameter of the central platform is 25m, upon which a mound is placed with a base diameter of 9.5m. Upon this mound there is a further shallow rise, bringing its height to 0.5m.

As in Barrows **20** and **21**, this barrow has raised areas in the ditch bottom joining the outer bank to the inner platform, both of which are situated at the north-west side of the barrow, one with a width of 5m, the other with a width of 2m. At the southern side of the monument the base of the ditch, 0.1m deep, rises at a shallow incline until the ditch merges in to ground level for a length of 4.5m. Immediately south-east of this rise is another small low oval mound, with base dimensions of approximately 10m by 3.5m.

This barrow slightly overlaps the northern edge of Barrow **24**, showing that it post-dates it. There is no clear evidence of the exploration noted by Hoare (1812, 200).

Barrow Wilsford 24

Barrow **24** (Figs 12, 13 and 16) has generally been classified as a bowl barrow. The results of the current survey imply that it may in fact be a bell barrow. There is a clear separation between the mound (base diameter of 21m) and the wider base platform (diameter of 30m), although it may be argued that a degree of slumping of earth appears to have occurred on the western slope of the barrow, masking any phasing on that side. At present, the maximum height of the barrow is 2m. It has minimal remains of an outer ditch on its north-western side, which meets the outer southern edge of Barrow **22**. Like the three previously discussed barrows, this monument's shape has been severely compromised by the placing of fences around its base.

On the western slope of the barrow there appears to be surface disturbance. This may be the result of the explorations noted by Hoare (1812, 200).

Barrow Wilsford 23

This bowl barrow (Figs 13 and 16) has a base diameter of 29.5m. It rises with a shallow slope to a height of 0.4m, where there is an upper platform measuring 13.5m in diameter. There is a gap of 12m between this and Barrow **22**. Remains of a fence line are visible on the western side of the barrow, running for approximately 25m at a distance of 1.5m from the base of the barrow. This fence line is also visible for a 5m section on the south-eastern side of the monument. A second fence line can be seen running around the south, east and north sides of the barrow also, which is part of a fence that appears to

have once enclosed the entire barrow group from 15/16 to 23 (and possibly 24a). However, these two fence lines do not appear to have impacted upon the overall shape of the barrow.

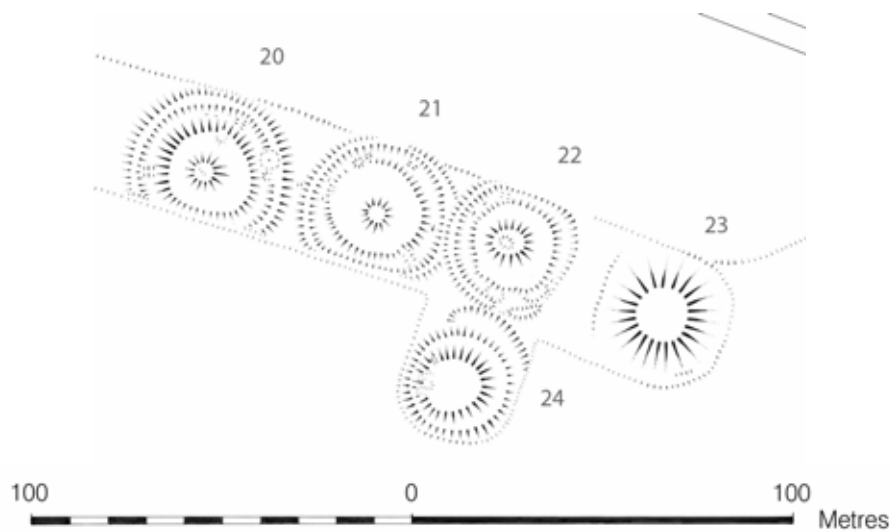


Fig 13: barrows 20-24; survey plan reduced to 1:2000

Barrow Wilsford 24a

This monument (Fig 16) is extremely badly eroded. It has been documented historically as being a disc barrow, an interpretation supported by historical aerial photographs (eg Fig 2), though ploughing has destroyed its form and transformed its central mound into the appearance of a very small, low bowl barrow with only a slight trace of a surrounding ditch or bank to its west. The remains have an approximate base diameter of 29m, though it is clear that the eastern side is very spread, probably as a result of ploughing. The height of the barrow mound today is approximately 0.1m. There are multiple remains of fencing, with two parallel 47m lengths running across the north and south sides of the monument (the southern cutting through the base of the existing mound), as well as an irregular octagonal enclosure around the whole of the remains, following approximately the original perimeter of the barrow.

The monument was so badly worn away that it was impossible to discern any surface irregularities as those resulting from the documented investigation of the monument (Hoare 1812, 199).

Barrow Amesbury 17

This monument has previously been recorded separately (lying within the parish of Amesbury), though its proximity to the Normanton Down group demands its attention here. The low bowl barrow measures 14.5m in diameter at its base, and has a height of

0.4m. It currently sits in an arable field, with a square fence placed around it. It appears to have been pulled slightly north-east, probably a result of ploughing over many years. There is no evidence today to suggest that this barrow has been excavated, though Hoare states that it had been investigated (1812, 199).

Other barrows

Barrows on Normanton Down not surveyed as part of this project are shown on Fig 2 and listed in Table 2.

Wilsford 1, a small bowl barrow with a beaker interment, is sometimes considered as part of this cemetery though it is 300m west of its nearest neighbour and, as Exon *et al* have pointed out (2000, 102), in a different topographical locale. More closely integrated with the main cemetery are the bell barrow, Amesbury 15, and the three barrows in Normanton Gorse, Wilsford 2, 2a and 2b. Amesbury 15, sometimes referred to as the 'Sun Barrow', was considered by Hoare 'the most beautiful bell-shaped barrow in the plains of Stonehenge' and yielded an exceptionally interesting grave assemblage (1812, 205-6); it now has a distinctly flat top. Grinsell recorded its dimensions as: mound, 31m in diameter and 3.4m high; berm, 5.5m wide; ditch, 5.5m wide and 0.75m deep (1957, 207). Wilsford 2 is a disc barrow, recorded by Hoare as having been previously opened (1812, 205). In 1970 it was recorded by the OS Field Investigator: the ditch was 0.4m deep internally and the bank 0.8m high above the ditch but the central mound could not be identified. The others are bowl barrows but 2b was probably destroyed by the construction of a building on the edge of the Gorse (Grinsell 1957, 196). Barrow 2a was recorded by the OS in 1970: it had a diameter of 14m and a height of 0.5m. Wilsford 3, which forms part of a distinct cluster with Wilsford 4 and 5, Bush Barrow, is a very fine disc barrow; it was excavated by Cunnington in 1804 (Hoare 1812, 205). Grinsell recorded its dimensions as: mound, 9.4m in diameter and 0.3m high; berm, 15.8m wide; ditch, 4.0m wide and 0.4m deep; bank 5.8m wide and 0.4m high (1957, 220). Wilsford 32, a bowl barrow, was excavated by Cunnington (Hoare 1812, 206). It was recorded by the OS in 1970 as 0.2m high with no trace of a surrounding ditch. Wilsford 24b, 25 and 26 are part of another, widely-spaced, linear group stretching southwards down the spur which divides Stonehenge Bottom from the westerly branch of Spring Bottom. Bowl barrow 24b was excavated by Cunnington but the larger bowl 26 had been previously opened, as had bell barrow 25 (Hoare 1812, 207). These barrows were recorded by the OS in 1970: 24b was 24m in diameter and 0.3m high; 25 was described as well preserved, 52m in diameter and 3.6m high; 26 was 34m in diameter, 1.8m high and had traces of a ditch to the south. Amesbury 17a was recorded by Hoare as bearing the marks of prior opening (1812, 199); this small bowl barrow was recorded by Grinsell as surviving to 0.15m high (1957, 150) but was ploughed out by 1970 when visited by the OS.

There is also a ring ditch visible on aerial photographs (NMR SU 14 SW 384), 24m in diameter, indicating the position of a further round barrow about 10m south of Barrow 23.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Antiquarian activities

The Stonehenge area and its barrows have received much antiquarian interest. John Leland described the barrows around Stonehenge: '*monticuli illi ex egesta terra conglobati*' (little mounts conglobulate in this poor soil) (quoted by Thurnam 1868, 162). William Camden also commented on the monuments of Salisbury Plain, stating that, '...many such artificial hills both round and pointed are to be seen in these parts, and are called burrowes or barrowes, probably thrown up in memory of soldiers slain thereabouts. Bones are found in them' (*ibid*).

John Aubrey considered the area in his *Monumenta Britannica* (compiled 1665-93) and discounted the 'memory of soldiers' theory for the barrows, suggesting instead that they were the 'burying places for the great persons and rulers of those times' (quoted by Thurnam 1868, 162-3). William Stukeley published his principal work on Stonehenge in 1740. It was under Stukeley and his benefactor the Earl of Pembroke that the first recorded excavations of five of the Normanton Down Barrows surveyed for this report took place. In the small long barrow **13** he found nothing (Burl and Mortimer 2005, 103). In Barrows **4** and **14**, both Bronze Age disc barrows, Stukeley found primary cremations (*ibid*). Excavations by Pembroke and Stukeley in Barrow **15/16**, referred to by them as a twin bell barrow, produced a secondary inhumation close to the surface in **15** but only frogs' bones, snail shells and large flints in **16** (Burl and Mortimer 2005, 95, 104). There has also been speculation that Stukeley and Pembroke excavated Barrow **17** (Hoare 1812, 200; Grinsell 1957, 211), but he does not record this.

Stukeley also recounts an excavation in the bottom of a circular 'cavity...like a dish', 30.5m in diameter and just over 2m deep, between Amesbury **15** and the Bush Barrow (Burl and Mortimer 2005, 102). Atkinson located this hollow on the northern edge of Normanton Gorse, containing building debris, which he considered to be of First World War date; he thought the hollow was too large to be a pond barrow (and had no surrounding bank) and was probably natural (1985, 245).

The next thorough investigation of Stonehenge and the surrounding area took place from 1798, under Sir Richard Colt Hoare and William Cunnington. Under these famous antiquaries more than 200 barrows were excavated, including all but one (Barrow **13**) of the 28 surveyed in the Normanton Down group for the current investigation. This level of intrusive activity has been suggested as one of the possible reasons for the misshapen appearances of the surfaces of many of the barrows (above) but it should be noted that other barrows that they excavated were backfilled well. The relative information regarding each barrow can be found in Table 1. However, it is possible to make a number of broad observations as a result of the work undertaken by Hoare and Cunnington and these will be considered below.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the archaeologist, doctor and superintendent of the Wiltshire County Asylum, John Thurnam, set about reassessing the work undertaken by previous antiquaries, including Hoare and Cunnington. It is known that he re-opened Barrow 11 in 1856 and discovered an interment not noted by them. Though there is little in the way of specific excavation records left by Thurnam, he is well known for compiling a systematic study and detailed engravings of the external and internal characteristics of long and round barrows (1868 and 1869).

20th-century to present day investigations

In the 20th century archaeological investigation on the Normanton Down group continued. Goddard's (1913) comprehensive lists paved the way for much of the compilation of the gazetteer by Leslie Grinsell which was published in the Victoria County History of Wiltshire (1957). Meanwhile, Crawford and Keiller published an aerial view of Bush Barrow and the two adjacent disc barrows, Wilsford 3 and 4 (1928, 190-2, pl 33a).

In October 1959, Faith Vatcher excavated one of the now completely eroded features of Normanton Down. The rectangular ditched enclosure with internal banks was situated to the east of Barrow 31, and can now only be seen on aerial photographs (eg Figs 2, 4 and 14). A radio carbon date for this feature, from an antler pick, places it at 3512-2914 cal bc (BM-505; OxCal4.1), which ties in with the Mortlake Ware found, along with some animal bones, during its excavation (Vatcher 1961).



Fig 14: A low level oblique, taken between 1933 and 1939. It shows Barrow 31 in the foreground, Barrow 30 (with southern ditch apparently surviving) top left and the mortuary enclosure right (detail of NMR SU 1141/11 © Ashmolean Museum)

Schemes of investigation covering the wider WHS area have been the trend from the later 20th century to the present day, though they have all considered Normanton Down

in some way. Excavation of any area of the WHS has been more strictly controlled since it received its status in 1986. From then on there has been a greater move towards surface surveys and other less intrusive methods of analysis such as geophysical survey (though no geophysical surveys have been carried out on the Normanton group as yet). Much more attention has been given to the interpretation of the role and function of monuments here also, rather than purely compiling data sets and catalogues.

In the early 1980s the Stonehenge Environs Project was launched by the Wessex Archaeological Committee, in reaction to an RCHME survey which outlined severe destruction of the remains in the Stonehenge area (1979). The results of the Wessex project were published by English Heritage (Richards 1990). It was recognised in this publication that Normanton Down would serve as a good case study in any attempt at understanding the development of Neolithic and Bronze Age cemeteries over time, both in general and within the Stonehenge area. One of the realisations from this comprehensive study was outlined by Richards: 'The topographic relationship between Stonehenge and its peripheral barrows is easily demonstrated; less easy to characterise positively is the concept ... of a complementary focal area on Wilsford Down, to which the cemeteries of Lake, Normanton Down, and Winterbourne Stoke Crossroads appear to be related' (1990, 274). Richards explicitly related this 'focal area' to the North Kite, an earthwork for which he had confirmed the early Bronze Age date (1990, 184-92) previously suggested by Ernest Greenfield and the RCHME. However, the statement quoted here has been taken to imply an abandonment of this concept (Woodward and Woodward 1996, 281), though Ann Woodward has subsequently re-emphasised the importance of the view to the Normanton Down barrows from the south (2000, 131-2; see also Exon *et al*/2000, 88-91).



Fig 15: A crop circle at Normanton Down. Its presence illustrates how these ancient monuments still attract attention, often of a bizarre nature (NMR SU 1141/110 21961/15 17th July 2002 © English Heritage. NMR)

More recent publications discussing Stonehenge in its landscape include that of Cleal *et al* (1995), which also stems from the joint research programme between English Heritage

and Wessex Archaeology outlined above. It set out to publish fully previous research with the aim of elaborating upon views already expressed, as well as to provide a good knowledge base from which future management decisions could be made. At the same time as this publication, desk based research had been underway regarding possible changes to the existing road systems within the WHS, with most attention paid to the potential upgrade to the A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down (Blore, Hitchen and Vallender 1995). This roadway has been a bone of contention for many years given its position and heavy traffic load, and it runs almost parallel to the Normanton Barrow Group and approximately 500m to the north. Despite this assessment, and several other similar reports considering the repositioning of the A303, no changes to the roadway have yet taken place.

Other in-depth studies of the Stonehenge area include that of Exon *et al* (2000), which considered the spatial arrangement and patterning of the barrows in the Stonehenge area. More recent landscape studies include the 'Stonehenge Riverside Project', a collaborative research project which has involved several universities. As part of this, phenomenological field investigation was undertaken, including an assessment of barrow profiles and sight lines from Normanton Down to Stonehenge, Beacon Hill and elsewhere (Dave Field pers comm). A new research proposal to undertake detailed study of the Normanton Down cemetery has recently been put forward (Stuart Needham pers comm; Needham *et al* 2010, 35).

DISCUSSION

The Survey

The barrows are the only surviving earthworks on Normanton Down; there is no evidence of ancient fields, prehistoric settlement, linear ditches or indeed later activity. However, the aerial photographic evidence largely confirms this lack of evidence; there are few cropmarks or soilmarks in the area. There are some ditches trending south-west to north-east, with one crossing from south-east to north-west, but these do not seem to be part of the established linear system; most of them are possibly field boundaries of relatively recent date, while the south-east to north-west aligned ditch could be a water pipe from Springbottom Farm to the Stonehenge airfield.



Fig 16: The eastern barrows (NMR 21917/1 19th December 2002 © English Heritage. NMR)

The barrows surveyed comprise the majority of the Normanton Down barrow group. Circumstances prevented survey of the rest of the group – basic details of those not surveyed are listed in Table 2. There were three main issues preventing the recording of

these barrows: access denied by landowner; stone curlews, an extremely rare breed of bird, were nesting in the nearby area and could not be disturbed; the monument cannot be recorded on the ground as it has been ploughed away and can only be seen on aerial photographs as a cropmark.

Of those that were surveyed, the conditions in which recording took place were ideal. The weather was fine and the area was in open fields – perfect conditions for GPS surveying. Despite being quite late in the year for earthwork survey, the vegetation was not high, allowing a good level of clarity when observing the contours of each barrow. This was due to the grazing sheep and, though sheep scrapes have damaged the slopes of some barrows, this grazing regime is the most benign land use for the management of the barrows, especially if strict stocking levels can be maintained. It is clearly arable agriculture during the latter part of the 20th century and into the early years of the 21st century that has been most destructive of the historic landscape of Normanton Down (Grinsell 1978, 5), with the result that there is little but the remaining barrow mounds and ditches, frequently truncated, visible on the surface (Fig 16).

The Barrows – chronology and phasing

Historical research and the creation of period characteristics

Given the extensive historical research and knowledge of period characteristics associated with prehistoric burial monuments (Ashbee 1960 and 1970; Bender 1992; Grinsell 1957; Parker Pearson 1999; Stukeley 1740; Thurnam 1868 and 1869; Woodward 2000 – to name but a few), it may be argued that assessing the date of initial construction of the Normanton Down barrow cemetery should be possible. The presence of two long barrows suggests a Neolithic origin of the cemetery but, and until carbon dating is undertaken for this group, there are only the more traditional phasing methods available. Several scholars have attempted to phase the cemetery by reference to excavated grave assemblages, seeking a linear progression (summarised by Needham *et al* 2010, 4). However, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the physical relationships between adjacent barrows readily visible on the surface.

Barrows **30** and **13** are small long barrows of distinctly Neolithic type. The others within the surveyed group are all round but, while it cannot be assumed that they are not Neolithic in origin, there is a greater likelihood that they were erected in the Bronze Age or later. Of the non-surveyed features, there is also one other (now ploughed away) example of a Neolithic monument in the form of a mortuary enclosure. There is currently no evidence to suggest that pre-Neolithic monument creation or other activities occurred on Normanton Down but the fact that burial monuments were placed upon this ridge

over such a long period of time implies that the area held some degree of ritual significance to begin with.

The ditch of Barrow **28** arguably resembles a henge ditch and given the number of other small henges known in the Stonehenge environs, including those with later barrow mounds constructed over them, this identification is not impossible.

The order of construction of the barrows – the whole group

As outlined above it is assumed that the long barrows **30** and **13** represent Neolithic monuments, and there is clearly no direct physical relationship between them. The Bronze Age round barrows appear to have been purposefully positioned though, as Needham *et al* have pointed out (2010, 4-6, fig 2), the cemetery falls into several different groups. It is difficult to determine the order in which they were constructed as only a few of them show stratigraphic relationships with others in the same group. It has already been discussed above how barrows such as **28** and **29** have a stratigraphic relationship, as well as pairs **6** and **7**, **11** and **14**, **15/16** and **17** (and possibly **17** and **18**), **21** and **22**, and **22** and **24**.

When these relationships are considered within the cemetery as a whole, there is conflicting evidence regarding any directionality of construction in the linear. Traditionally, it has been suggested that there is a sequence that runs from west to east (Needham *et al* 2009, 17; 2010, 4). The stratigraphic evidence in the field suggests a less straightforward story: in the cases of Barrows **21–22** and **28–29** the sequence is indeed west to east; in the case of Barrows **6–7** the sequence is east to west; in the case of Barrows **11–14** it is south-east to north-west, and in the case of Barrows **22–24** it is south to north. It seems to be the case that no particular order of build occurred, with various barrows being erected and later ones being slotted in between and against those already existing. As Needham *et al* (2010, 4) point out, the long barrows occupy different positions within the cemetery, though arguably each might form the focus for a separate group of later barrows. In circumstances like this it is not possible to come to any strong conclusion regarding the specific erection patterns of monuments, except in the cases of those listed above where clear stratigraphic relationships can be seen on the ground. The sequence of barrow construction will not, of course, necessarily match the sequence of burials deduced from Cunnington's and Hoare's records (*see below*).

The order of construction of the barrows – at an individual level

Various examples of how some of the barrows appear to have been changed in shape have been outlined above; for example, Barrow **30** had a later mound placed at the eastern end of the central platform which contained a secondary, possibly Anglo-Saxon, burial (Hoare 1812, 206). Barrow **15/16** is also reported to have contained a secondary inhumation, discovered by Lord Pembroke, and also has evidence for a mound denoting

this (Hoare 1812, 200). Barrows 4, 8, 9 and 14 each have evidence of a small later mound being added to the central platform. Barrows 6, 12, 17, 18 and 24 have evidence of heightening of the barrows, with layers added covering the entirety of the central mound. Barrow 5 (Bush Barrow) has evidence of three possible phases of construction in the form of clearly defined breaks in slope. There are two examples in which a later mound appears at the base of a primary larger monument – Barrows 28 and 21. Barrows 21 and 20 also have evidence for causeways within their ditches, which may be later additions, given their lack of symmetry and uneven spacing.

These examples of later remodelling and additions to the monuments are more clearly presented in some than others but this practice is a long recognised tradition of prehistoric peoples, very noticeable in the British Neolithic and early Bronze Age, and so it is not unusual in itself. However, it does indicate the longevity of the reverence felt for these monuments.

The association of finds as a basis for construction phase and dating

The finds associated with burials in many of the barrows, which were discovered under Hoare and Cunnington, are well catalogued and can also provide some level of insight when attempting to date and phase the group, on the argument that they can be placed in well-defined typological sets (Woodward 2000, fig 56; Needham *et al*/2010). The associated finds of each barrow (surveyed and non-surveyed) are listed within the 'Comments' columns in Tables 1 and 2, and so will not be itemised here. However, some of the more informative examples will be discussed.

Beaker material has only been found in Barrows 1, 2b and Amesbury 15 (not surveyed) at the western edge of the cemetery. Bush Barrow (Barrow 5) is the richest and most significant example of a Bronze Age burial monument not only in the Normanton Group or in association with Stonehenge, but arguably in the whole of Britain. Excavated in 1808 by Cunnington, the primary burial was found to be that of a tall stout male, interred lying 'from south to north' with an array of high quality grave goods (Hoare 1812, 202-5); this has given rise to the interpretation that this is a 'princely' burial of 1900-1700BC. For a more recent reinterpretation and discussion see Needham *et al* (2009; 2010). The artefacts are now held by the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes; they can be viewed on the online catalogue. Whether this assemblage represents the entire period of barrow construction and use is less clear.

Bush Barrow is clearly extremely important archaeologically, as its finds are so rich and plentiful, making it worthy of special attention. However, because of this unusual importance it should not be utilised as a representative example of the processes and uses of the rest of the barrows in the Stonehenge area or the Normanton Group. Several of the other barrows within the Normanton Group nevertheless contain similarly rich

grave goods associated with primary interments, also of a similar age (see Needham *et al*/ 2010, 24-30, fig 9), for example Barrows Amesbury 15 (not surveyed), **7**, **8**, and **23**, which implies that this group is one of high status as well as being one created during a short time frame, as the styles of the goods are alike. Other barrows contained less remarkable but still important goods, for example Barrows **15/16**, and **18**. Those listed without grave goods have either not been excavated or any finds have not been recorded; we must be wary when utilising antiquarian documents – absence of evidence does not necessarily imply evidence of absence – there may have been more grave goods discovered than are known of today.

The Barrows - wider landscape setting

The Normanton Down monuments are interpreted as foci for ritual activity, as memorials to people and past events, and are not overtly associated with activities other than ritual ones (i.e. they do not relate to any known specific settlement or working area in the adjacent valleys). This group appears to have been purposefully placed upon the ridge with inter-visibility to Stonehenge and other barrow groups, including the Wilsford Down group to the south and the Kings Barrows group to the north-east, confirming that it was part of a much larger ritual landscape. As mentioned above, there have been tentative suggestions that the Normanton Down barrows relate as much to the downs to the south and west as they do to Stonehenge to the north (Richards 1990, 274; Woodward 2000, 131-2). Exon *et al* (2000, 88-91) stress how the Normanton Down cemetery not only dominates any approach to Stonehenge from the south but that Stonehenge itself, when approached from due south, only comes into view on this ridge.

Barrows **1**, **2**, **2b**, **3**, **4** and, marginally, **5** are on the upper slope of the valley to the south, as are long barrow **30**, the mortuary enclosure and barrows **31** and **32**. Barrows **8** and **13** to **23** are in a line along the ridge, distinct from the others; in that respect they mirror parts of the Winterbourne Stoke Cross Roads and King Barrow groups, defining watersheds. The long barrow, **13**, stands out here; it crosses the contours, unusually for a long barrow, and is aligned on Stonehenge, or the rising sun. Barrow **8** aside (which should perhaps be seen as part of a clustered group with **6**, **7**, **9**, **9a**, **10** and **11**), this long barrow provides a western boundary to the linear group. The significance, if any, of the large natural hollow on the northern edge of Normanton Gorse (see Fig 2, extreme top left), first noted by Stukeley, is yet to be assessed.

CONCLUSION

Few archaeological surface features remain on Normanton Down for investigation. The major component, the Normanton Down cemetery, comprises mostly Bronze Age monuments, positioned upon a prominent ridge where they interact with the rest of the landscape, other monuments and Stonehenge. Detailed survey of the earthworks has brought to light some interesting evidence regarding phasing of both the group as a whole and at an individual level. The antiquarian excavations have provided a rich selection of finds from the group, notably Barrow 5 (Bush Barrow), suggesting that those interred here were socially significant people and inferring that there was a degree of hierarchy in the make up of the Bronze Age population of the area. In regards to the surrounding landscape in which the Normanton Barrows lie, it is clear that it was in the later Neolithic and earlier Bronze Age a vast area of ritual activity, with minimal evidence for domesticity or work, implying a special level of reverence for the place. More specifically, the Normanton Down cemetery occupies a ridge that has significance in terms of the approach to Stonehenge from the south.

Once the overall research project is complete it is hoped that it will be possible to come to broader conclusions concerning the WHS as a whole. Each barrow group survey will provide an up to the minute record of the state of each monument, which will contribute to effective future plans regarding its management and presentation to the public.

METHODOLOGY

Detail was surveyed using a Trimble [R8/5800] survey grade GNSS receiver working in Real Time Kinematic mode (RTK) with points related to an R8 receiver configured as an on-site base station. The position of the base station had previously been adjusted to the National Grid Transformation OSTN02 via the Trimble VRS Now Network RTK delivery service. This uses the Ordnance Survey's GNSS correction network (OSNet) and gives a stated accuracy of 0.01-0.015m per point. The survey data was downloaded into Korec's Geosite software to process the field codes, and this data was transferred to AutoCad software for plotting out at 1:1000 scale for graphical completion in the field, where extra details were added using the traditional method of taping-and-offsetting.



Fig 17: Calibrating the base station and configuring the roving GPS receiver

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Table 1 Concordance of references for the Normanton Down Barrow Group

Those surveyed in April 2010:

Proj ID	Hoare	Grinsell	SAM No.	NMR No.	NMR Group No.	SMR No.	Centres on	Interpretation	Excavated	Finds?	Comments
A	174	Wilsford 31	10328/ 10329	NMR SU14 SW46	~	SU14SW844	SU 1135 4100	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Excavations by Colt Hoare found it had been previously opened.
B	173	Wilsford 30	10327	NMR SU14 SW95	~	SU14SW129	SU 1411 4106	Neolithic long barrow	Colt Hoare & Cunnington	Y	Colt Hoare and Cunnington found a primary deposit of four skeletons on a 'floor' at the eastern end. They stated that one of the interred appeared to <i>'have no forehead, the sockets of his eyes appearing to have been on the top of his head'</i> (p207). A later (poss Anglo- Saxon) inhumation near the top of the mound was also at found at the eastern end.
C	175	Wilsford 28	10326	NMR SU14 SW453	NMR SU14 SW47	SU14SW846	SU 1167 4102	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Colt Hoare found a primary cremation during excavations in the early 19th century. He also states he found fragments of bone in the other 'small tumulus attached to it'.
D	176	Wilsford 29	10326	NMR SU14 SW455	NMR SU14 SW47	SU14SW848	SU 1171 4101	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Hoare states that an inhumation was discovered though Cunnington states there was not. Colt Hoare suggested it was a bell barrow, though it seems not to be.
E	177	Wilsford 27	10325	NMR SU14 SW452	NMR SU14 SW47	SU14SW843	SU 1178 4018	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Excavations under Colt Hoare produced a primary cremation with a bronze dagger.
F	159	Wilsford 4	10317	NMR SU14 SW438	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW850	SU 1157 4124	Bronze Age disc barrow	Stukeley/ Earl of Pembroke & Colt Hoare	Y?	Stukeley and the Earl of Pembroke are said to have excavated prior to Colt Hoare. The records of excavation are unclear regarding finds.
G	Bush Barrow 158	Wilsford 5	10317	NMR SU14 SW439	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW851	SU 1164 4126	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Cunnington	Y	Excavated 1808 by Cunnington, found primary inhumation of adult male oriented N-S. Many grave goods: large lozenged shaped decorated plate of gold, smaller lozenge shaped sheet of gold, a gold belt hook, bronze rivets with some wood remains (helmet or shield?), a small bronze axe, copper dagger with wooden hilts remains, thousands of gold pins, a large bronze dagger, polished fossil macehead with decorative bone mounts, an Iron Age brooch and sherds of urn.
H	157	Wilsford 6	~	NMR SU14 SW440	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW852	SU 1176 4126	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N	Colt Hoare believed it had been excavated before.
I	156	Wilsford 7	10470	NMR SU14 SW441	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW853	SU 1179 4123	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Colt-Hoare found primary inhumation with a grape cup, collared urn, shale beads (one gold), shale pendant, four amber pendants, sheet gold, and part of a fossil encrinite. All in Devizes Museum (DM 1080-1058).
J	155	Wilsford 8	10470	NMR SU14 SW442	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW854	SU 1181 4132	Bronze Age bell barrow	Cunnington	Y	Cunnington excavated a primary cremation burial beneath the barrow. Grave goods included: gold and bronze penannular ring, gold bound amber disc, bone pendant covered in sheet gold, pottery accessory vessel, bronze and gold halberd pendant, nine amber pendants. Finds in Devizes museum (DM 1059-1067).
K	153	Wilsford 9	10470	NMR SU14 SW443	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW855	SU 1185 4131	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Colt Hoare believed the barrow had been previously opened. 1920, WJ Hemp gave Devizes Museum red deer antler pick from surface.

Table 1 Continued

Those surveyed in April 2010:

Proj ID	Hoare	Grinsell	SAM No.	NMR No.	NMR Group No.	SMR No.	Centres on	Interpretation	Excavated	Finds?	Comments
L	154	Wilsford 9a	10470	NMR SU14 SW444	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW856	SU 1184 4127	Bronze Age round barrow	Colt Hoare	N	Colt Hoare believed the barrow had been previously opened. Shallow rise only in 1970s.
M	151	Wilsford 13	10470	NMR SU14 SW78	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW128	SU 1188 4129	Neolithic long barrow	~	N/A	Very small barrow with side ditches. No record of excavation.
N	152	Wilsford 10		NMR SU14 SW445	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW857	SU 1190 4134	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N	Colt Hoare believed the barrow had been previously opened. Barrow very shallow.
O	150	Wilsford 11	10470	NMR SU14 SW446	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW858	SU 1191 4130	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare & Thurnam	Y	Colt Hoare's excavation proved unproductive though the later investigation by Thurnam unearthed an interment.
P	149	Wilsford 14	10470	NMR SU14 SW448	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW860	SU 1192 4125	Bronze Age disc barrow	Stukeley & Colt Hoare	Y	Stukeley probably excavated here in 1723 when he found a primary cremation. Later Colt Hoare found nothing more.
Q	148	Wilsford 12	10470	NMR SU14 SW447	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW859	SU 1198 4129	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N	Colt Hoare's excavations proved unproductive.
R	147	Wilsford 15/ 16	10470	NMR SU14 SW449	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW861 SU14SW862	SU 1201 4123 SU 1204 4122	Twin bell barrow	Lord Pembroke, Stukeley & Cunnington	Y	Lord Pembroke found a secondary inhumation close to the surface of the western barrow. Later investigations by Hoare found a primary cremation with bone objects. At the eastern barrow, Hoare excavated a primary cremation, a small pottery cup and amber and shale beads, after Stukeley's failed attempt.
S	146	Wilsford 17	10470	NMR SU14 SW450	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW863	SU 1208 4121	Bronze Age bell barrow	Stukeley (?) & Colt Hoare	Y?	No records of finds from excavations survive, though bone and flint found on surface 1935-36 by WEV Young.
T	145?	Wilsford 18	10470	NMR SU14 SW385	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW879	SU 1212 4120	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Colt Hoare believed the barrow to have been opened previous to his excavation. He located a 'cist' beneath the mound with a piece of bone resembling the handle of a cup and a kidney shaped black pebble. The bone object has been interpreted as a belt hook.
U	144	Wilsford 19	10470	NMR SU14 SW386	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW880	SU 1218 4119	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Colt Hoare excavated a primary inhumation with the head to the north, and a bronze dagger.
V	142?	Wilsford 20	10470	NMR SU14 SW387	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW881	SU 1224 4117	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed the barrow to have been excavated prior to his intervention, no finds are listed.
W	143	Wilsford 21	10470	NMR SU14 SW388	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW882	SU 1228 4116	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed this to have been opened prior to his excavation - no finds recorded.
X	141	Wilsford 22	10470	NMR SU14 SW389	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW883	SU 1232 4115	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed this to have been opened prior to his excavation - no finds recorded.
Y	140	Wilsford 24	10470	NMR SU14 SW391	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW885	SU 1230 4112	Bronze Age bowl/ bell	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed this to have been opened prior to his excavation - no finds recorded.
Z	139	Wilsford 23	10470	NMR SU14 SW390	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW884	SU 1235 4113	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	Hoare found a primary cremation with grave goods including: bronze dagger, knife-dagger, decorated pin, a bone tube with perforations (musical instrument), and a perforated whetstone pendant.
AA	138	Wilsford 24a	10471	NMR SU14 SW392	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW886	SU 1244 4115	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed this to have been opened prior to his excavation - no finds recorded.
BB	137?	Amesbury 17	10440	NMR SU14 SW126	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW868	SU 1253 4116	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	Colt Hoare believed this to have been opened prior to his excavation - no finds recorded. Grinsell records this as damaged by rabbits.

Table 2 Concordance of references for the Normanton Down Barrow Group

Not surveyed April 2010

Hoare	Grinsell	SAM No.	NMR No.	NMR Group No.	SMR No.	Centres on	Near surveyed barrow	Interpretation	Excavated	Finds?	Comments
172	Wilsford 32	10328	NMR SU14 SW451	~	SU14SW845	SU 1131 4105	50m W of Barrow 30.	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare found a primary cremation with a lignite ring and shale beads. Barrow is spread , 0.2m in height and has no trace of a surrounding ditch.
~		~	NMR SU14 SW144	~	SU14SW131	SU 1143 4100	100m E of Barrow 31.	Neolithic mortuary enclosure	Vatcher	Y	PLOUGHED AWAY. Vatcher excavated fully in 1959, finding a single potsherd of mortlake ware. It is visible only on aerial photographs.
160	Wilsford 3	10317	NMR SU14 SW437	NMR SU14 SW39	SU14SW849	SU 1155 4130	Less than 20m NW of Barrow 4.	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare found a primary cremation with 6 shale, 11 amber and 2 faience beads. Barrow is large, diameter c 60m, clearly visible on the ground and in aerial photographs.
161	Wilsford 2b	10469	NMR SU14 SW436	NMR SU14 SW105	SU14SW842	SU 1144 4134	Original position thought to be approximately 200m WNW of Barrow 4 in the Normanton Gorse area.	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare found a primary burial with a beaker near the right hand, and two secondary inhumations, one with a beaker. There is now no trace of the monument.
162	Wilsford 2	10316	NMR SU14 SW434	NMR SU14 SW105	SU14SW840	SU 1138 4141	500m WNW of Barrow 4 in the Normanton Gorse area.	Bronze Age disc barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare excavated and states only that he believed the barrow had previously been opened - he records no finds. The surrounding ditch and bank are visible but the central mound is covered in vegetation. It is c 55m in diameter.
163	Wilsford 2a	10316	NMR SU14 SW435	NMR SU14 SW105	SU14SW841	SU 1140 4147	Approximately 500m NW of Barrow 4.	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare excavated a primary cremation with a bone pin and sherds from and 'incense' cup. The barrow is 14m in diameter and 0.5m in height.
164	Amesbury 15	10314	NMR SU14 SW104	~	SU14SW835	SU 1150 4160	Around 70m NNW from Barrow 4.	Bronze Age bell barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	LAND INACCESSIBLE. Colt Hoare found a primary inhumation laid on an elm plank, accompanied by a bronze dagger in a wooden box, a small bronze knife dagger, antlers and a possible Beaker. The barrow is still extant, c 60m in diameter.
178	Wilsford 24b	10331	NMR SU14 SW49	~	SU14SW930	SU 1222 4093	Approximately 475m S of Barrow 20	Bronze Age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	Y	STONE CURLEW NESTING AREA. Colt Hoare found a primary cremation but lists no other finds. It is an extant spread mound around 20m in diameter and 0.3m high.

Table 2 Continued

Not surveyed April 2010

Hoare	Grinsell	SAM No.	NMR No.	NMR Group No.	SMR No.	Centres on	Near surveyed barrow	Interpretation	Excavated	Finds?	Comments
179	Wilsford 25	10331	NMR SU14 SW382	~	SU14SW931	SU 1220 4088	Approximately 500m S of barrow 20	Bronze Age bell barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	STONE CURLEW NESTING AREA. Colt Hoare suggested the barrow has been opened prior to his investigations. He lists no finds. The barrow is an extant earthwork 3.6m high.
180	Wilsford 26	10332	NMR SU14 SW383	~	SU14SW932	SU 1217 4075	Approximately 750m S of Barrow 17	Bronze age bowl barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	STONE CURLEW NESTING AREA. Colt Hoare believed the barrow had been opened prior to his investigations. He lists no finds. The barrow is an extant mound 34m in diameter and 1.8m high with a trace of a ditch to the south.
~	~	~	NMR SU14 SW683	~	~	SU 1235 4110	The position of these remains is approximately 10m S of Barrow 23.	Bronze Age round barrow	~	~	PLOUGHED AWAY. This barrow has not been excavated. It has been levelled by ploughing and can now only be seen as a crop mark in aerial photographs.
136?	Amesbury 17a	10472	NMR SU14 SW384	NMR SU14 SW48	SU14SW869	SU 1253 4119	The believed position of these remains is approximately 10m S of Barrow A17.	Bronze Age round barrow	Colt Hoare	N?	PLOUGHED AWAY. Colt Hoare stated that he believed the barrow had been opened prior to his excavations - he lists no finds. The exact position of this monument is uncertain and it is not distinguishable in modern aerial photographs.

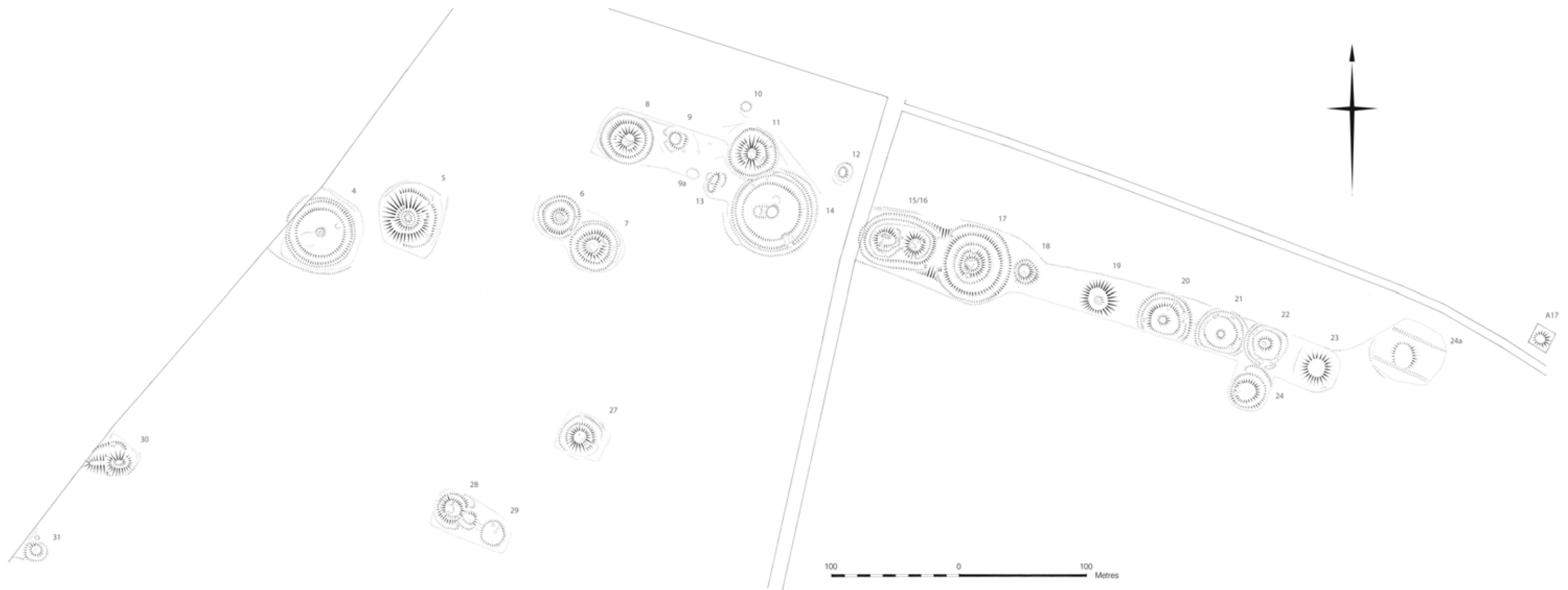


Fig 18: Normanton Down barrow cemetery: survey plan, reduced from 1:1000



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