

STONEHENGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE LANDSCAPE PROJECT FARGO SOUTH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

Anna Komar and Sharon Bishop



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STONEHENGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE LANDSCAPE PROJECT

FARGO SOUTH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

A M Komar & S Bishop

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SUMMARY

The area of Fargo Plantation to the south of the earthwork known as the Stonehenge Cursus was investigated as part of the Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project. Two areas immediately south-west of the plantation, one either side of the A344, were analytically surveyed in January and March 2010 and the woodland was subjected to rapid field investigation in November 2010. The surveys included the 'Monarch of the Plain' (Amesbury 55) and other round barrows, plus military features associated with the First World War Stonehenge Aerodrome.

CONTRIBUTORS

The analytical survey was undertaken by Anna Komar and the rapid field investigation of Fargo Plantation (South) by Sharon Bishop and Dave Field. The figures were prepared by the authors, Trevor Pearson and Deborah Cunliffe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

English Heritage is grateful to Mr John Elliot of the Druids Lodge Estate and Mr Mike Dando of the National Trust for allowing access. Thanks to Luke Griffin (Archive Support Team, NMR) for supplying the aerial photographs.

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ARCHIVE LOCATION

The project archive is held at:

National Monuments Record Centre (NMRC),
English Heritage
Kemble Drive,
Swindon
SN2 2GZ

FRONT COVER

The image on the front cover was taken during the rapid field investigation on the 10th November 2010. It shows some of the surviving concrete footings for a First World War Handley Page hangar.

DATES OF SURVEY

Analytical survey: 26th January 2010, 4th-5th March 2010.

Rapid field investigation: 10th November 2010.

CONTACT DETAILS

Tel: 01793 414600 Email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk

NMRC, Kemble Drive, Swindon, SN2 2GZ

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INTRODUCTION

The area of Fargo Plantation to the south of the earthwork known as the Stonehenge Cursus was investigated as part of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS) Landscape Project (Fig 1). Two areas immediately south-west of the plantation, one either side of the A344, were analytically surveyed in January and March 2010. They are centred at NGR SU 1103 4272 and lie in the parish of Winterbourne Stoke, Wiltshire. The adjacent woodland of Fargo Plantation, in Amesbury parish, was subjected to rapid field investigation in November 2010 (Fig 2). The settlements of Winterbourne Stoke and Amesbury lie 3.8km to the south-west and 4.6km to the east-south-east respectively.

The surveys were undertaken to further a number of aims and objectives identified in the Stonehenge Landscape Project Design (Bowden & Field 2009) and the Stonehenge Research Framework (Darvill 2005). Objective 10 of the Framework is to survey the barrow cemeteries in the WHS to 'modern standards', providing in the first instance a 'detailed topographic survey' (ibid, 129). Recording the earthworks and features of potentially military origin addresses Framework research objective 16 by 'validating and dating features revealed by air photography' and objective 17 'understanding recent land use change' (ibid 131-132; Bowden & Field 2009, 9).

The surveys included the Fargo hengiform and other round barrows which form part of the Cursus Barrow Group (Amadio & Bishop 2010) and the large extant round barrow known as the 'Monarch of the Plain' (Amesbury 55) which provides a marker on the parish boundary. Military features associated with the First World War Stonehenge Aerodrome were also recorded.

Table 1 provides a concordance of the various numbering systems applied to each monument. It includes the National Monuments Record's (NMR's) archaeological database, the county Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Register of Scheduled Monuments (RSM) number for each round barrow. Grinsell's (1957) numbering system for the round barrows is generally accepted in the literature and is therefore retained for this report. The appendix presents the measurements of the surveyed barrows (Table 3).



Fig 1: The location of the survey areas.
The dotted orange line is the Stonehenge WHS boundary. The two areas surveyed analytically are outlined in blue and the rapid field investigation area outlined in magenta.

Table 1: Concordance.

ANALYTICAL SURVEY

NMR's archaeological database

Monument Type	NMR No	Monument Number (UID)	Scheduled Monument Number (RSM)	Wiltshire HER	Hoare's Barrow number (1812)	Goddard's (1913) & Grinsell's (1957) number	NAME / note
ROUND BARROWS							
BOWL BARROW	SU 14 SW 32	219516	10473	SU14SW719	42	Winterbourne Stoke 28	
BELL BARROW	SU 14 SW 57	219593	10336	SU14SW741	40	Amesbury 55	MONARCH OF THE PLAIN
ROUND BARROW	SU 14 SW 181	219929		SU14SW742			probable duplicate of Winterbourne Stoke 29
MILITARY FEATURES							
AIRCRAFT HANGAR	SU 14 SW 646	1362705		SU14SW538			
MILITARY CAMP	SU 14 SW 647	1362709		SU14SW537			

RAPID FIELD SURVEY

NMR's archaeological database

Monument Type	NMR No	Monument Number (UID)	Scheduled Monument Number (RSM)	Wiltshire HER	Hoare's Barrow number (1812)	Goddard's (1913) & Grinsell's (1957) number	Other reference
HENGIFORM	SU 14 SW 30	219510	10363	SU14SW162		Fargo flat grave	
BOWL BARROW	SU 14 SW 86	219678	10335	SU14SW726	39	Amesbury 54	
BOWL BARROW	SU 14 SW 424	942674	10337	SU14SW737	38	Amesbury 53	
ROUND BARROW	SU 14 SW 513	1066498	10367	SU14SW998			Amesbury 112 (RCHME 1979)
COMMEMORATIVE STONE / CROSS	SU 14 SW 736	1522462		SU14SW543			

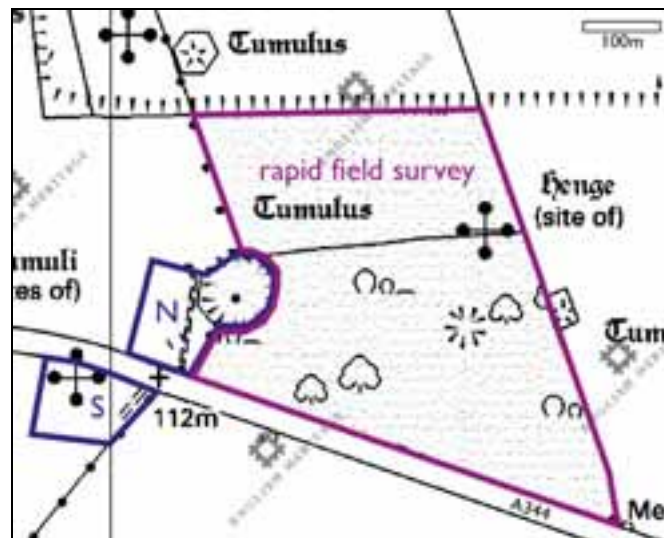


Fig 2: Fargo South survey areas.

The northern analytical survey area is marked 'N' and the southern area 'S'. The area subjected to rapid field investigation is outlined in magenta. The base map is © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. English Heritage 100019088. 2010.

GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND-USE

The survey areas lie on Cretaceous Upper Chalk at an elevation of c 110m, rising to the south and west and falling gently to the east. They are situated 1.3km north-west of Stonehenge and just over 120m south of the western terminus of the Stonehenge Cursus. The site lies between two drainage systems: the River Till which runs through Shrewton due west is some 2.8km distant, while the river Avon separates Amesbury from West Amesbury some 4km to the east.

The area to the north of the A344 is presently owned by the National Trust (NT) and affords access to the western part of the Stonehenge Cursus via a 'permissive path' through Fargo Plantation, which is managed woodland. The area to the west of the 'Monarch' seems to be disused presently; it is over-grown and only the gate at its southern extent appears to be utilised to gain vehicular access to the woodland. Its western, northern and southern extents are fenced off from fields under arable cultivation and the A344 respectively.

Fargo Plantation is an area of deciduous and coniferous species and forms the largest block of woodland in the WHS. Because of its size and location this woodland is a visually dominant feature and can be seen from much of the WHS area.

The area to the south of the A344 road is presently owned by the Druid's Lodge Estate, but is also over-grown and un-managed. It measures 68.5m from east to west at its widest point, and c 53m from north to south. It is fenced-off from large fields under arable cultivation to the south and west, and from a track on its eastern side which gives access to one of those fields. A 20th-century extension to Fargo Wood lies beyond this track. An earth bund has been placed across the only point of access in its north-eastern corner, to stop vehicular traffic.

LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Environmental evidence suggests large natural clearings or glades of grassland, scrub and some trees were a natural part of an extensive open park forest that stretched across the southern English chalklands in the early post-glacial period (Allen & Scaife 2007). This openness, with the opportunities for hunting and gathering it provided, attracted Mesolithic communities who constructed what is perhaps the first monument in the Stonehenge landscape: the post holes in what was later to become the Stonehenge car park (Vatcher & Vatcher 1973; Young *et al* 2009, 155).

This early open landscape may be a contributing factor to the accumulation and density of later, Neolithic and Bronze Age, monuments. Localised clearance of existing woodland is thought to have taken place in the early Neolithic around monuments such as causewayed enclosures and long barrows and the large number of round barrows constructed in an open established downland landscape indicates that much remaining woodland was probably cleared by around 2000BC (Allen & Scaife 2007). The round barrows are first shown on Crocker's map for Sir Richard Colt Hoare (1812) and are amongst the westernmost of the Cursus Barrow Group, which extends eastwards beyond the Fargo Plantation (Amadio & Bishop 2010).

More diverse activities are visible in the wider Stonehenge landscape by the Middle Bronze Age. Large areas of Salisbury Plain were converted to agriculture and 'Celtic' fields became widespread (McOmish *et al* 2002, 52). The early soils were fertile and easily tilled but subject to erosion through rain splash, soil creep and occasional recurrent mass erosion events (Allen & Scaife 2007, 29). Erosion changes the soil and the shape of the landscape, eroding hilltops and infilling valleys.

Throughout the Iron Age farming, based on the Till and Avon valleys, appears to have been the predominant activity in the Stonehenge landscape (Young *et al* 2009, 156) although it has left little evidence immediately around the survey area other than perhaps re-use and modification of nearby 'Celtic' fields (Yates 2007). The impressive hillfort known as Vespasian's Camp was constructed near the River Avon but tree cover has prevented its full archaeological investigation (Young *et al* 2009, 156). Roman period farmsteads and small unenclosed villages, which also reused earlier fields, are known across Salisbury Plain (McOmish *et al* 2002, 88-104). The nearest are those to the west along the River Till, on High Down and Winterbourne Stoke Down (Freeman 1995, 276).

By the 11th century many of the estates in the western valley were called 'Winterbourne' after the River Till, which is sometimes dry in summer and had long been called by that name (*ibid*, 275). Little is known of how the landscape was used in the early medieval period, although Amesbury had become the centre for a widespread royal estate (Young *et al* 2009, 156). What became Winterbourne Stoke manor was also held by the king at that time (Freeman 1995, 277). The large round barrow known as the 'Monarch of the Plain' (Amesbury 55) was used as a marker when defining the boundaries between

Amesbury and Dole Hundreds, and between the parishes of Amesbury and Winterbourne Stoke.

During the medieval period settlement in both parishes focused on the two rivers, the Till and the Avon, which flow north to south through the centre of each parish. Extensive meadows, some of which were watered, were located beside the rivers, arable was concentrated on the lower slopes and extensive pasture covered the downs further to the east and west (Freeman 1995, 275). Open field sheep and corn husbandry, with common meadows and pasture, dominated well into the post medieval period. This is confirmed by land-use details on tithe and other maps.

The turnpike road between the survey areas, now the A344, is depicted as dashed lines on Andrews & Drury's 1773 map (WANHS 1952), which suggests that it passed through an unenclosed landscape. Winterbourne Stoke was enclosed by an Award of 1812 under an Act of 1810 (WHC EA104) when both the southern and northern analytical survey areas were pasture, forming part of the 'Tenantry Sheep Down'. The far western edge of Amesbury parish, whilst also on the downs, provides contrast. Small portions of the downs had started to be broken up as temporary arable fields, known as 'burnbake', during the 18th century and Hoare observed that Amesbury 54, his Barrow 39, had 'been some years under tillage' (1812, 163). The Tithe Award for Amesbury shows a plantation along the western edge of the parish, to the north of the turnpike, which occupies one of the former arable plots (WHC TA 1846; RCHME 1979, map 3). The Fargo Plantation takes its name from the adjacent field to the west, located in the far north-eastern corner of Winterbourne Stoke parish (Gover *et al* 1939, 490).

Winterbourne Stoke suffered much less from military activity in the early 20th century than its neighbouring parishes. Stonehenge Airfield in Amesbury parish was one of five new, mainly grass, airfields to open in 1917 on Salisbury Plain (James 1987, 170). From 1918 it was used by the School of Navigation and Bomb Dropping (SofN&BD) and functioned as a finishing school for pilots and observers, divided between two squadrons for Day and Night bombing.

The Night trainees had difficulty getting sufficient rest during the day and so a separate hutted camp was authorised well away from the airfield. Stonehenge Night Camp was constructed in 1918 but was the only part of the station not completed by the end of the First World War. It has been tentatively identified as the buildings at the western end of the Cursus (Wessex Archaeology 1998, 22). Four semi-permanent hangars were constructed nearby in 1918, at the northern edge of the airfield. These mainly housed Handley Page aircraft, which were used by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) for training the Night Bombers.

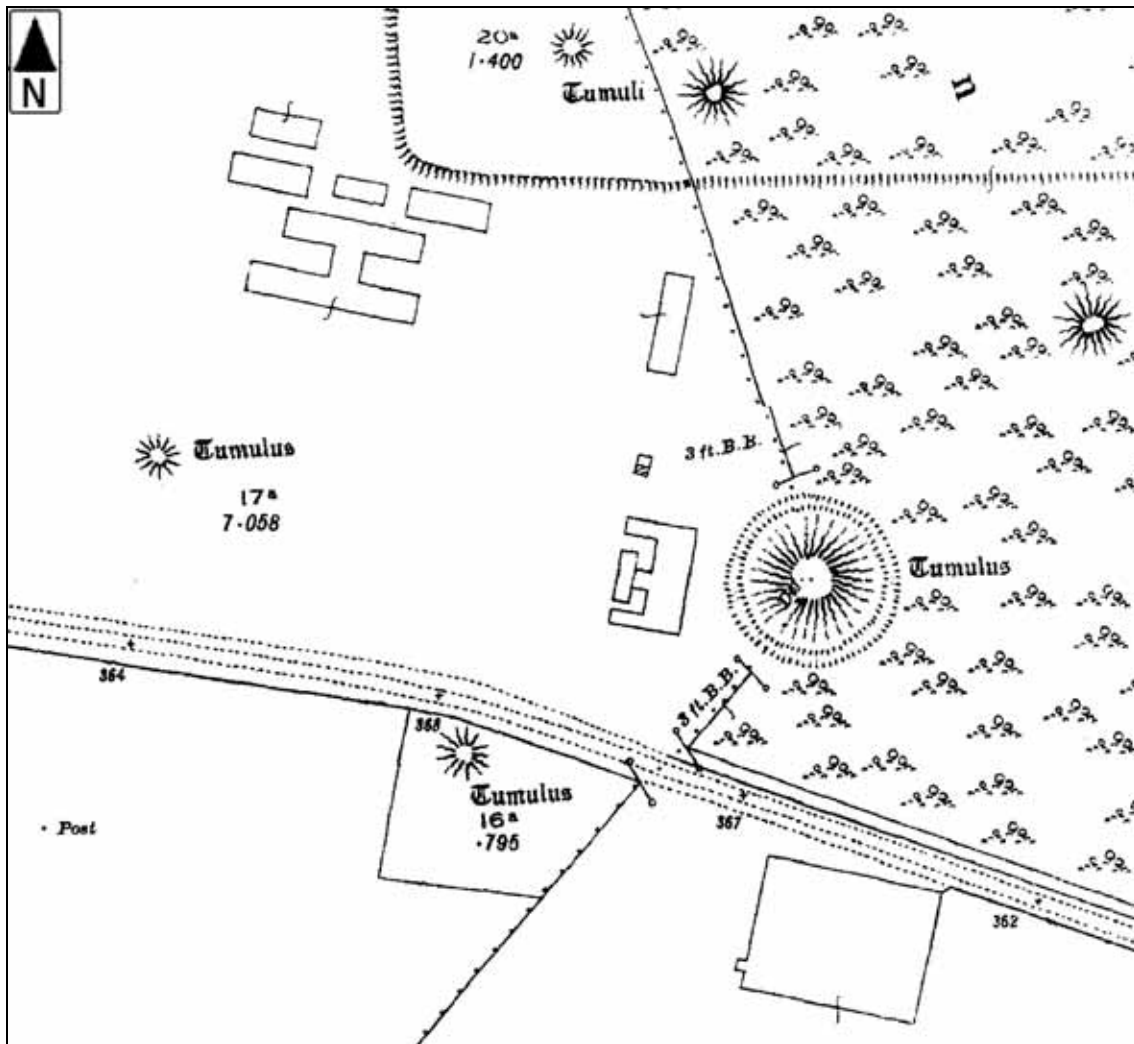


Fig 3: The 1924 25 inch Ordnance Survey map.

The map shows a range of buildings near the western end of the Stonehenge Cursus and a large rectangular structure to the south of the A344. Fargo Plantation extends across the Cursus but part of the western Fargo boundary, which once overlaid the Monarch of the Plain, has been removed. Reproduced from the 1924 Ordnance Survey map (not to scale).

Between the Wars some of the buildings were removed and the northern analytical survey area became part of a pig farm, which is visible as a series of square enclosures with patches of white at their centre on aerial photographs taken in the 1940s (Fig 12). Both Christie and Stone refer to damage to archaeological monuments as a result of a recent pig farm (Christie 1963; Stone 1948, 9). The pig pens were removed by the early 1950s, when a cottage was located immediately to their east. An area of scrub to the north-west, where other Night Camp buildings had been, contained two Nissen huts and other structures which suggest it was still used for some military activity. The cottage was demolished by 1971 and by 1978 its location and the scrub area were part of an arable field.

The extent of the woodland to the north of the road appears to have been similar in 1945 to today, but less dense. The woodland that now extends a short distance to the south of the A344, over the site of the easternmost hangar, had not been planted. The area of the southern analytical survey was used for road maintenance storage by Wiltshire County Council throughout the later 20th century (Blore *et al* 1995, 129). It was also used for agricultural storage and a large haystack is visible on aerial photographs taken in 1978, with small dumps of darker material around it.

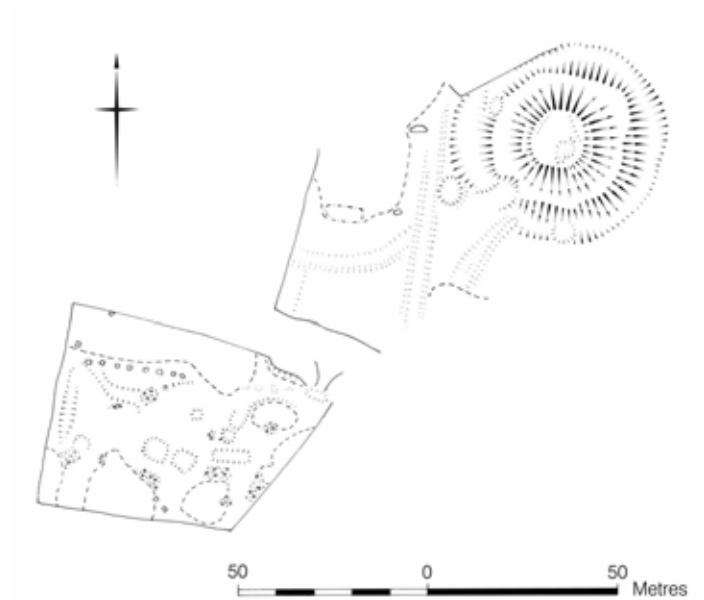


Fig 4: The earthwork survey.

The drawing shows the 'Monarch of the Plain' and military features to the north and south of the A344 at Fargo Plantation. Original survey scale 1:1000, reduced to 1:2000.

THE EARTHWORKS

The earthworks comprise several round barrows, which form part of the Cursus Barrow Group (Amadio & Bishop 2010), plus features associated with early 20th-century military activity and subsequent agricultural use. The three areas of survey are described below.

North of the A344

Earthworks within the analytical survey area north of the A344 are dominated by the large bell barrow known as the 'Monarch of the Plain' (Amesbury 55). It presently marks the western extent of the Cursus Barrow Group, which continues east beyond the Fargo Plantation (Amadio & Bishop 2010). Other features surveyed include blocks of concrete relating to the First World War military encampment known as 'The Night Camp', and associated with the Stonehenge Aerodrome.

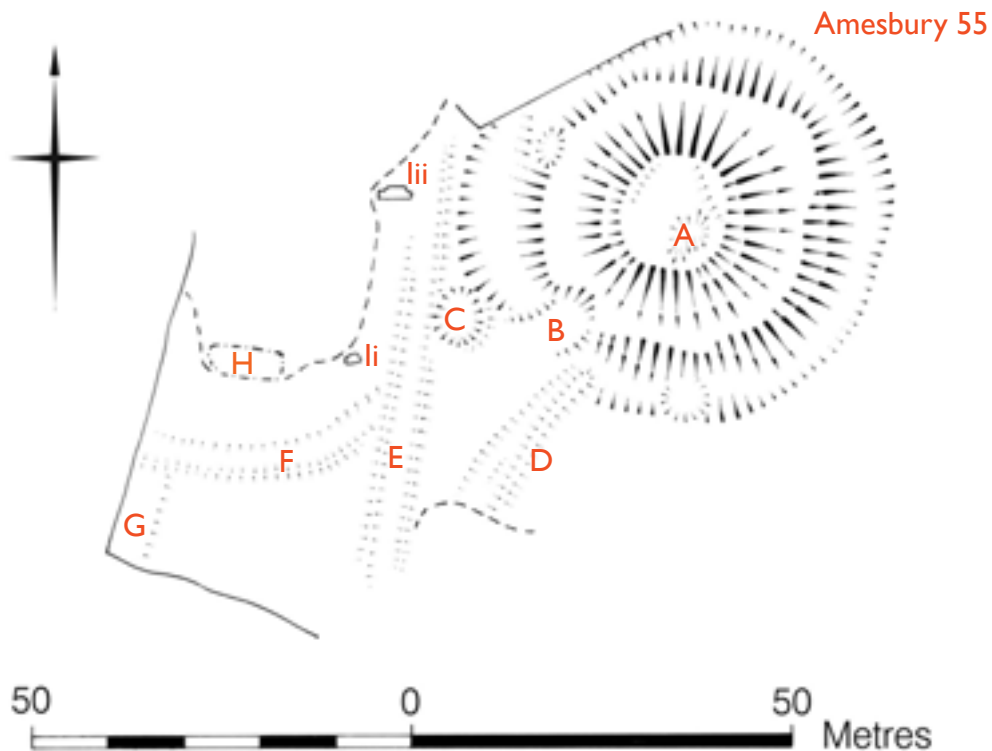


Fig 5: The earthworks north of the A344. The Monarch of the Plain (Amesbury 55), fragments of the Night Camp and overlying pig farm trackway to the south-west. Extract from survey plan shown at 1:1000.

The Monarch of the Plain (Amesbury 55)

This as a very large bell barrow; it comprises a mound atop a sloping berm, surrounded by an incomplete ditch (Fig 5). The overall height of the monument is 2.8m above the surrounding ground level. The base of the mound has a diameter of 27.5m and the flattish top varies between 14m and 16m across. The top is c 2m above the top of the berm, which is fairly irregular and measures between 35m in diameter from south-west to north-east, and 40m from south-east to north-west. Its outer edge rises c 1.2m above the base of the ditch. The ditch measures between 6m and 10m wide and has a maximum depth of 0.4m below the surrounding ground surface.

The whole barrow appears to have sustained a considerable amount of damage, ranging from burrowing rabbits to what appears to be the result of 20th-century, largely vehicular, activity. Anomalies found on the top of the barrow include a polygonal hollow (**A**) which appears of a size and shape (it measures c 6.5m by c 5m) that could suggest the presence of a structure at this location, or perhaps the location of antiquarian excavations, although not central to the mound. Immediately to its north is a short linear scarp that runs diagonally from north-west to south-east across the north-eastern part of the mound's summit and overlies the north-eastern edge of **A**. Use of the track, which ascends the barrow from SSW to NNE, has caused considerable erosion and has cut into the upper edge of the mound.

The berm on which the mound sits has an irregular appearance in plan because a considerable amount of the mound material has slumped onto it. On its south-western side berm material has been pushed in towards the mound, creating an inverse 'v'-shape and narrowing the berm from an average width of c 3m to just under 1m. The western side of the berm has suffered additional damage, some of which similarly seems to have been caused by more pushing-in of material towards the mound. Small areas of additional damage appear to be the result of gouging material from the berm, particularly on the barrow's north-western side.

The north-western extent of the ditch has been cut-off by a fence (Fig 5). The greatest variation in the ditch's width corresponds with the area of most serious damage on the western side, where it appears to have been widened relatively recently, possibly by the passage of vehicles along it. A causeway (**B**) to the south-west of the mound has been created by filling-in the ditch, probably using material from the hole (**C**), which cuts slightly into the ditch to the west of the causeway. Another hollow, this time in the ditch to the east of the causeway, may have provided additional material.

Other earthworks

A bank and corresponding ditch (**D**) overlie and cut the barrow ditch's outer southern edge. They extend for c 24m to the south-west before being overlain by a set of vehicle

tracks then fade out in the woodland towards the southern boundary of the survey area. The bank supports a thorny hedge, possibly laid out at enclosure, and appears to represent the parish boundary between Winterbourne Stoke and Amesbury.

The survey area is bisected north to south by a track (E) which comprises a slightly raised, flat area c 3m wide with low banks, no higher than 0.1m on either side. The total width of the track is c 6.2m and it is traceable for a distance of c 70m from the gate at the southern edge of the area almost as far as its northern boundary, where it is obscured by a hedge and debris. It is joined from the west by a curvilinear track (F) that clearly once extended into the field to the west of the survey area but is now truncated by a fence. This track is also defined by narrow linear banks to either side and appears to cut an earlier, low north-north-east to south-south-west scarp (G) near the fence line.

The area to the north of the curvilinear track contains a number of features so heavily obscured by thick vegetation that only small fragments could be fully surveyed. They include a rectangular trench (H) at the southern edge of the vegetation, which measures 9.7m east to west by 7.8m north to south. East of the trench is a concrete slab (I), the full extent of which could not be measured due to the dense vegetation cover. It extends northwards for 21m, to where it appears to end beneath a concrete block (II) which measures 4.7m by 1.9m. Two parallel lines of bricks extending roughly north to south, which suggest the footings of a building, were observed within the area of vegetation at the north-western corner of the survey area during the rapid field investigation.

South of the A344

This survey area contains a variety of earthworks (Fig 6), which are described clockwise from the entrance to the area, at its north-eastern corner. A slightly curved scarp (J), c 0.25m high, extends for c 12m from the earth bund at its south-eastern end to the fence at its north-western end. Facing this is a second scarp (K), which begins c 3m south of the earth bund and extends westwards for a distance of 9.3m, before curving southwards and continuing for a further 6.6m. The scarp then appears to extend into a shallow rectangular hollow (L), but the relationship between the two is unclear. The rectangular hollow measures 4.2m north-east to south-west, and c 3.5m from north-west to south-east and is c 0.1m deep. It cuts a further rectangular feature (M) of almost the same size immediately to the south-west. A long, shallow feature (N), similar in size to the trench (H) in the northern survey area, lies to the south of M. N is less than 0.1m deep and seems to be comprised of two parts; the square area on its eastern side is fractionally deeper than the rectangular area on its western side.

Two rectangular hollows (O and P) are situated side by side just south-east of centre in the survey area. They measure 6.2m by 5.5m, and 7.2m by 5.9m respectively; both are c 0.1m deep. Near the fence to their south are two concrete blocks (Q) which measure c 0.7m by 0.7m. They are similar in size and condition to those at the north of the survey area (T), and are therefore probably contemporary.

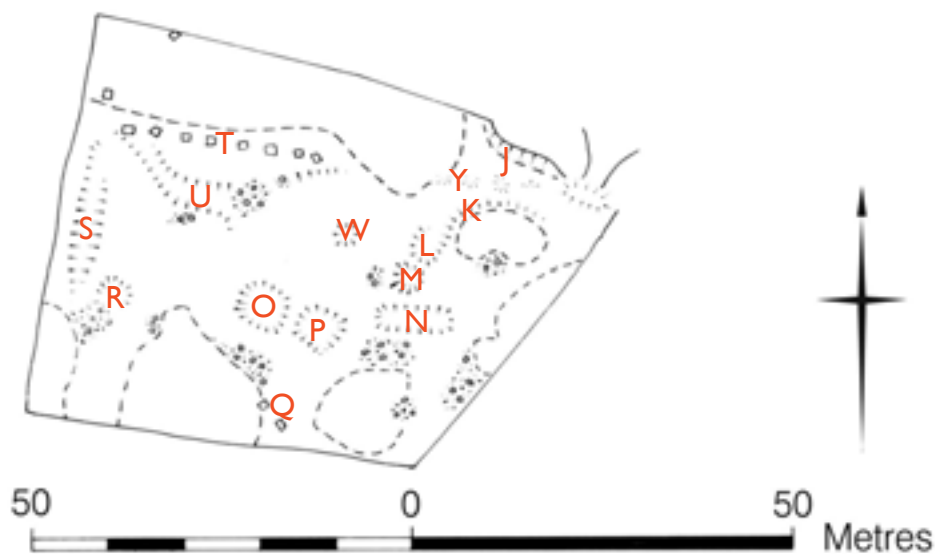


Fig 6: The earthworks south of the A344.
Extract from survey plan shown at 1:1000.

Approximately 16m from the south-western corner of the survey area is a rectangular hollow (R), which is very similar in size to those first described (see M and N) further north-east. It lies c 1.5m east of the southern end of linear hollow (S) that extends northwards for 22.5m, parallel to the western boundary of the survey area. Its northern end appears squared-off and just 1.2m to its north is the westernmost concrete block in a line of 10 that extends eastwards for a distance of c 39m (T; see front cover). Several square hollows (Y) continue this line to the east, between the scarps J and K, as far as the bund that blocks the entrance to the site. They appear to mark the previous locations of several more concrete blocks.

A concrete block was observed c 2.6m north of the western end of the line and an additional concrete block and two hollows are situated c 2.5m south of curved hollow U, up to 4m wide, which appears to extend beneath the line of concrete blocks T at its north-western end suggesting that the hollow is an earlier feature. This hollow extends in an arc between SU 1096 4270 and SU 1097 4269, which corresponds with the site of the round barrow known as Winterbourne Stoke 28 and the hollow probably represents the mutilated remains of its ditch. Its eastern end disappears beneath one of the many heaps of hard-core material placed about the site. The northern half of the round barrow is obscured by vegetation.

The centre of the survey area is generally uneven. It has been disturbed by vehicular traffic, moles and the dumping of hard-core material, all of which may combine to obscure other archaeological features. One final square hollow (W), although slightly larger than those in line Y, is perhaps the former site of another concrete block. To the south of the survey area a short linear bank was observed but not surveyed. It appears to be

approximately parallel to the southern boundary of the area and is probably the remains of an earlier fenced boundary.

Fargo Plantation (south)

The rapid field investigation identified the site of the excavated Fargo hengiform, two of the round barrows opened by Cunnington for Hoare (Amesbury 53 and 54) and the round barrow first identified by the RCHME in 1979 (Amesbury 112). Other linear hollows were observed dispersed throughout the woodland, which may be the result of decaying trees or perhaps military storage during the Second World War.

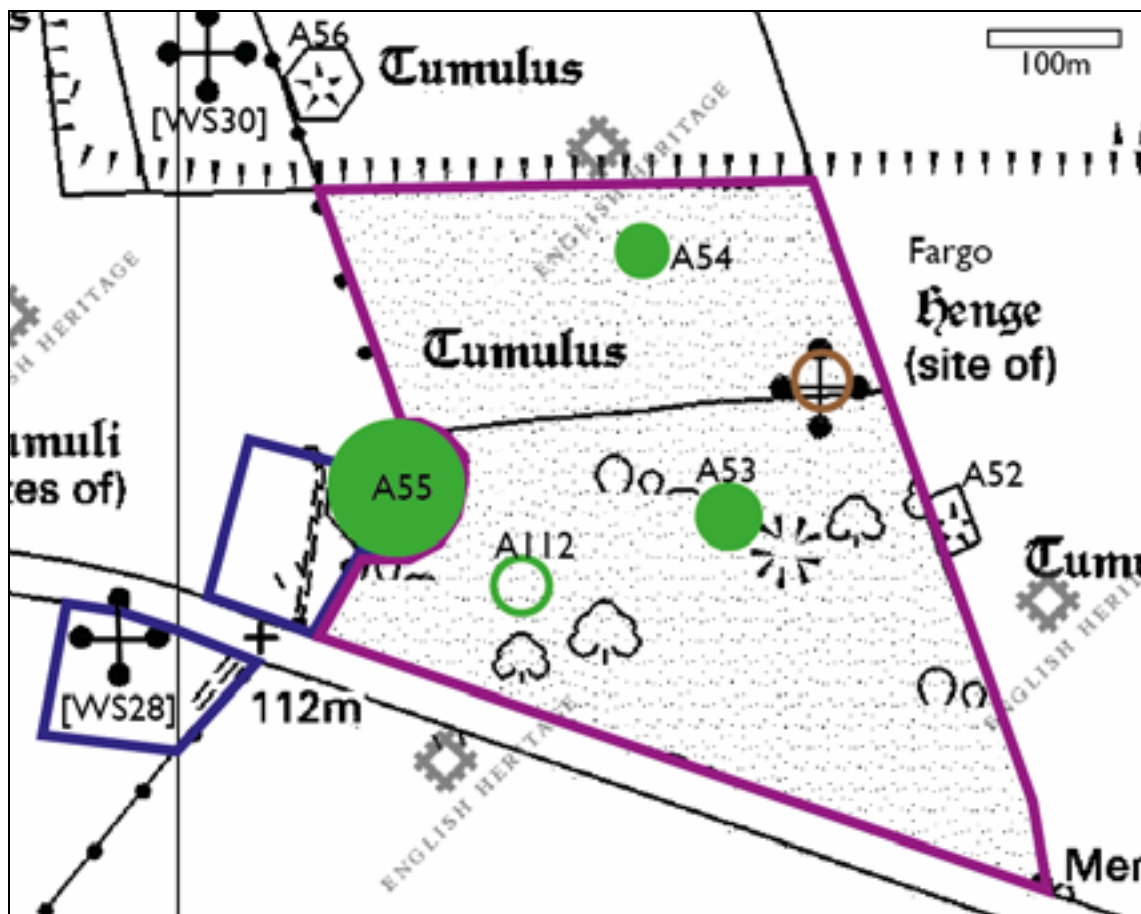


Fig 7: Area covered by the rapid field investigation.

The prefixes denote which parish (Winterbourne Stoke or Amesbury) and the approximate locations of each barrow indicated. Those labelled in square brackets have been levelled. The base map is © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. English Heritage 100019088. 2010.

Amesbury 112

Amesbury 112 is located perhaps 25m north of the location quoted by the RCHME (1979, 2). It measures an overall diameter of 29.5m and comprises a ring ditch and outer

bank. The ditch encircles an area 20.2m in diameter, with some internal mounding visible along the southern side. The outer bank measures 0.2m high and c 1.85m wide, and the ditch measures 2.8m wide and 0.4m deep.



Fig 8: Amesbury 54 in Fargo Plantation. The round barrow can only just be seen as a green mound in the centre of this photograph, behind the coppiced trees.

Amesbury 53

The round barrow known as Amesbury 53 measures an overall diameter of 26.6m and comprises a roughly circular mound surrounded by a ditch. A break in slope almost half way up the mound, which is 1.5m high, implies two phases of construction. A slight berm separates the mound from the ring ditch and possible causeways are evident in the south-western quadrant of the ditch.

The summit of the mound measures 8m in diameter, the base of the upper mound 13.8m, the top of the lower mound is 16.4m and the base of the lower mound is 20m in diameter. A slight berm of 1.7m separates the mound and the ditch, which measures 4.9m wide and 0.3m deep. The lower mound is 0.7m high and the upper mound is 0.8m high, giving a total height for the mound of 1.5m. The northern side of the mound is less sharply defined and is covered by denser vegetation.

Amesbury 54

The round barrow known as Amesbury 54 comprises an asymmetrical mound of two phases of construction which sits on a plinth surrounded by a ditch. The plinth is 0.35m high, the lower mound 0.85m high and the upper mound is 1m high. The southern ditch is 0.1m deep.

North from the approximate centre, the edge of the mound's summit is at 3m; the bottom of the upper mound at 6.8m; the top of the lower mound at 9m; the bottom of the lower mound at 12.2m; the top of the plinth at 14.3m, and the bottom of the plinth at 16m. South from the approximate centre the edge of the mound's summit is at 3.4m; the bottom of the upper mound at 6.8m; the top of the lower mound at 9.2m; the bottom of the lower mound at 11.4m; the top of the plinth at 12.9m; the bottom of the plinth at 14.4m and the far side of the ditch at 19m.

Fargo hengiform

An irregular hollow, circa 8.5m in diameter, is recognisable at the location of this excavated site. The extent to which this is original earthwork or the result of excavation is unclear.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Excavation

The first recorded excavations within the three survey areas are those of William Cunnington for Sir Richard Colt Hoare in the early 19th century (Hoare 1812, 163-4). Cunnington opened several of the round barrows. He considered Amesbury 55 the largest barrow and called it 'the Monarch of the Plain' but found only charred wood remains beneath it. Amesbury 54 had been opened before but contained three interments, two with Beakers. The primary burial was also accompanied by a flint spearhead and a whetstone. They found no interment in Amesbury 53 and recovered only a Food Vessel Urn from Winterbourne Stoke 28.

In the 20th century the only excavation was J F S Stone's discovery of a hengiform in Fargo Plantation (1939). Others nearby include the re-examination of Winterbourne Stoke 30 within the western end of the Cursus (Christie 1963), and excavation of the western end of the Cursus itself in 1983 as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project (Richards 1990, W56). In the summer of 2009 excavations took place at the site of the proposed visitor centre at Airman's Corner, south-east of the junction of the A344 and A360 (Wessex Archaeology forthcoming).

Aerial Photography

The archaeology of the survey areas has been mapped using aerial photographs as part of the Salisbury Plain Training Area Mapping Project and the Stonehenge WHS National Mapping Programme (Fig 9; Crutchley 2000; 2002). The earthworks, cropmarks and structures plotted by these projects include 'Celtic' field systems, round barrows and possible 20th-century military features on both sides of the A344 (Fig 4). Only some still exist as earthworks, while others have been destroyed by military or agricultural activity. On aerial photographs taken in 1945 the 'Monarch' round barrow appears damaged by a deep track which cuts through it north to south.

Two rectangular enclosures were mapped to the south of the A344 and were identified as the former locations of Handley Page hangars associated with the Stonehenge Aerodrome, which lay c 1km to the south-east. The site of the westernmost hangar, which was located in the southern survey area described in this report, is visible on 1930s aerial photographs as two rows of concrete block footings (Fig 11). Specific aerial photographs referred to in this report are listed in the references.

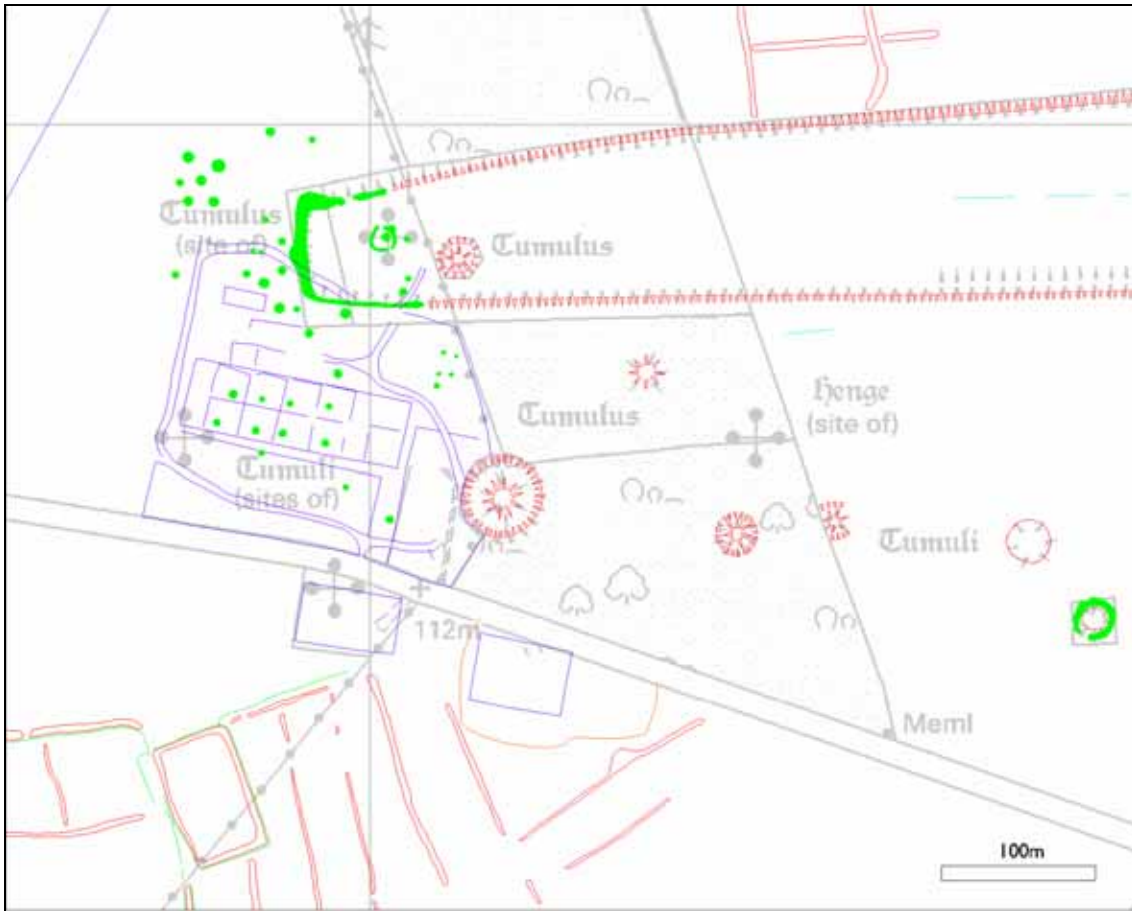


Fig 9: The aerial photograph mapping.

The purple squares containing green dots, with associated trackways, probably relate to the mid-20th century pig farm. The two large purple rectangles south of the A344 are the early 20th-century hangars. Other features shown in green (ditches) and red (banks) are the prehistoric Cursus, round barrows and 'Celtic' field systems. The mapping is © English Heritage and the base map is © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. English Heritage 100019088. 2010.

Other archaeological investigation

The round barrows were listed by the Reverend E H Goddard (1913) and this list was later revised by Leslie Grinsell (1957). The barrows have been subjected to field inspections more recently but have not been the subject of geophysical survey. They were inspected for Ordnance Survey mapping revision in 1970 and 1971; included in the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England's survey of the Stonehenge environs (RCHME 1979), and examined as part of the Monuments Protection Programme for Scheduled monuments in 1995.

Various archaeological investigations were carried out to inform the selection of sites for new visitor facilities for Stonehenge. At Fargo these comprised geophysical survey of a

narrow corridor along either side of the A344 and desk based assessment, plus test pitting in the woodland north of the Cursus (Darvill 2005, map Q). The area around the A344 near Fargo Plantation was one of five short-listed options (English Heritage 2008, Option 3 (Area X)) and was the most preferred location in the public consultation undertaken in 2008; however, in May 2010 the government gave the 'go ahead in principle' to an alternative site at Airman's Corner.

Other archaeological investigations nearby have focussed on the western end of the Cursus. The area to its west was fieldwalked as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project (Richards 1990, number 62). Geophysical surveys were conducted inside the western end of the Stonehenge Cursus in 2006 and 2007. In addition to confirming the features present as earthworks they identified a number of anomalies including the now destroyed barrow Winterbourne Stoke 30 and previous archaeological interventions (Payne 2007, 3-4).

DISCUSSION

Round barrows

Amesbury 55, the 'Monarch of the Plain', is situated on the western edge of the Fargo Plantation. It marks the western extent of the surviving Cursus Barrows (Fig 10), which continue east beyond the Fargo Plantation and are discussed as a group elsewhere (Amadio & Bishop 2010). Two round barrows were located to the south and west of the 'Monarch' but were almost destroyed by early 20th-century military and subsequent agricultural activity: the site of Winterbourne Stoke 29 lies west of the northern survey area, in an arable field, and the earthworks of Winterbourne Stoke 28 were damaged in the First World War by construction of an aircraft hangar immediately south of the A433.

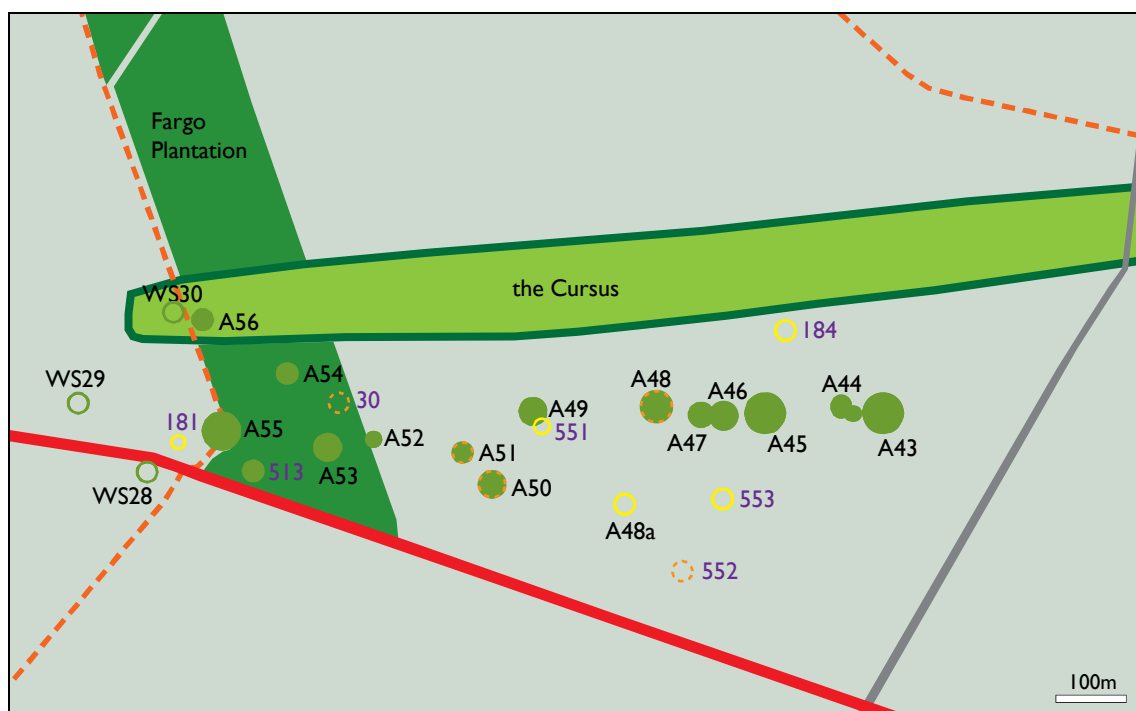


Fig 10: The Cursus Barrow Group.

Grinsell's numbers (1957) are prefixed with initials for the parish (Amesbury and Winterbourne Stoke). The purple numbers represent the NMR's archaeological database index number (SUI4SW...; see Table 1) used where Grinsell numbers have not been allocated. Damaged and destroyed barrows are shown as green rings, segmented ring ditches including the Fargo hengiform as dashed orange rings and other possible barrows as yellow rings.

Three further round barrows and a hengiform monument are situated within the southern end of Fargo Plantation, to the east of the 'Monarch' (Amesbury 55), and two more round barrows, one extant and one destroyed, are within the Cursus to its north (Pearson forthcoming). The analytical field survey found no sign of the circular feature

marked on Crawford's 6 inch map (recorded as NMR SU 14 SW 181), which appears to have been confused with Winterbourne Stoke 29 – Hoare's barrow 41 (1812, 164).

The 'Monarch' round barrow, whilst large, is comparable in size with other barrows at the eastern end of the Cursus Barrow Group (Amadio & Bishop 2010). At c 58m in overall diameter and 2.8m in height it is actually slightly smaller than Amesbury 43 (60m across and 3.4m high), the easternmost barrow in the group. Together these two barrows almost bracket the cemetery group. It appears that Amesbury 55's ridge top location led to Hoare's perception of its physical dominance over the Plain (1812, 164).

The top of the 'Monarch's' mound is relatively broad, at between 14m and 16m across, and the small irregular polygonal hollow south-east of centre (A) could perhaps suggest that a structure once stood on its summit, probably associated with the nearby military or agricultural activity during the early 20th century although possibly much earlier. An alternative interpretation is that the hollow represents antiquarian excavations (Hoare 1812, 164). The location of the hollow, south-east of centre, could perhaps explain the lack of finds from these, although the usual practice for Cunnington's workmen was to dig a central shaft (Simpson 1975, 14). The large size, ridge top location and lack of excavated finds from the 'Monarch' might suggest that it functioned as a focal point, as a cenotaph or 'ritual' barrow, as identified in other round barrow cemeteries (Jones 2005; Thomas 2005), although modern excavation might disclose a very different story.

Amesbury 112 was first identified by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments on England (RCHME 1979, 2), who described it as a ring ditch and outer bank defining a level central area. Although Scheduled as a disc barrow in 1995, mounding along the southern side of the area inside the ditch, observed during the rapid field survey, suggests that the barrow may have had a different original form. At nearly 30m in diameter it is much smaller than other disc barrows in the area, which typically reach 50m. It would have been damaged by ploughing in the early 19th century as part of the bumbake, but was not recognised by Cunnington or Hoare, which suggests that it may not have had any great height.

The surviving earthworks suggest the original forms of Amesbury 53 and 54 were more complex than the simple bowl barrows recorded by Grinsell (1957). They each comprise mounds that appear to be of more than one constructional phase. The mound of Amesbury 54 survives to a height of nearly 2m and sits on a plinth, although as Hoare observed (1812, 163), this barrow was ploughed in the early 19th century and the plinth could be the result of this process. Documents suggest the whole of what was to become Fargo Plantation was used as a temporary arable plot at this time (RCHME 1979, map 3) and doubtless the other monuments likewise suffered damage.

'Celtic' fields were mapped nearby by the NMP aerial surveys (Crutchley 2000; 2002) and are clearly of more than one phase (Fig 9). They may have extended further north, to include the barrows, but have been obliterated by post medieval ploughing, creation of the turnpike road and construction of the First World War hangars. A rectangular

enclosure appears to sit on top of the 'Celtic' field boundaries and is visible as white chalk in aerial photographs taken in the 1920s (Fig 11). Its dimensions are similar to the early 20th-century hangars immediately south of the road, which could suggest it is the site of another hangar. The absence of the broad footprint contrasts with the removed example, however, and could indicate that earlier earthworks were used as some form of road or pathway whilst the hangars were in use. The date and function of the rectangular enclosure remains unclear.

20th-century activity

The various pieces of concrete in both analytical survey areas probably relate to early 20th-century military activity. North of the A344, concrete slabs (Fig 5, **li** and **lii**) can be identified as parts of the eastern side of a structure marked on the 1924 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 3), which is visible on early aerial photographs (Fig 11). The structure appears to be a remnant of one of the 'Night Camp' buildings built towards the end of the First World War. Aerial photographs show that most of these were dismantled in the 1920s and 1930s.

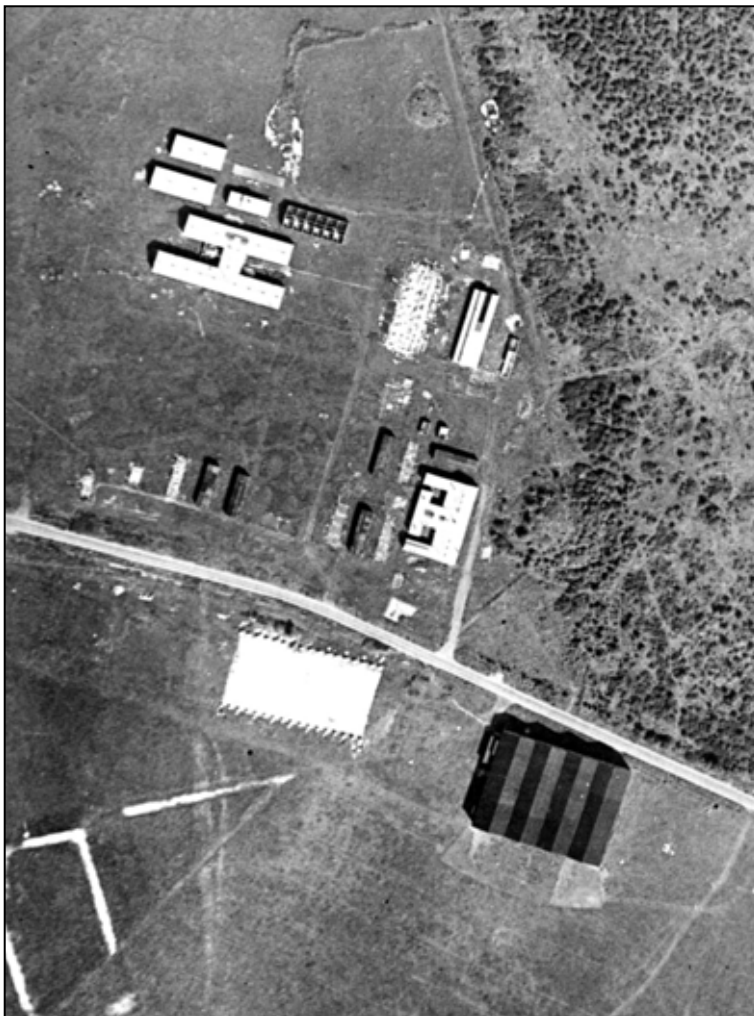


Fig 11: An aerial view of the Night Camp. This photograph was probably taken in the 1920s. One of the Handley-Page hangars has already been removed, as have some of the Night Camp buildings. NMR SU 1152/58 CCC 8151/1103 © Crown copyright. NMR Crawford Collection.

The Night Camp comprised accommodation for 81 Officers and 151 other ranks (James 1987, 170; Wessex Archaeology 1998, 22). The trainee night-bomber pilots were instructed in practical night navigation, map flying by day and night, compass flying day and night, use of vertical search lights, and of bombs and bomb dropping gears. Observers for both day and night bombing were given a finishing course before being qualified to wear the Observer's Wing. The courses lasted 4-5 weeks for a maximum of 60 pilots and 60 observers a month.

The night-bombers used Handley-Page 0/100 and 0/400 bomber aircraft which were housed in four semi-permanent Handley Page sheds constructed to the north of the Stonehenge Aerodrome for the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) school, which had arrived in January 1918 (ibid). The northern side of one of these hangars can be traced as a line of concrete blocks (T and Y) in the southern analytical survey area, overlying the mutilated remains of the round barrow Winterbourne Stoke 28. Only a few of the blocks forming the footings for the parallel southern side of the hangar survive (at Q), although they are clearly visible on aerial photographs taken in the 1940s (Fig 12). The hangars were served from the west by a short branch of the Larkhill Military Light Railway (James 1987, 198).



Fig 12: The pig farm and demolished Night Camp in 1945. The larger white rectangles are the highly reflective concrete bases of the Night Camp buildings. The footings of the First World War hangars and other associated structures are visible south of the road. NMR RAF/106G/UK/915 extract from frame 4205 11th October 1945. English Heritage (NMR) RAF Photography.

Various trackways visible as earthworks (Figs 4) can be dated using the aerial photographs. North of the A344 track (E) is clearly visible on the earlier aerial photographs as the access road for the Night Camp (Fig 11), together with a faint grid pattern of pathways to its west that differs from the later pig farm grid. The curving trackway (F), visible on the 1940s aerial photographs, is part of a trackway around the pig farm, which makes use of the earlier trackway (E) (Fig 12). The aerial photographs show a vehicle track cutting into the 'Monarch' barrow but no structure is visible on its summit (A), although this is perhaps partly due to vegetation cover. The presence of the vehicle track suggests that the causeway (B) constructed across the ditch was at least contemporary. It is not clear whether this activity is related to the military use of the site or the later pig farm, although it is perhaps most likely to have been military. While the craters with a halo of white up-cast chalk were initially thought to result from Second World War bombing practice, a comparison with known free-range pig farms (Wilson 2000, plate 29), suggests that these are pig farm enclosures, and that the pig farm utilised any remaining Night Camp buildings on the site.



*Fig 13: The memorial to Major Hewetson.
The plaque reads 'In memory of Major Alexander William Hewetson 66th Battery Royal Field Artillery who was killed whilst flying on the 17th July 1913 near this spot.'*

Several linear hollows were observed, of differing orientations and dimensions, within Fargo Plantation during the rapid field survey. Given the density of military activity in the surrounding landscape it is unlikely that the woodland was un-used during either War. Scraps of corrugated iron and small lumps of concrete can also be found dispersed through the woodland and these hollows are perhaps most likely to represent temporary ammunition stores.

A memorial to Major A W Hewetson is located at the south-eastern corner of Fargo Plantation, next to the A344 (Fig 13). He was one of several early fliers who lost their lives in accidents on the Plain. Hewetson tragically crashed his Bristol Coanda monoplane at Larkhill airfield during the test for his aviator's certificate (James 1987, 166; Wessex Archaeology 1998, 17).

Storage

The other earthworks surveyed are not visible on the 1940s aerial photographs and are probably later. An area of disturbance in the centre of the southern area is visible on an aerial photograph taken in 1971, which corresponds with the location of two rectangular hollows (**O** and **P**). A rectangular trench is visible in each of the survey areas (**H** and **N**); although there does not appear to be any documentary information for either they are probably 20th century. The other features observed south of the road appear to relate to agricultural storage and dumping of road maintenance material throughout the later 20th century (Blore *et al* 1995, 129).

CONCLUSION

The analytical and rapid surveys contrast the earthworks of one of the largest round barrows in the WHS with the remnants of the once prominent RNAS station. The latter are some of the few remaining vestiges of early military activity in the vicinity and an important component of the 20th-century landscape. The location of some of the First World War Night Camp buildings and Handley Page hangars can still be traced on the ground. These aircraft set the pattern for the future of aerial warfare, highlighting the possibilities of aerial bombardment (Wessex Archaeology 1998, 23).

New information has also been provided on the forms and phasing of the round barrows, which are more complex monuments than Grinsell's listing implies (1957). The Cursus Barrows had a wide variety of original forms, comprising combinations of barrow mounds, timber structures, causewayed and complete ring ditches, plinths, berms and outer banks. They are a series of complex circular and oval monuments with multiple phases ranging from the late Neolithic to the early Bronze Age (Amadio & Bishop 2010). This is hinted at in the earthworks by the segmented or causewayed ditches and the plinths beneath barrow mounds. Continued archaeological investigation through geophysical survey and targeted excavation can be expected to provide further information on their construction and phasing, potentially including material that could provide absolute dates.

METHODOLOGY

A Level 3 detailed analytical survey (Ainsworth *et al* 2007, 23) of two areas west and south-west of Fargo Plantation was carried out between January and March 2010. It used 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 Office 5.1 software to process the field codes. The data was then transferred to Autodesk Map 2007 software and plotted on to polyester drawing film at the elected scale of 1:000 for graphical completion in the field.

A number of inter-visible control points on the site were established with GNSS to allow future work with conventional survey equipment. Subtle earthwork detail was added using standard graphical techniques of taped offset and radiation using these control points.

A Level 1 rapid field investigation (*ibid*) of Fargo Plantation, south of the Cursus, was carried out on 10th November 2010. It comprised observations and taped measurements made while walking through the woodland in east / west transects.

The report was written By Anna Komar and Sharon Bishop and the hand-drawn archive plan was produced by Deborah Cunliffe. Additional report illustrations were prepared by the authors using Adobe Illustrator software and the report was prepared for publication using Word.

Monument records for each site surveyed have been added to English Heritage's archaeological database (AMIE) and existing records enhanced. The main elements of the monument record comprise location, indexed interpretation, textual description and main sources.

Table 2: AMIE records.

Event:	UID: 1518117	Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project
Archive Collection:	AF00338	

AMIE Monument Records			
Existing	Amended	New	Revised total
9	9	1	10

In compliance with English Heritage RADF guidelines (Dickinson 2008) the project archive has been deposited in English Heritage's National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ, where it can be consulted.

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Maps

1976 Geological Survey of Great Britain *Sheet 282 – Devizes*

Documents viewed at Wiltshire History Centre (WHC)

Winterbourne Stoke Enclosure Award 1812 under an Act of 1810 (EA104)

Tithe Award Amesbury (TA Amesbury 1846)

Aerial Photographs

(Supplied by the National Monuments Record)

RAF/106G/UK/915 4205-4206 11-OCT-1945

USAAF/US/7PH/GP/LOC122 1048-1050 24-DEC-1943

FSL/71211 211169 25-SEP-1971

SU 1042/17 NMR 1352/190-191 11-OCT-1978

SU 1142/30-33 CUCAP NP33-36 22-APR-1954

SU 1142/58 CCC 8515/1103 UNDATED

APPENDIX

Table 3: Measurements of the surveyed barrows.

Name	overall diameter	mound height	mound base diameter	mound top diameter	hollow diameter	plinth base diameter	berm diameter	ditch width	ditch depth	ditch diameter	outer bank width	outer bank height
ANALYTICAL SURVEY												
Winterbourne Stoke 28	[2.4m]	2.8m	27.5m	1.6m			40m	4m	0.4m	5.8m		
Amesbury 55	5.8m							1.0m				
RAPID FIELD SURVEY												
Fargo hengiform	8.5m				8.5m							
Amesbury 53	26.6m	1.5m	20m	8m			21.7m	2.45m	0.3m	26.6m		
Amesbury 54 (radius to N)	16m	1.85m	12.2m	3m		16m						
Amesbury 54 (radius to S)	19m		11.4m	3.4m		14.4m		4.6m	0.1m	[38m]		
Amesbury 54	[38m]	1.85m	23.6m	6.4m		30.4m		2.8m	0.4m	25.8m	1.85m	0.2m
Amesbury 112	29.5m		20.2m									



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