

**Archaeological Watching Brief report
Cissbury Ring Hillfort
Worthing, West Sussex**

NGR: TQ 13953 07947

National Monument No. 1015817

**ASE Project No: 7741
Site Code: ISS15**

**ASE Report No: 2015350
OASIS id: archaeol6-224818**



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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at the National trust site of Cissbury Ring hillfort, Worthing, West Sussex, in September 2015.

The watching brief monitored the removal of existing wooden fence posts and the excavation of eight new post holes. No archaeological finds or features were noted during the course of the works.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Cissbury Ring Hillfort, Worthing, West Sussex (NGR TQ 13953 07947; Figure 1) during the installation of new fence posts and fencing in September 2015.
- 1.1.2 Cissbury Ring is a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No. 1015817) and comprises a large, oval-shaped earthwork of Iron Age date. Within the interior (an area of approx. 24 ha.), evidence has been identified of Neolithic flint mines, Romano-British farming and domestic activity (including some evidence of refortification), an Anglo-Saxon mint, medieval agriculture, post-medieval beacons, and Second World War defences.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (1:50,000 scale Geology of Britain map, accessed 27th September 2015), the bedrock geology in the area of Cissbury Ring is Newhaven Formation chalk: a sedimentary bedrock formed in the Cretaceous Period (an estimated 71 to 86 million years ago,) when the local environment was dominated by warm and shallow seas.
- 1.2.2 The hillfort itself is situated on high land with superficial deposits of 'Clay-with-flints Formation' clay, silt, sand and gravel. These deposits were formed up to 5 million years ago in the Quaternary and Neogene Periods, from the rock debris left behind by weathering processes. No superficial deposits are recorded for the landscape surrounding the hill.
- 1.2.3 The site today is open grassland with scattered clumps of trees and shrubs, and tree plantations to its immediate north-east and south.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The watching brief covered the replacement of fencing along the northern ramparts of the hillfort. New fencing was installed in order to instate an effective and sustainable grazing regime on the site. Due to the status of the site as a scheduled monument, an archaeologist was employed to record any deposits or finds of archaeological interest uncovered during removal of the old fence posts and the excavation of post holes for the new ones.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The general objective of the archaeological watching brief was to record archaeological deposits exposed by the development and to interpret these and any recovered artefacts within the context of the site as a whole.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report summarises a watching brief carried out by ASE during the groundworks relating to the installation of eight new post holes excavated for fencing along the northern ramparts. The work took place on the 2nd September 2015.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 The archaeological background of the site has been covered in detail in previous project documentation (e.g. National Trust 2013). Archaeological surveys were carried out of the site in 2006 and 2013 and a watching brief was carried out on earlier fencing work in 2014. Only a short summary of the findings from these various reports is provided here.
- 2.1.2 The primary feature of the site is the Iron Age defensive hillfort (National Monument No. 1015817), but activity has been noted across a wide range of periods. The earliest noted archaeological features are flint mines from the Neolithic period. Following Iron Age occupation of the site, there is evidence of Roman domestic and agricultural activity, along with possible refortification of the hillfort. This is succeeded by an Anglo Saxon mint, medieval agricultural activity, post-medieval use of the site as a beacon, and concrete defences relating to the Second World War.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The watching brief work involved monitoring the removal of existing wooden fence posts along the north-west side of the hillfort and the excavation of holes for new steel posts and wire fencing.
- 3.1.2 The new posts were galvanised steel, 0.08m in diameter and sunk to a depth of 1.1m. The posts were driven in for the final 0.3m of their depth so it was not possible to see the lowest layer of stratigraphy through which they cut or monitor their impact on these unexposed horizons. The upper 0.8m of each post hole was excavated by hand, however, and this part was carried out under archaeological supervision. The holes measured 0.3m by 0.3m in size.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

- 3.2.1 The narrow size of the post holes made it difficult to observe the stratigraphic deposits through which the postholes were cut, especially towards the base of each excavation.

3.3 The Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited with the National Trust in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	3
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	11
Permatrace sheets	0
Trench Record Forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Fence post excavation work monitored on 2nd September 2015

4.1.1 Three deposits were recorded during the course of the work to erect new fencing (Table 2). These were: [7001], a scrubby topsoil, 0.1m-0.2m thick, comprising dark brown silt with very occasional flecks of chalk; [7002], a mid-brown silt 0.6m thick with frequent chalk flecks, which formed a possible bank material for the fort; and the natural geological chalk [7003]. The post-holes excavated for the new fencing were 0.3m by 0.3m in size by 0.8m in depth. Post-holes 2-5 did not reach chalk, while posts 1, 7 and 8 hit natural chalk at a depth of 0.8m from the current ground surface.

4.1.2 No archaeological artefacts or features were identified.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Deposit Thickness m
7001	Layer	Topsoil	0.1m to 0.2m
7002	Layer	Bank material (?)	0.6m to >0.7m
7003	Layer	Natural chalk and flint	

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 No archaeological artefacts or features were identified during the course of the work to erect new fencing along the northern ramparts of the hillfort.
- 5.2 Deposit [7002] probably represents a deposit used to form part of an earthwork bank around the fort. No evidence was recovered to confirm or date this.
- 5.3 The work to erect the new fence therefore had very little impact on the fort and the watching brief did not contribute any further to understanding or interpretation of the site.

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HER Summary

HER enquiry no.	-				
Site code	ISS15				
Project code	7741				
Planning reference	Scheduled Monument No. 1015817				
Site address	Cissbury Ring, Worthing, West Sussex				
District/Borough	Worthing				
NGR (12 figures)	TQ 13953 07947				
Geology	Bedrock geology of Newhaven Chalk Formation and superficial deposits of clay-with-flints				
Fieldwork type			WB		
Date of fieldwork	2/9/2015				
Sponsor/client	The National Trust				
Project manager	Paul Mason				
Project supervisor	Hayley Nicholls				
Period summary					
Project summary (100 word max)	<p><i>This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at the National trust site of Cissbury Ring hillfort, Worthing, West Sussex, in September 2015.</i></p> <p><i>The watching brief monitored the removal of existing wooden fence posts and the excavation of eight new post holes. No archaeological finds or features were noted during the course of the works.</i></p>				
Museum/Accession No.	-				

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-224818

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Cissbury Ring Hillfort, Worthing, West Sussex
Short description of the project	This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at the National trust site of Cissbury Ring hillfort, Worthing, West Sussex, in September 2015. The watching brief monitored the removal of existing wooden fence posts and the excavation of eight new post holes. No archaeological finds or features were noted during the course of the works.
Project dates	Start: 02-09-2015 End: 02-09-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	HILLFORT Iron Age
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX WORTHING WORTHING Cissbury Ring
Postcode	BN14 0HX
Study area	24 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 13953 07947 50.859226567596 -0.380729578433 50 51 33 N 000 22 50 W Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	National Trust
Project design originator	National Trust
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Hayley Nicholls
Type of sponsor/funding body	National Trust
Project archives	
Physical Archive	No

Exists?

Digital Media available "Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Diary", "Report"

Project bibliography
1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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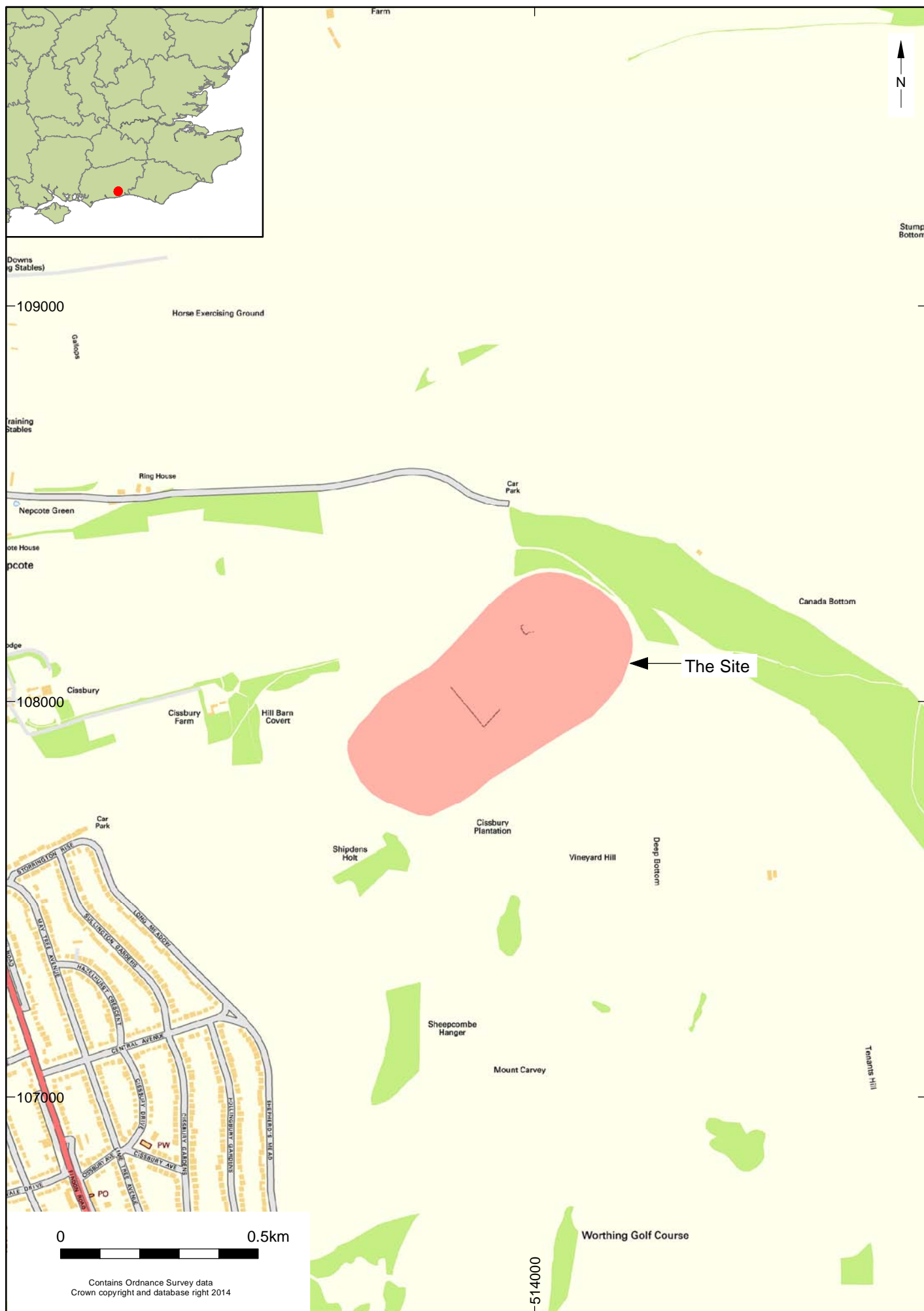
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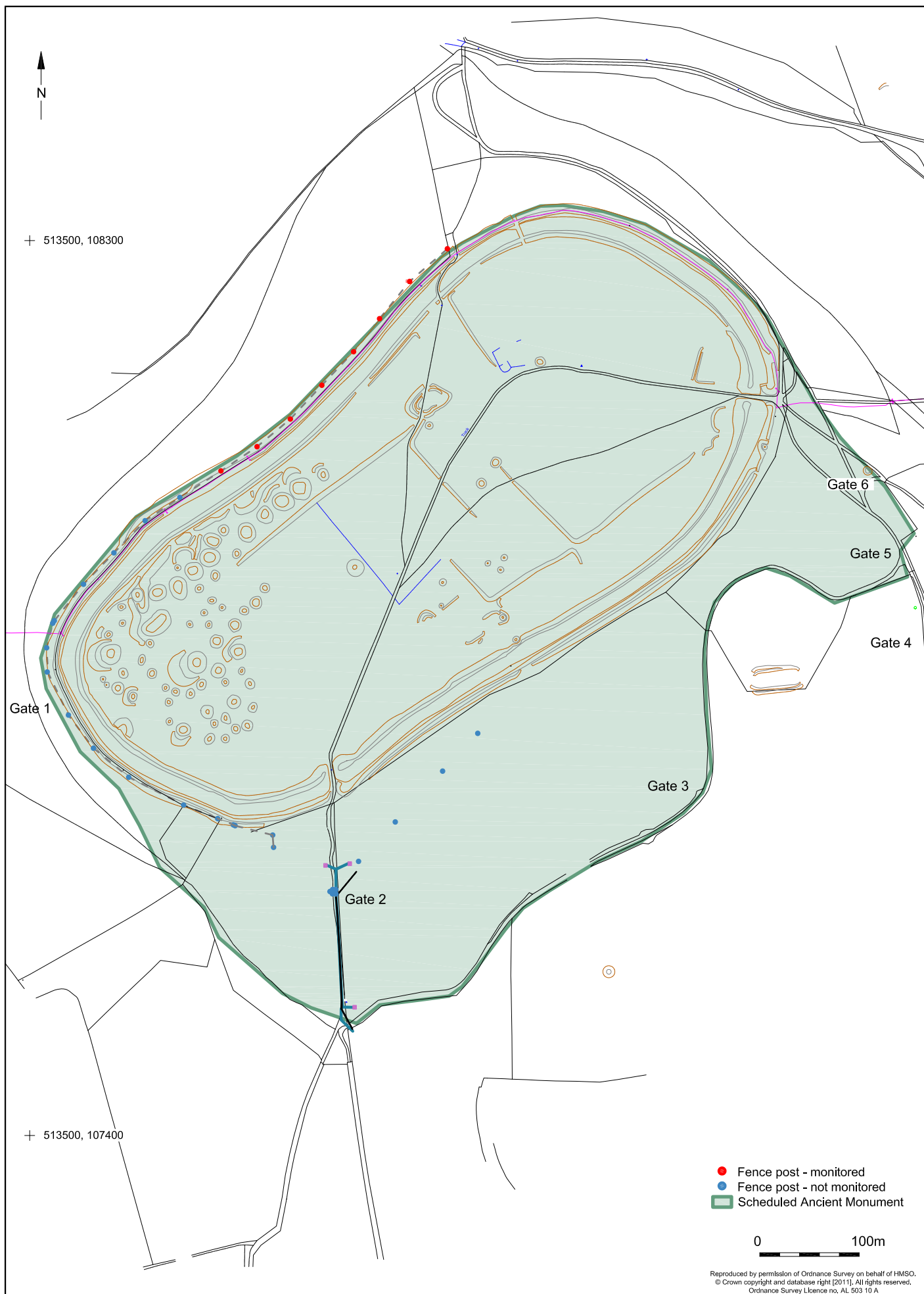
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© Archaeology South-East		Cissbury Ring Hillfort, Findon	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 7741	August 2015	Site location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: NG		



© Archaeology South-East		Cissbury Ring Hillfort, Findon	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 7741	September 2015	Location of monitored fence posts	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: NG		

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