

Section 2.

Basic information about the site

2.1. Name of the site:	Castle Dykes (medieval), Castle Yard (prehistoric)
2.2. Alternative name of the site:	Caution: distinguish between the 2 different sites
2.3. National Grid Reference:	CD = SP 61848 56735, CY = SP 61778 56305
2.4. Any known reference numbers:	HER MapInfo, CD = MNN8560 etc
2.5. Current county/Unitary authority:	Northamptonshire County Council
2.6. When did you visit the site (month/year):	25 September 2014

Landscape setting of the site

2.7. Altitude (metres): **CD** = 176m. **CY** = 163m

2.8. Topographic position: [you can tick more than 1]

HILL TOP	.
COASTAL PROMONTORY	.
INLAND PROMONTORY	.
VALLEY BOTTOM	.
KNOLL/HILLOCK	.
OUTCROP	.
RIDGE	X
PLATEAU/CLIFF-EDGE	.
HILLSLOPE	.
LOWLAND (E.G. MARSH)	.
OTHER	.

Comments on topographic position: It is relevant to note that:

- (a) Both sites straddle the geological junction between Upper Lias Clay and Northants Sand & Ironstone (see geological map and further comments in 5.1 and the Appendices), which is probably significant in relation to the archaeological evidence of c500BC tapped-furnace iron-making at Castle Yard (see paper by D.Knight).
- (b) Castle Dykes exhibits traces of entrances in the inner and outer baileys (not shown on RCHM and other maps) that align with a possible route to an early nodal centre at Dodford (see suggested map in the Appendices).
- (c) Castle Yard lies directly on a major long-distance ridgeway route, directly adjacent to the Great Way (referenced in Anglo-Saxon charters, see further details in the Appendices)

ASPECT (if slope) .

2.9. Maximum visibility/view: (for details, see Viewshed Diagram in Appendices)

NE: [tick 1 only]	
LONG	X (>20km)
MEDIUM	.
SHORT	.
SE: [tick 1 only]	
LONG	X (>20km)
MEDIUM	.

SHORT	.
SW: [tick 1 only]	
LONG	.
MEDIUM	X (4.5km)
SHORT	.
NW: [tick 1 only]	
LONG	.
MEDIUM	X (5.0km)
SHORT	.
Comments:	The viewshed diagram (see Appendices) shows excellent long-distance views from due north clockwise to the south-east, and more restricted views from the south clockwise to the north-west. A possible inference might be that any possible threat may have been perceived as lying to the east of the site

2.10. Water source inside: [you can tick more than 1]

SPRING	CD: spring source in NE corner of inner bailey (not shown on maps)
STREAM	.
POOL	.
CISTERN	.
OTHER (details):	.

2.11. Water source nearby: **CY:** two spring sources within 100-200m, one to the west, one to the south; also a possible submerged spring-line source almost within the CY enclosure, just visible in aerial images at the NE corner of the CY enclosure.

2.12. Current land category (over whole site footprint) (you can tick more than 1)

WOODLAND	CD (medieval coppice throughout the inner bailey, motte, banks and ditches)
COMMERCIAL FORESTRY PLANTATION	.
PARKLAND	.
PASTURE (GRAZED)	.
ARABLE	CD (outer bailey only), and all of CY
SCRUB/BRACKEN	.
ROCKY OUTCROPS	.
HEATHER/MOORLAND	.
HEATH	.
BUILT-UP	.
Comments:	.

2.13. Pre-hillfort activity: Seems extremely likely for CY, due to the presence of the Great Way immediately adjacent on the south side, supported by significant numbers of Bronze Age finds nearby (well-documented BA palstaves at Everdon Stubbs, 1-2km west along the ridgeway, plus recent find by metal-detectorists of a BA spearhead in the valley 200m south of CY, etc.).

For CD, the position is much less clear, owing to the significant medieval structures; however, an argument can be made in favour of much earlier activity on that site (see 2.8b above and 5.1a below, plus the close proximity of the CD and CY sites)

- 2.14. Post-hillfort activity: Medieval motte and bailey at CD, plus much evidence of medieval coppicing (as at nearby Everdon Stubbs) throughout the inner baileys and motte and their respective banks and ditches; this probably continued at CD until the 1700s judging by the present state of the trees.

Surface morphology of the site

Note (see the Notes for guidance document): from this section onwards we are assuming that you are working with a plan of the site. If it is a published plan then we do not expect you to record every item, only those which are different/additional to the plan you are working with. If you are drawing your own plan you can annotate details on it.

- 2.15. Which plan are you using: 1885 OS map plus RCHM, plus Knight's survey (which uses both the RCHM plan and the 1885 1:2500 map as its basis).

- 2.16. Have you used any other sources of information (tick any that apply):

HER	X (MapInfo database)
NMR	.
PUBLISHED SOURCE (details):	D. Knight, see reference in Bibliog.
OTHER (details):	Anglo-Saxon charters

- 2.17. Is there an annex (see diagram in Notes for Guidance):

YES	CD has an outer bailey separated from the inner bailey by a deep ditch and steep bank, possibly with a bridged entrance flanked by twin portal towers in the centre of the north side of the inner bailey, to judge by the sharp variations in height of the inner bank at this point. This appears to align with a possible further entrance in the north side of the outer bailey – and both these possible entrances are directly aligned with a possible route to the early nodal centre at Dodford (see further details and map in the Appendices).
NO	CY has no annex.

Note: Sections 3 and 5 are for every site, section 4 only applies to sites with an annex.

Section 3. Enclosed area

3.1 General overall shape of enclosed area: [you can tick more than 1]

- CIRCULAR .
SUB-CIRCULAR/OVAL .
RECTANGULAR .
SUB-RECTANGULAR CY (the south face of the rectangle is cut away by a later roadway, see details in Knight)
POLYGONAL .
IRREGULAR .
COMPLEX (MORE THAN ONE ENCLOSURE)

CD (roughly pear-shaped, see diagrams in Appendices)
Comments: CD is relatively well preserved, despite being overgrown with ancient coppice. CY is almost completely ploughed out over its entire interior, and destroyed altogether on the eastern part of the southern side by a minor Enclosure-period roadway. The bank and ditch is clearly visible only on the north side (photographs 18-19); the west and east sides of the bank and ditch are just discernible in the arable field (photographs 16-17, 21-22).

3.2. Maximum dimensions of internal area (see diagram in Notes for Guidance):

1. **CD** N face of outer bailey to S face of inner bailey = 205m
widest points of inner bailey = 145m
2. **CY** N & S sides each 240m, W & E sides each 108m

Comments: None

3.3. Maximum dimensions of whole site footprint (see diagram in Notes for Guidance):

1. **CD** 35,600sq.m. area. The linear measurements at the locations as described above to the outside of the site are 255m and 210m.
2. **CY** 27,500sq.m. area. The linear measurements at the locations as described above to the outside of the site are 256m and 140m

Comments: See comment in 3.1 above.

Entrances

3.4. Number of breaks/entrances through the rampart by position: [give a number for each]

- N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

Comments: **CD:** see diagram in Appendices and comment in 2.17 above.

CY: it is no longer possible to distinguish any features clearly, except on the north side, and that side shows no evidence of any entrance (NB: Knight

records a 5m gap on the north side in the outer bank, with an associated causeway, which might have indicated a northern entrance, but there was no sign of an equivalent break in the inner scarp at that point, so this remains inconclusive). However, bearing in mind the comments in 2.8c above, it seems likely that there would have been an entrance on the south side of CY, relating to the Great Way.

3.5. How many are apparently secondary breaks: [give a number for each]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

Comments: Not possible to answer.

3.6. (see diagram in Notes for Guidance):

For each entrance that is not a simple gap, is it most like any of the following (e.g. in-turned), if so record which position it is in:

IN-TURNED: [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

OUT-TURNED: [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

BOTH (IN- AND OUT-TURNED): [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

HORNWORK: [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

OVER-LAPPING: [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

OUTWORKS: [you can tick more than 1]

N .
NE .
E .
SE .
S .
SW .
W .
NW .

Comments: Not possible to answer.

OTHER FORMS:

Comments: .

Enclosing works - ramparts/banks/walls and ditches

3.7. Number of ramparts/banks/walls per quadrant:

NE: .
SE: .
SW: .
NW: .

Comments: **CD:** Single ditch (7-10m deep and 12-15m wide at the greatest) around all of the inner bailey, with inner raised bank (rising about 5m above the surrounding fields) and a wide top (5-7m broad). The motte has a separate deep ditch surrounding it. The outer bailey (north of the inner bailey) is surrounded by a ditch and bank, somewhat less deep and wide than the inner bailey. The outer bailey bank comes to a relatively narrow top (1-2m). In all the banks (both for the inner and outer baileys), the sides and tops are strewn with thousands of flat pieces of Northants Sand and Ironstone, and it seems likely that the these banks may originally have been revetted in stone along the whole of their

perimeter, which has been gradually eroded and scattered, perhaps by a combination of robbing-out and the root-action of medieval coppicing.

CY: Appears to have been a scarp flanked by a ditch and external bank on all sides (though the south side has been obliterated by a minor west-east road, which closely follows the ridgeway route of the Great Way). Now relatively shallow (about 2m) even on the best-preserved northern side; and within the arable interior perhaps 1m on the west side and 2m on the east side, but both west and east sides are seriously ploughed-out (photographs 16-17, 21-22).

3.8. Number of DITCHES per quadrant:

NE: .

SE: .

SW: .

NW: .

Comments: See 3.7 above.

3.9. Form of rampart/bank/wall

Same all the way around:

Y X

N .

If yes: [tick one only]

EARTHEN BANK X (stone-faced, see Knight)

STONE WALL .

BOTH .

PALISADING .

VITRIFICATION .

OTHER BURNING .

Comments:

CD: Earthen banks, perhaps originally revetted in rough local stone.

CY: Originally stone-faced earth-infill 'box' ramparts (see Baker, 1822-30, p376 quoted in Knight's report), of a type common to IA structures all over Britain.

If NO then by quadrant:

NE: [you can tick more than 1]

EARTHEN BANK .

STONE WALL .

BOTH .

PALISADING .

VITRIFICATION .

OTHER BURNING .

Comments: .

SE: [you can tick more than 1]

EARTHEN BANK .

STONE WALL .

BOTH .

PALISADING .

VITRIFICATION .

OTHER BURNING .

Comments: .
 SW: [you can tick more than 1]
 EARTHEN BANK .
 STONE WALL .
 BOTH .
 PALISADING .
 VITRIFICATION .
 OTHER BURNING .
 Comments: .
 NW: [you can tick more than 1]
 EARTHEN BANK .
 STONE WALL .
 BOTH .
 PALISADING .
 VITRIFICATION .
 OTHER BURNING .
 Comments: .

3.10. For each quadrant how many of each of the bank/wall/ditch combinations are there (see diagram in Notes for Guidance):

NE:
 BANK/WALL (NO DITCH) .
 BANK/DITCH .
 BANK/DITCH/BANK .
 OTHER .
 Comments: .
 SE:
 BANK/WALL (NO DITCH) .
 BANK/DITCH .
 BANK/DITCH/BANK .
 OTHER .
 Comments: .
 SW:
 BANK/WALL (NO DITCH) .
 BANK/DITCH .
 BANK/DITCH/BANK .
 OTHER .
 Comments: .
 NW:
 BANK/WALL (NO DITCH) .
 BANK/DITCH .
 BANK/DITCH/BANK .
 OTHER .
 Comments: .

3.11. Chevaux de Frise (tick if YES, you can tick more than 1]

NE .
 SE .

SW .
NW .
Comments: .

Interior features

3.12. Tick all that are present, mark where on the plan and send to us: [you can tick more than 1]

NO APPARENT FEATURES .
STONE STRUCTURES .
PLATFORMS .
QUARRY HOLLOWES .
PITS .
OTHER .

Comments: **CD:** Heavily overgrown by medieval coppice. RCHM records features associated with the motte.

CY: For internal features, see Knight's report, especially regarding the evidence for early iron smelting c 500BC using a tapped-furnace technique, possibly the earliest British evidence for this technique. For details, see Knight. (NB: recent Google Earth imagery shows a faint sign of what might be a long trapezoidal feature within the enclosure, though this is purely speculative and does not appear to be shaped like any known IA structure. Better evidence is provided in the map from the Northamptonshire Mapping Project, based partly on historical aerial photography. Note: the NMP map takes no account of CD, but see the surveyors' comments in 5.1a below regarding possible earlier use).

Section 4.

If the site has an annex (see notes for definition of an annex), continue here with information about the annex, otherwise go to section 5 below:

4.1. Shape of the annex [tick only 1]

LOBATE .
CONCENTRIC .
CIRCULAR .
SUB-CIRCULAR .
RECTANGULAR .
SUB-RECTANGULAR .
POLYGONAL .
IRREGULAR .
OTHER .

4.2. Number of annex ramparts: .

4.3. Number of annex ditches: .

4.4. Number of annex entrances: .

4.5. Comments on the annex: .

Section 5.

5.1. Any general comments (including comments on erosion/damage, especially if recent):

a) Castle Dykes:

It is difficult to advance a sound argument for earlier activity at Castle Dykes than the Anglo-Saxon period – and even the Anglo-Saxon period can only be attested by postulating a route from the supposed entrances to the outer bailey along an alignment of sections of various post-Enclosure roadway and parish boundary towards the well-documented early nodal centre at Dodford (see annotated map in Appendices).

It may perhaps be speculated that the CD site, being located very close to the CY site and also a rich source of Northants Sand and Ironstone, may have served during the Iron Age as a raw material quarry to feed the furnaces at the CY site; although this seems a very plausible theory, the surveyors can see no way in which it might now be tested by fieldwork, other than speculative excavation at the head of the valley to look for a possible paved causeway linking the sites.

As an alternative hypothesis, it is also worth noting in passing, that Sutton's report on Iron Age hillforts in Oxfordshire describes a site at Eynsham Park as consisting of a sub-circular univallate camp with a squarish yard albeit conjoined – ie similar to the medieval development at CD, which may perhaps have re-used and enhanced an earlier construction.

Much of the medieval groundwork of the CD site remains in relatively good condition, and erosion / agricultural / animal activities have done relatively little serious damage that would prevent successful archaeological examination.

b) Castle Yard:

The positioning of Castle Yard in geological terms, i.e. exactly at the junction of bands of Northants Sand & Ironstone and Upper Lias Clay, is probably significant – i.e., with the Sand & Ironstone serving as the raw material for smelting and the Lias Clay, being relatively unploughable at that period, probably being left as woodland which would provide the necessary source of fuel for smelting. It is noticeable that several IA hillforts in Northamptonshire (including Hunsbury Hill, Northampton) are located at precisely such interfaces between these two geological layers.

The proximity of Castle Yard to the Great Way, and the ongoing route of the Great Way (as attested in Anglo-Saxon charters), suggests that there may have been a long-established trade route from the Castle Yard IA hillfort to the IA hillfort at Hunsbury Hill (see also comments in the survey report on Hunsbury Hill). These two hillforts may well have operated from about 500BC onward as major centres of iron-production, and also of early technical innovation in ironmaking; and a transport route from Castle Yard to Hunsbury would allow access to the R. Nene for long-distance transport (see also the reports on Thrapston and Irthlingborough, which together with Hunsbury provide control over a 30km section of the Nene).

In terms of erosion, this site has been badly eroded by an adjacent post-Enclosure roadway, and by recent ploughing, so that very little now remains visible; for further details, see Knight's report. The internal features indicated in the map in the Northamptonshire Mapping Project (see appendices) are based on earlier aerial photography, and there is now no sign of these features on the ground.

Bibliography:

Knight, D., "An Iron Age Hillfort at Castle Yard, Farthingstone, Northamptonshire"

Sutton, J.E.G., "Iron Age Hillforts and some other Earthworks in Oxfordshire"

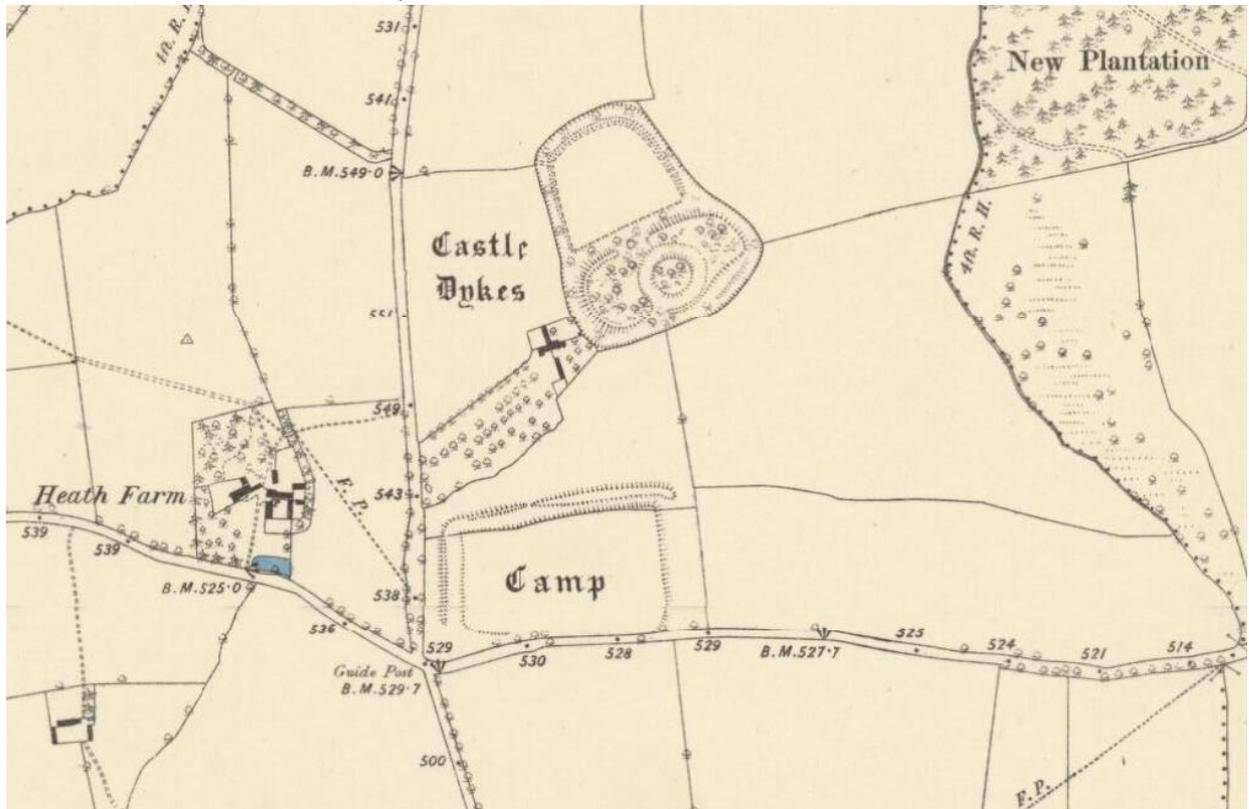
Brown, Key, Orr & Woodfield, discussion of the Anglo-Saxon charter for Stowe, Eadwig to Briththelm

Northamptonshire Mapping Project, Alison Deegan and Glenn Foard

RCHM

Appendices:

1. Extract from 1885 OS 6" map



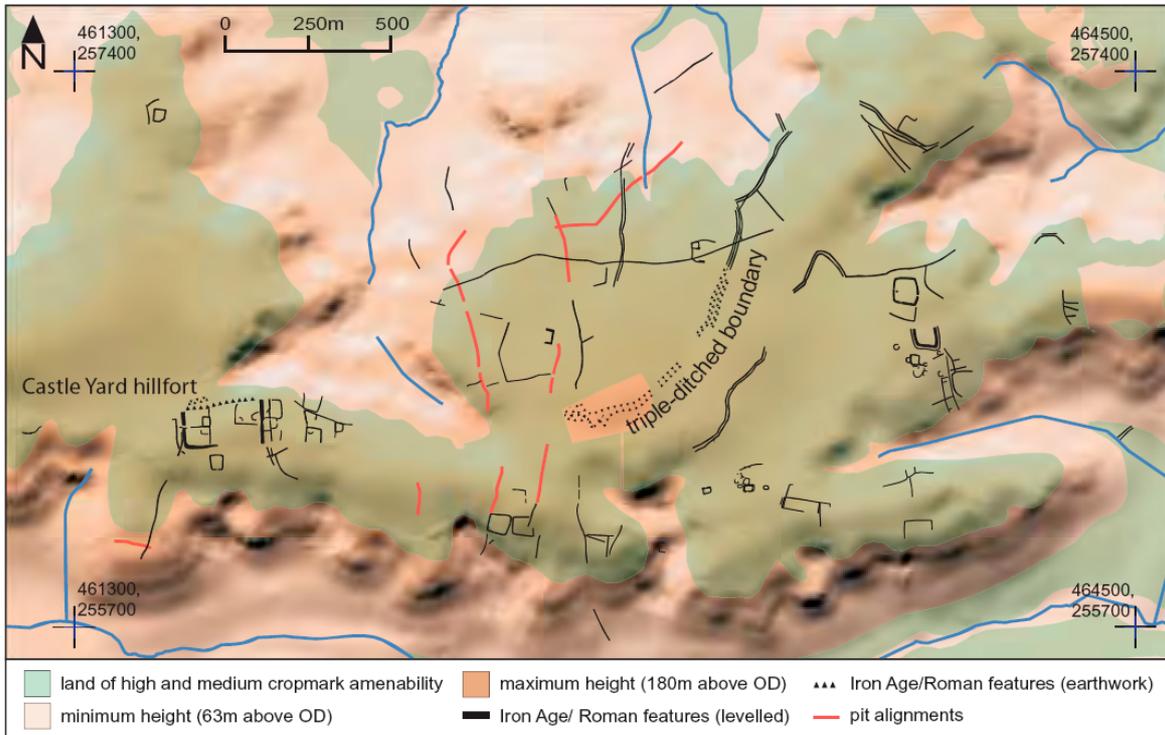
2. Aerial view from Google Maps (approx 2010), also indicating the route of part of the Great Way



3. Geology, viewed in MapInfo (source: geological map of Northamptonshire, NCC and MOLA)

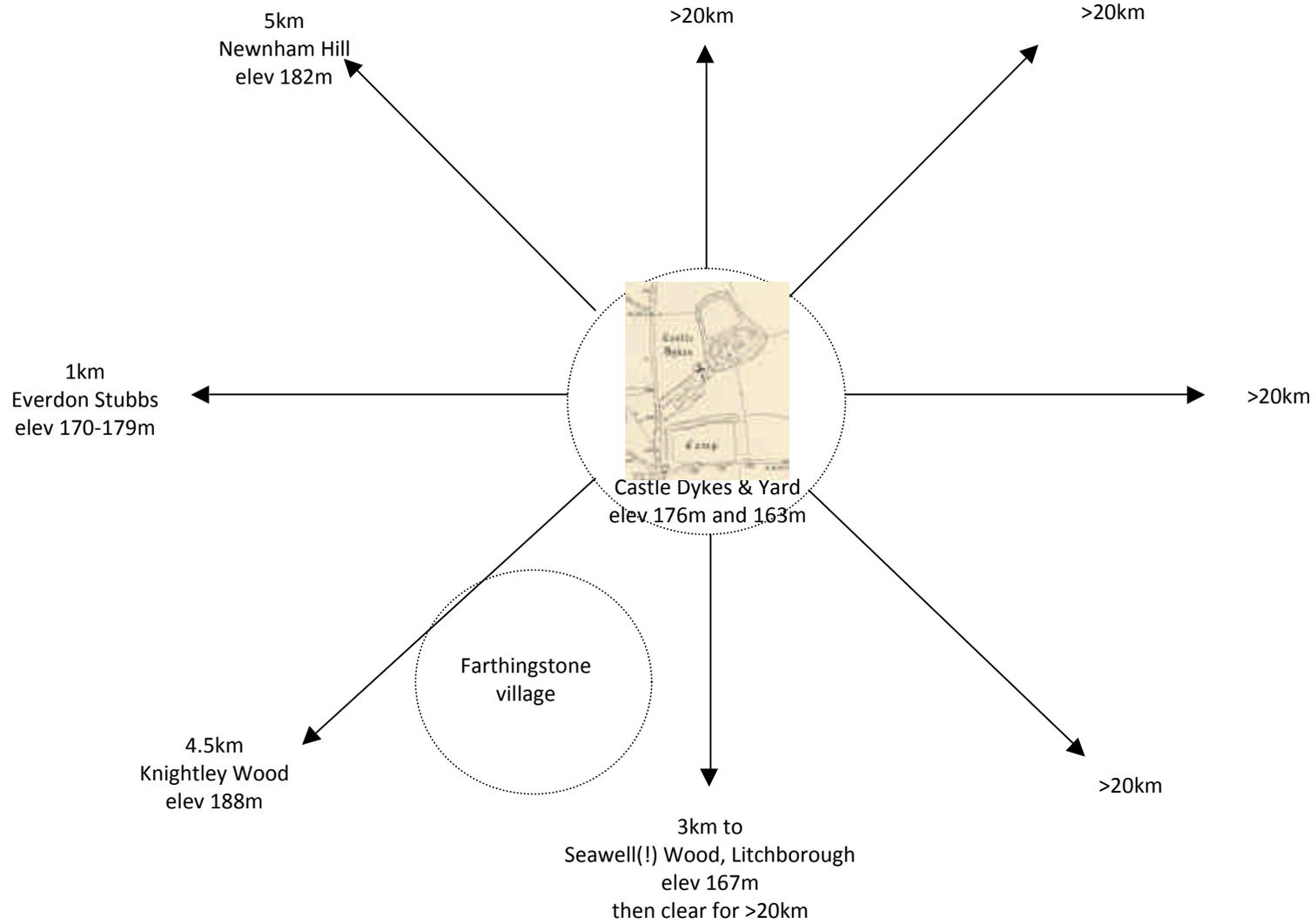


4. Ancient landscapes at Stowe and Farthingstone (Northamptonshire Mapping Project, op. cit.)

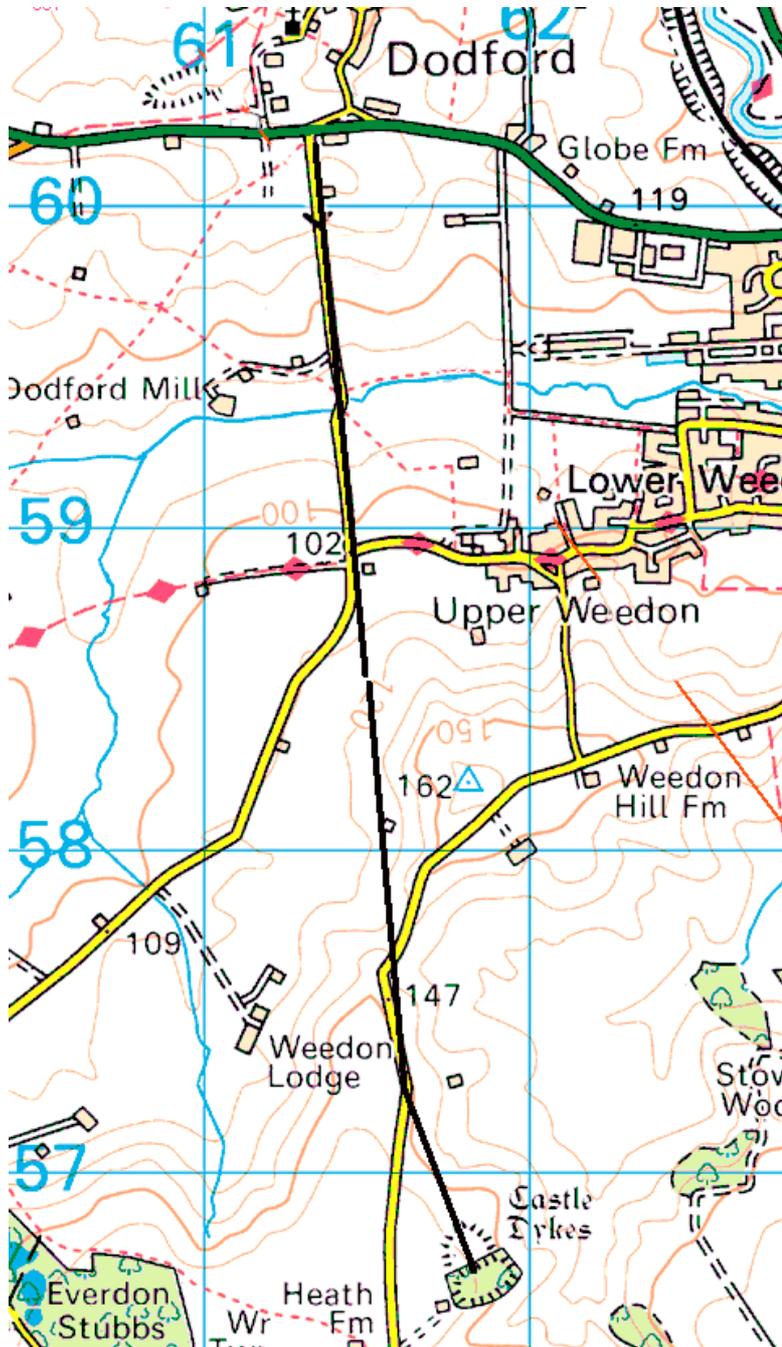


5. Viewshed diagram (see overleaf)

Viewshed diagram for Castle Dykes and Castle Yard, Farthingstone



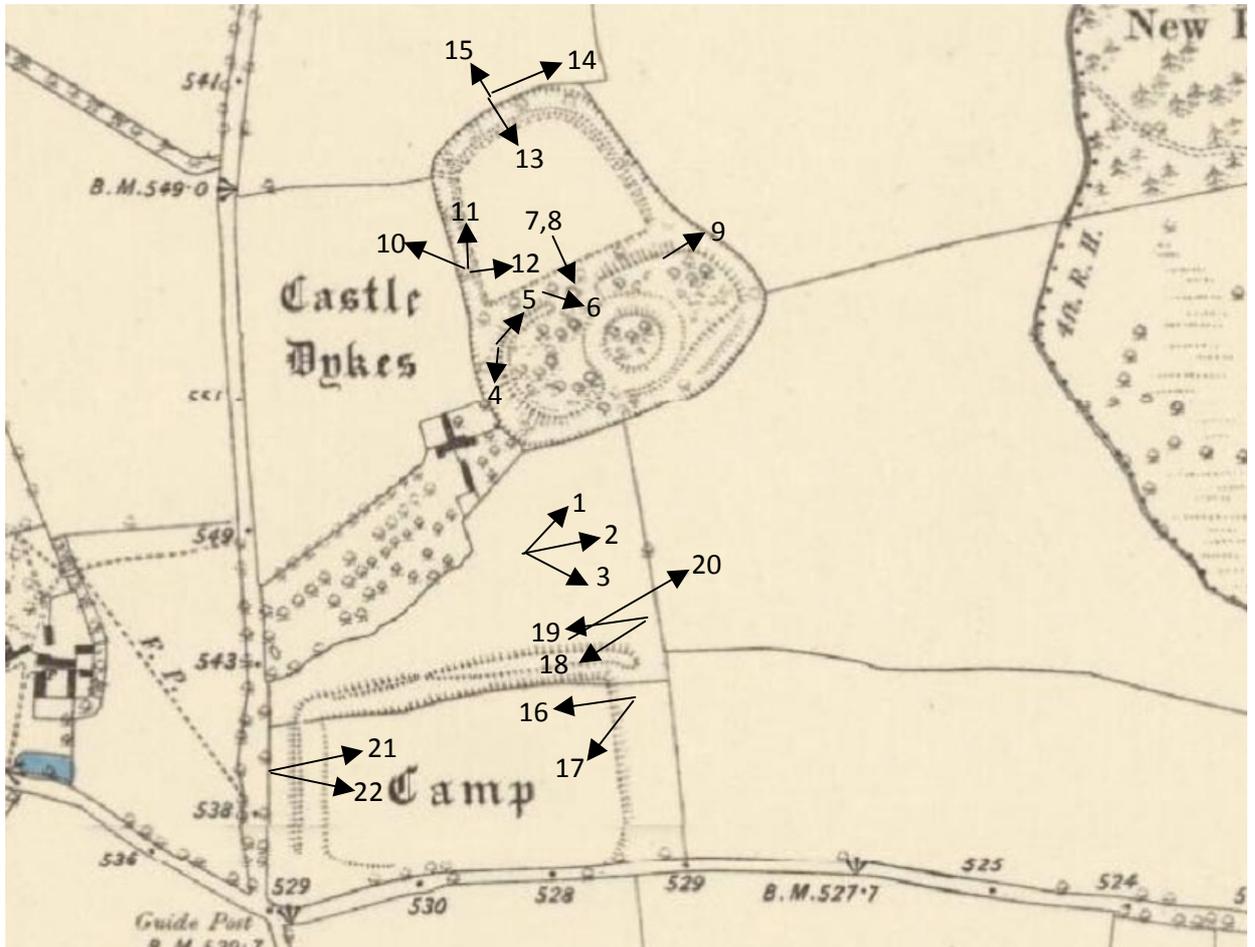
6. Conjectural early route from Castle Dykes to Dodford, following the alignment of possible entrances in the N and S walls of the outer bailey.



7. Anglo-Saxon charter

The AS charter for Stowe, granted in 956AD by King Eadwig to his brother Briththelm Bishop of Wells, is discussed in depth in "The Stowe Charter - a revision, and some implications" by A.E. Brown, T.R. Key, C. Orr and P. Woodfield. It is also referred to in the Badby charter of AD 944, analysed in "Some Anglo-Saxon estates and their boundaries in SW Northamptonshire" by A. E. Brown, T. R. Key and C. Orr. These charters include statements defining the route of the Great Way in their areas.

8. Photograph locations



9. Photographs



1-3: Shallow valley of Upper Lias Clay linking the sites of Castle Dykes (left) and Castle Yard (right)



4-5: Castle Dykes, views along the base of the ditch, western inner bailey



6-8: Castle Dykes, probable north entrance to inner bailey



9: Castle Dykes, spring source at NE corner of eastern inner bailey



10-12: Castle Dykes, ditch and bank, west side of outer bailey



13-15: Castle Dykes, views south (13), east (14) and north (15) from north entrance to outer bailey



16-17: Castle Yard, view from NE corner, showing deterioration of eastern scarp and ditch



18-19: Castle Yard, view from outside NE corner, showing southern scarp and ditch



20: Castle Yard, extensive viewshed to NE from outside NE corner (wooded area on left is Castle Dykes)



21-22: Castle Yard, view from centre of west side, showing deterioration of western scarp and ditch