



Stowe's Hill Fort Site Report & Management Plan

A Monumental Improvement Project

Cornwall National Landscape

September 2025

 **Cornwall
National
Landscape**

 **Heritage
Fund**

A Monumental Improvement Project:

The Monumental Improvement Project was delivered by Cornwall National Landscape between 2022-2025 and sought to ensure that 40 at risk and vulnerable Scheduled Monuments, spanning 6000 years of Cornish history, were better identified, supported and enjoyed by a wide range of people.

The Project was funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), Cornwall Council, Historic England, National Trust, Cornwall National Landscape (including Farming in Protected Landscapes Funding), Cornwall Heritage Trust, Cornwall National Landscape Trust.

The Project was supported by a Partnership Board, made up of representatives from Cornwall National Landscape, Historic England, Cornwall Archaeology Society, Cornwall Heritage Trust, National Trust and Cornwall Council.

A Lasting Legacy:

The Purpose of this document is to provide advice and guidance on the future management of Stowe's Hill Fort. This management plan has been put together by the Monumental Improvement project and informed by the Partnership Board.

This document references the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites*, designed to be used by landowners and volunteer groups in carrying out ongoing monitoring and maintenance, including a methodology approved by Historic England, ecological considerations, statutory designations, a reporting framework and risk assessment.

The Toolkit and resources including archaeological, ecological and management information, can be found on the site-specific webpages on the Cornwall National Landscape website.



Funded by
Historic England



Stowe's Hill Fort

Future Management Plan

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Site Overview

(Use this information when completing HER Monument Monitoring and Recording Form)

Site Name:	Stowe's Hill Fort
Scheduled Monument number:	1012352
Site Type:	Tor Enclosure
Site Grid Reference:	SX 25720 72732
Site W3W:	eyelashes.endlessly.homework
Site Postcode:	n/a

Details:

The monument includes a large early prehistoric hillfort, containing numerous house platforms, a stone hut circle and two funerary cairns. It is adjacent to prehistoric field systems that hold evidence of hut circles, clearance cairns and two medieval transhumance huts. There is also evidence of the southern part of the hillfort being used as a medieval stock pound. The site is close to a concentration of Bronze Age ritual monuments on the edge of Bodmin Moor.



Designations

HE Designations: [Scheduled Monument](#)

Other Designations: [Cornwall National Landscape – Section 12 Bodmin Moor](#)

Site Status on HAR register: **AT RISK**. The trend has been updated to 'improving' to reflect the interventions of the Monumental Improvement Project.

Link to CIOSHER web page for this site:

https://map.cornwall.gov.uk/website/ccmap/?zoomlevel=9&xcoord=225742&ycoord=72502&wsName=historic_natural_environment&layerName=Scheduled%20monuments

Link to Historic England's webpage for this site:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1012352?section=official-list-entry>

Link to Cornwall National Landscape webpage for this site:

<https://cornwall-landscape.org/monument/stowes-hill-fort/>

Monumental Improvement Interventions

Site priorities identified at Monumental Improvement Development Stage:

Priority	Project year	Action
Longer term	3 (post project)	CAS Monument Watch and TimeSeekers – use of the stone stack recording form. Skilled volunteers scything bracken in northern enclosure (summer, ideally twice, in July and August/September).

Vegetation management	Interpretation	Survey & Monitoring
To be carried out in multiple visits spread across April to September by CAS, Timeseekers, or other local groups.	Landowner to check and report to Cornwall National Landscape on any issues	Monument Watch or HART monitoring through CAS, Timeseekers, or local groups

Threats Identified at Stowe’s Hill Fort:

- The principal threat to the site is vandalism, mostly in the form of the construction of stone stacks or ‘Fairy Castles’.
- The site is also threatened by bracken encroachment across the site, obscuring the archaeological features.

Interventions during Monumental Improvement Delivery Stage:

- Monumental Improvement Project staff monitoring and efforts to increase the awareness in the community has already benefitted the reduction of fairy castle and stone-stacking outbreaks.
- A condition survey was undertaken in 2021 by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, identifying threats to the monument and proposing a range of interventions aimed at enhancing the condition of the site and raising its profile with the local community.
- An ecological survey of the site was completed in 2021 by Woodfield Ecology, identifying habitat types and compiling an inventory of notable species to inform future conservation and land management plans.

- New physical interpretation was developed and installed near to the site.
- Relevant Volunteer Organisation(s) have been engaged and supported throughout the Monumental Improvement Project. Volunteers have received hand tools safety training to assist in the future management of the site as part of the legacy programme.

Assets created during Monumental Improvement Delivery Stage:

- New site-specific webpage hosted on the Cornwall National Landscape website.
- New digital interpretation including a site overview, ecological information, surveys and reports.
- Aerial photography of the site captured by drone showing the archaeological features in plan.
- 360 panoramic photography hosted on the Cornwall National Landscape website allowing virtual tours of the site.
- Ground Photography of the site, recording conditions of the monument and its setting in the landscape.
- Creation of the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites* to assist in the future management of the site.
- An artist's reconstruction illustration was commissioned and developed along side archaeologists showing the site as it may have looked during its use.

Management & Maintenance Recommendations:

Ongoing Site Management Recommendations:

- Scythe trained Relevant Volunteer Organisation members to continue with scything bracken in the northern enclosure (summer, ideally twice, in July and August/September) in adherence to the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites*. Other hand tools are permitted to be used.
- Relevant Volunteer Organisation to monitor and photograph stone stacking issues (CAS, Monument Watch, and Time Seekers) – use of the stone stack recording form (Appendix 1).
 - Please take a photograph and a what3words location for each stone stack.

- Once recorded, stone stacks to be dismantled and where possible, the stones returned to their original position. The aim is to discourage copy-cat stacking. As well as being harmful to the condition of the monument, stone stacks are a health and safety risk to people and life below the enclosure.
- Relevant Volunteer Organisation to monitor the condition of the monument, including stability of the stones and erosion.
- Annual vegetation clearance - outside of bird nesting season (March to August).

Putting recommendations into practice:

- Please refer to the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites* for a best-practice guide to carrying out scrub clearance and monitoring work at heritage sites.
- All site work must be accompanied by a Risk Assessment covering all attendees and activities.
- A record of work should be made and a copy sent to the secretary of the Relevant Volunteer Organisations: e.g. Cornwall Archaeological Society, Historic England and Historic Environment Record (HER). You can find a template for your records and a link to the HER online form in the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites*.

Future Opportunities:

- Opportunity to increase interpretation through the Cornwall National Landscape website.
- The monument and wider landscape would benefit from further volunteers receiving scythe training and additional tools being stored in the Minions Heritage centre.
- There is an opportunity for volunteer involvement in long term monitoring of condition and presence of heritage crime. Collaboration between the Police and volunteer organisations could provide more data on the scale and trends of heritage crimes.

Vegetation/scrub clearance methodology:

Please refer to the *Toolkit for Volunteer Monitoring and Maintenance at Heritage Sites* for a best-practice guide to carrying out scrub clearance and monitoring work at heritage sites.

For site-specific considerations, please refer to the section below and to the full Ecology report summarised below.

Ecology Overview

**Taken from: ECOLOGY BRIEFING NOTE – SITE 3 STOWE’S HILL FORT
Commissioned by the Monumental Improvement Project in 2021**

The full Report is available to download on the Cornwall National Landscape website and includes details on types of work likely affect the following species, a calendar for helping to plan work at the monument, and opportunities for ecological enhancement of the site.

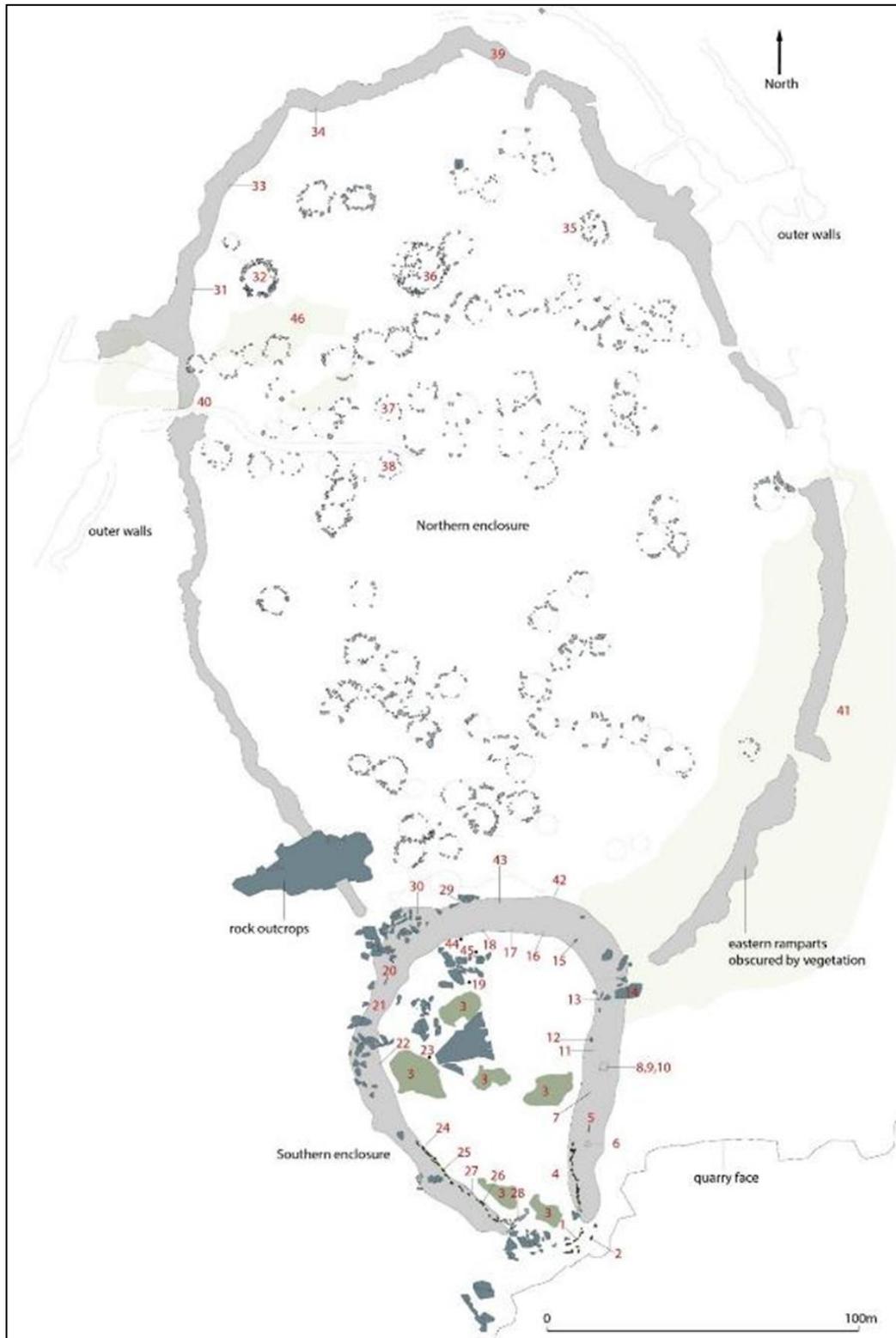
Key species at this site:

Birds	Reptiles	Flora & Funghi	Invertabrates
Common Cuckoo Common Starling House Sparrow Reed Bunting Yellowhammer Mistle Thrush Linnet Skylark Song thrush Peregrine Falcon Kestrel	Common Lizard	Kilarney fern Wilson’s Filmy-fern Cornish Path-moss Box Cornish Moneywort Lanceolate Spleenwort Welsh Poppy 4x notable mosses 2x notable liverworts 4x notable fungi Abundant epiphytic mosses and lichens	Marsh Fritillary 8x nationally notable 2x locally notable species High value habitat for terrestrial invertebrates

5. FURTHER SURVEY AND MITIGATION CALENDAR

FURTHER SURVEYS (ONLY REQUIRED FOR BRACKEN CONTROL OF EXTENSIVE AREAS)		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Breeding Birds	Surveys should involve multiple visits spread across the survey period			■	■	■	■	■					
Invertebrates	Surveys should involve multiple visits spread across the survey period				■	■	■	■	■	■			
MITIGATION		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No specific mitigation timing due to seasonal limitations for Bracken control													
KEY:													
Optimal Periods for Survey		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Periods when certain types of activity within suitable habitat for this species should be avoided or be subject to specific controls		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Archaeological Overview



J. Gossip CAU : Stowe's Hill condition survey 2021, recorded features (numbers refer to recorded features in Gossip 2020).

Taken from Historic England's listing.

Stowe's Hill is a prominent granite ridge reaching 378m above sea level situated in open moorland just north of the village of Minions, set within an area of Bodmin Moor which constitutes an extensive ceremonial landscape. This includes stone circles, rows, standing stones, barrows and cairns and forms one of the richest and best-preserved prehistoric landscapes in the country.

The ridge is a prominent skyline feature from The Hurlers, three stone circles lying 1km to the south, and Rillaton Barrow, source of the famous 'Gold Cup' is sited 600m further along the ridge towards Minions. The hill looks down on Rillaton Moor and Witheybrook Marsh to the south and west, the upper reaches of the River Lynher to the east and on the skyline beyond can be seen distant views of Dartmoor.

At its southern tip the hill has been eaten into by the workings of the 19th century Cheesewring Quarry and the surrounding landscape is peppered with the lode back pits and other workings resulting from what was extensive 19th century mining activity.

The summit of the hill is encircled by two walled ramparts and numerous outworks, forming one of the largest and best-preserved examples of a Neolithic defended settlement in Cornwall (Heritage Gateway record and Scheduled Monument Listing).

Risk Assessment

Before any work takes place, a comprehensive Risk Assessment should be created. A template has been prepared for work carried out at this site and should be updated for future events – with any new risks considered. The template can be found on the Cornwall National Landscape website and with the Relevant Volunteer Organisation.

Some key issues which should be included in a risk assessment:

- Exposed, open moorland with frequent slip and trip hazards.
- Uneven ground.
- No toilet facilities nearby.
- The site is at least a 30-minute walk from nearest road over open moorland.
- The site may have poor phone signal.
- The weather of Bodmin Moor is changeable, and it is advised to check weather forecasts before setting out for a site visit.

NB: This is not an exhaustive list, and individual circumstances of each group and site conditions should be considered in creating a risk assessment.