GIANT'S HILL, RAMPTON CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Geophysical and Topographical Survey Report

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SUMMARY

The site known as Giants Hill, Rampton was the subject of a detailed geophysical and topographic archaeological survey by the University of Exeter research project 'Anarchy? War and Status in Twelfth-Century Landscapes of Conflict'. *Giants Hill comprises a trapezoidal earthwork platform surrounded by a water-filled ditch, located at the eastern edge of the village of Rampton, Cambridgeshire. The site has previously been assigned as a castle of King Stephen constructed during the 1140s in order to restrict the activities of Geoffrey de Mandeville, who was using the Isle of Ely to launch raids into the surrounding countryside. Whilst there is little direct archaeological evidence to convincingly corroborate this theory, the location of the site suggests that it was positioned in order to control movement between the southern fen-edge and Ely. The form of Giants Hill also bears some resemblance to Burwell Castle which can be more confidently dated the Anarchy, although the chronological sequence of both sites is complicated by their subsequent use as manorial residences. At Rampton it is possible that the original castle was furnished with a tower, but the fortification may never have been finished and occupation is likely to have been brief. Giants Hill later emerged as the residence of the de Lisle family who were probably serviced by a market immediately outside of their lordly precinct. The settlement at Rampton was probably re-planned in the late thirteenth century leading to abandonment of tenements to the west of Giants Hill, but buildings relating to the manor remained standing until the eighteenth century.*

INTRODUCTION

Located at the eastern end of the village of Rampton, Cambridgeshire lie earthworks known as Giant's Hill (centred TL43016808) (Figure 1). The complex is situated to the east of the parish church of All Saint's in pastoral land between 5m and 7m aOD on the southern edge of the fens. The monument and surrounding landscape were subject to an archaeological survey as part of the University of Exeter research project *'Anarchy? War and Status in Twelfth-Century Landscapes of Conflict'*. The survey was undertaken in two stages between 25th and 26th January 2014 and between 27th and 28th October 2014. The earthworks of the castle and associated features are classified as a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No: 20452). Whilst all of the scheduled area is located to the north of the main thoroughfare of Church End, a series of earthworks extending to the south of the road have been mapped by the Ordnance Survey.

GEOLOGY

Giant's Hill is located on Late Jurassic mudstones of the Ampthill Clay Formation, but is immediately bounded to the east by Kimmeridge Clay mudstones. Extending northward from Rampton parish, the peat fens are underlain by similar mudstone geology to the site, but were deposited following the retreat of Quaternary glaciations (British Geological Survey, Huntington Sheet 187; Cambridge Sheet 188).

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Evidence from elsewhere around the southern fen edge suggests a well-settled early prehistoric landscape, but relatively little material has been recovered from Rampton parish itself. The earliest evidence for human activity in the area are two Neolithic flint axes found during the sinking of building foundations in the southern part of Rampton village (CHER No: 05183). Iron Age archaeology is better-represented in the area, however, with extensive settlements which continued in use into the Romano-British period found in the parishes bounding Rampton to the south at Oakington and Longstanton (CHER No: MCB16351; MCB16370). In the south-west part of Rampton parish ceramics dating to the third and fourth centuries have been also found (CHER No: 05285). It is unlikely that the dearth of archaeological evidence in Rampton parish dating from before the medieval period is merely a product of chance, especially when the significant material found elsewhere is considered. Rather, it seems likely that Rampton's close proximity to the fen edge prevented extensive or prolonged settlement before the early medieval period—prehistoric and Romano-British communities instead settled further south in a landscape which still allowed them to take advantage of fen resources, whilst being less liable to flooding.

It is only during the early medieval period that Rampton appears to have developed as a more permanent, and perhaps even a high status, settlement focus. Fragments of at least five Anglo-Saxon grave covers and parts of a probable cross-shaft have been found during the restoration of All Saint's church (Fox 1922). In the pre-Conquest period such stone sculpture is usually only associated with high status sites, and an ecclesiastical context at Rampton is hinted at by recovery of the cross-shaft fragments. Significantly, written sources indicate that Rampton was a holding of the minster at Ely by at least the tenth century, possibly as a dependent settlement from the more extensive community at Willingham. Settlements on the fen-edge like Rampton are apparently associated with monastic foundations from the Middle Saxon period, when the dependent holding of a minster were key to sustaining monastic communities (Wright 2010). The earthworks immediately east of All Saint's church may relate in part to pre-Conquest settlement, although by the time of the Domesday Survey the holdings of Rampton are moderate compared with surrounding vills. Around 1092, the church was included in Picot the sheriff's foundation grant to the Augustinian canons of Cambridge, later Barnwell priory, together with two thirds of his under-tenant's demesne tithes (VCH Cambs IX 1989, 216).

The castle at Rampton has been attributed by most previous commentators as a construction of the civil war of King Stephen's reign, commonly known as 'the Anarchy'. Particular parallels have been drawn between the earthworks at Giant's Hill, Rampton, and Burwell, Cambridgeshire—an apparently similar site located approximately 15km to the south-east (e.g. Brown and Taylor 1977, 97-9). Both monuments are thought to represent a chain of defences built by Stephen in an attempt to restrict the activities of Geoffrey de Mandeville (Creighton 2002, 199-200). Documents suggest that the disenfranchised baron used the Isle of Ely and Ramsey Abbey as bases from which to wage guerrilla-style warfare in the region.

Struggling to contain the movements of de Mandeville the *Gesta Stephani* (Deeds of Stephen), describes how in 1143:

> *"the king, in a judicious attempt to hinder his [Geoffrey de Mandeville's] wonted raids in the same region, built castles in suitable places and, after garrisoning them adequately for resistance to the devastators of the country, turned in another direction to deal with other affairs of the realm" (Gesta Stephani ii. 84, Potter 1955, 109).*

Unlike Burwell, Rampton is not specifically referenced in written sources but the close resemblance of both sites suggests that they were built as part of the same campaign. The efforts of King Stephen alluded to in the documents were quickly rewarded, as de Mandeville was mortally wounded whilst attacking the castle at Burwell in 1144. It has been suggested that the fortifications built around the southern fen-edge of Cambridgeshire rapidly became obsolete following de Mandeville's death, and at Rampton as at Burwell it is likely that castles had not been finished by the time it became surplus to immediate military requirements (e.g. RCHME 1972, 41-2). The form of the earthworks at Burwell, for example, suggest that the fortification had not been completed by the time de Mandeville was killed and some of the features thought to be diagnostic of an unfinished castle have also been suggested at Giant's Hill. In addition to the irregularly-shaped earthworks, both Rampton and Burwell feature ramps apparently for distributing upcast spoil during construction (Brown and Taylor 1977, 97-9).

Also comparable to the situation at Burwell, it is thought that the construction of the castle at Rampton led to at least partial desertion of pre-existing settlement (e.g. Creighton 2002, 200). The earthwork remains of what have been interpreted as crofts underlie the fortification at Giant's Hill, which was apparently established towards the eastern limits of occupation which extended at least as far as the church of All Saint's and possibly further west. The wider landscape context of Giant's Hill suggests that the primary motivation for locating the castle was its proximity to a causeway running across the fens, 1km to the west. The route, known as 'the Portway', was the main road from Cambridge to Ely during the medieval period. Entering Rampton parish via Histon, to the immediate north of the parish the Portway joined up to the Aldreth Causeway, which together with the Earith Causeway and Stuntney Causeway represented one of only three overland routes onto the Isle of Ely before the draining of the fens (see below; Smail 1972). Control of the Portway and the Aldreth Causeway to the north would therefore have been of fundamental importance in controlling movement into and out of Ely, and given its context as a likely blockading fortress against Geoffrey de Mandeville, is likely the main reason behind the siting of a castle in Rampton.

Broadly contemporary with the construction of Giant's Hill, All Saint's includes elements of twelfth-century work including parts of the tower and jambs in the chancel arch, used during a subsequent phase of rebuilding (Pevsner 1954, 432). Possibly encouraged by the construction of the castle, the focus of settlement at Rampton shifted to the south-east of All

Saint's church around a Y-shaped street pattern which also encompasses a village green. The green is associated with a series of regular tofts still visible on nineteenth century maps. It is possible that such an arrangement was the result of deliberate planning by Robert de Lisle who in 1270 was granted a market and fair at Rampton. The village appears to have retained its somewhat moderate size throughout the post-medieval and later periods, in comparison to nearby centres such as Cottenham and Willingham which underwent more significant expansion (VCH Cambs IX 1989, 214-16).

Later in the medieval period the manor of Rampton became a residence for the Lisle family, and a domestic chapel was licensed for John de Lisle in 1344 and for Roger le Scrope in 1403. An unusual reference in Close and Patent rolls dating to 1343 allude to a chamber 'in the moat', suggesting at least part of the manorial complex was located at Giant's Hill. A park apparently adjoined the moat and a building named Hall Barn stood just outside it in 1754. The premise that Giant's Hill was a manorial focus is further supported by reports of building foundations which were still visible at the castle in 1908 (VCH Cambs XI 1989, 214). Like many manorial sites in Cambridgeshire, it appears that the focus of the elite residential at Rampton shifted to drier ground at some point in the late medieval or early post-medieval periods (Ravensdale 1974, 6-10). During the Second World War Giant's Hill was utilised as a gun emplacement by the home guard and a one metre diameter concrete pier was set into the top of the motte near the south-western corner. In 1942 excavation for the gun emplacement revealed the foundations built of rubble and bricks, thought to date from the fifteenth century (CHER No: 01771). The earthworks of Giants Hill and it's the surrounding fields are today used for a combination of community recreation and pastoral farming. Relatively little archaeological investigation has been undertaken in Rampton parish, especially compared to the neighbouring parishes of Cottenham and Oakington (Mortimer 2000; Sayer *et al*. 2011).

MAP ANALYSIS

The earliest available map for Rampton is held in the Cambridgeshire archive and consists of a plan originally dating to 1718 but redrawn in 1754 (Cambridgeshire Archive: No KTR/324/3/18). A reproduction of the map could not be obtained, but the Victoria County History for the area includes a composite plan based on the original (Figure 2). The map depicts a squared moated site at Giant's Hill, immediately bounded by a field labelled 'Park' to the north. This presumably represents the park associated with the manorial residence recorded in the written sources. A distinctive Y-shape pattern, assumed to be the product of a process of deliberate settlement replanting during the medieval period, is depicted with narrow strip fields emanating from the plots to the north and south (VCH Cambs IX 1989, 210). Slightly confusingly, buildings and plots are also depicted in the area now occupied by the village green, a place previously thought to represent the site of the market recorded from the thirteenth century and where the medieval market cross still stands. It is possible that the area was subject to gradual infilling as the population of the village expanded in the post-medieval period, or an alternative possibility is that the market and fair was only held sporadically.

A further market previously unrecognised marketplace site, and one which may predate the re-planning of Rampton into its distinctive Y-shaped village pattern with central green, is also detectable immediately outside of the earthwork remains of Giant's Hill. The eighteenth-century map illustrates a notable widening of the street known today as Church End, a typical morphological trait of former market-place sites (Taylor 1982, 21-5). Markets formed the focus for commercial activity outside many castle gates, providing areas where lords could foster economic and social development close to their power bases (Creighton 2002, 163). At Rampton, the suggestion that the original castle was left unfinished does not preclude that it continued to act as a lordly residence, and indeed written documents support the presence of a manorial centre at Giant's Hill from at least the fourteenth century. It is possible that the early was relatively short-lived and replaced by a site now at the location now occupied by the village green, but the diagnostically wide street adjacent to the castle was perpetuated into the eighteenth century. The earliest map for Rampton also shows the important historical route once known as the Portway, projecting in a roughly north to south on the western edge of the village.

The Ordnance Survey (OS) First Edition 25" map for the area dates to 1888 and provides a more detailed depiction of Rampton and its hinterland (Figure 3). Giant's Hill is depicted as a square platform with a surrounding ditch labelled 'Moat'. The south-west corner of the ditch counterscarp is shown as extending for approximately 60m into the neighbouring field. To the north of the ditch a series of rectilinear earthworks are depicted projecting in a roughly north to south orientation, and to the north-west of the main complex of features a circular mound is depicted. The First Edition also labels the field to the north of the survey area is 'Rampton Park', consistent with earlier mapping. Perhaps significantly, the major east to west thoroughfare now known as Church End is labelled 'Hall Lane', perhaps referencing the former site of the manorial residence at the castle. In the southern part of the parish the line of the Portway is preserved, although the southern extent was by this time called 'Cuckoos Lane' in the south. The section of the Portway immediately west of the village is labelled 'Panley's Drove' but the route terminates where it meets the east-west orientated High Street. The northerly extension of the historic route to Ely was by the late nineteenth century was preserved for around 500m as a field boundary, and today is continues to be perpetuated as a farm track (Figure 1). Giant's Hill is illustrated in almost identical fashion in subsequent OS mapping throughout most of the twentieth century, although on more recent editions a complex of earthworks are shown on the southern side of Church End. The earthworks mirror almost identically the alignment of the historic settlement pattern of Rampton, and analysis of LiDAR data indicates that they can be confidently identified as a more easterly extension of former tenement plots (see below).

EARTHWORK DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION

Situated 200m east of the parish church, Giant's Hill comprises an irregular moated island (Figure 4), approximately quadrangular in form with maximum dimensions of 50m N–S and 45m E–W (Figure 5 'a'). In plan the north and west sides of the island are straight while the east and south sides are curving. Much of the interior of the island is obscured by vegetation,

although this appears relatively flat. The position of a WWII Spigot Mortar emplacement in the south-west corner of the moat (Figure 5 'b') is marked by a 1m wide circular concrete feature. The emplacement was surrounded by a ditch, slight traces of which also survive, although these are not mapped in detail. While raised approximately 1.5m above the surrounding landscape, the island is certainly not a motte, as sometimes claimed (see for example the Scheduled Monument Description: National Monument No. 20452). A broad flat-bottomed ditch, partly water-filled and averaging 20m in width (Figure 5 'c'), surrounds the moat. A land drain feeds the north-east corner of the moat (Figure 5 'd') and an artificial ramped causeway (Figure 5 'e') provides access from the south-west corner. On the north side of moat an irregular linear mound (Figure 5 'f'), approximately 70m long, can confidently be identified as a spoil head comprising upcast from the excavated moat. A series of three rectangular enclosures (Figure 5 'g', 'h', 'i'), defined by earthwork banks up to 0.75 m high and 2–4 m across, occupy the zone immediately to the north. The easternmost two enclosures are smaller (h is 30m E–W and 20m N–S, i is 22m E–W and 30m N–S) and immediately adjoin and may underlie the linear mound; the western enclosure (Figure 5 'g') is larger (40m E–W and 35m N–S). Two much larger rectangular enclosures (Figure 5 'j'), both with internal sub-divisions, lie west of the moat, and further enclosures lie between this area and the parish church to the west. Ridge and furrow (Figure 5 'k') on a N – S alignment runs up to a field boundary to the north side of the two enclosures (Figure 5 'j'). Measured earthwork survey at Giant's Hill has therefore identified numerous features, indicating the complex functional and chronological development of the site (Figure 6)

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY: METHODOLOGY, RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Geophysical investigation at Giant's Hill consisted of an earth resistance survey, undertaken on the central moated 'island' and the earthworks on its immediate periphery to the north and east. Survey was undertaken in three zones: Area A on the moated island, Area B focussing on earthworks to the north of the ditch, and Area C on earthworks to the east (Figure 7). The survey method was informed by English Heritage and Institute for Archaeologists guidance documents (English Heritage 2008; Institute for Archaeologists 2013). The equipment consisted of a Geoscan Research RM15 resistance meter in the twin-probe configuration with a probe separation of 0.5m. The traverse interval was 1m and the sampling interval was 0.5m. Grids were 30m x 30m in size and were surveyed in a zig-zag pattern. The collected data were downloaded and processed using the Terrasurveyor program and were imported into ESRI ArcGIS where they were geo-referenced using field triangulation measurements, and interpolated once in the direction of traverse. Survey identified a number of anomalies of likely archaeological potential which enhance our understanding of the historic development of Giant's Hill (Figure 8).

Area A

Area A is characterised by a largely flat grassed area, the southern half of which features the circular platform, ditch and counterscarp of a Second World War spigot gun emplacement. The north-western corner of the survey extended down the bank and included a small area at

the base of the ditch. The results of the survey are shown in Figure 9, with identified anomalies shown in Figure 10. The description and interpretation of the anomalies is detailed in Table 1, below.

Anomaly	Description	Interpretation
R1	Curving low-resistance anomaly coinciding with earthwork around the WWII gun emplacement.	Ditch of spigot gun emplacement.
R2	Meandering high-resistance anomaly 1.5m wide. Gun ditch appears to have cut through.	Stone-lined or stone-packed field drain emptying into moat.
R3	Rectangular area of high-resistance.	Uncertain. Possible continuation of field drain.
R4	Meandering high-resistance anomaly c.1.5m wide, widening to 4m at end.	Field drain of same constitution as r2.
R5	Vague high-resistance linear, c2m wide, 8m long.	Possible wall or continuation of a field drain system.
R6	Right-angled high-resistance anomaly.	Wall of structure, or part of field drain system.
R7	Low-resistance right-angled edge.	Perimeter ditch or robbed wall foundation.
R8	High-resistance linear c1m wide.	Uncertain, possible field drain.
R9	Low-resistance edge coinciding with edge of motte.	Same as r7 or eroded subsoils in the section of the motte.
R10	Linear, c. 95m long, LiDAR shows flanked by ditches.	Former causeway.
R11	High-resistance area	Possible surfacing
R12	High-resistance area	Possible surfacing
R13	High-resistance area	Possible surfacing
R14	High-resistance area	Area of possible surface
R15	Block of parallel high-resistance linears.	Modern raised causeway.
R16	Amorphous area of background resistance within a high-resistance zone.	Inter-enclosure drainage ditch (northern linear part). Southern end uncertain.
R17	Sub-rectangular uniform area of low-resistance	Activity area.
R18	Looping area of uniform low-resistance	Activity area.
R19	Linear of background resistance within high-resistance zone.	Drainage/wall slot.
R20	Broad linear low-resistance anomaly. Corresponds spatially with toft-edge depicted on OS 1st edition.	Drainage ditch or ditch associated with modern causeway r15.
R21	Curving low-resistance anomaly c.5m wide. Similar shapes are possibly visible towards the eastern end of Area C.	Natural geology or ditch.
R22	Curving low-resistance anomaly running concentric to r21.	Natural geology or ditch.

Table 1: Description and interpretation of geophysical anomalies.

Area B

Area B comprises a 150m-long area of land running roughly east-west across a concentration of earthworks to the north of the ditch. The results of the survey are shown in Figure 11, with identified anomalies shown in Figure 12. The description and interpretation of the anomalies is detailed in Table 1, above. Interpretation of the geophysical plot of Area B was made more challenging by the ground conditions, which was generally waterlogged and characterised by very low resistance of around 5ohms. This background of low resistance leaves makes the identification of low-resistance features very difficult and whilst anomalies do appear more clearly when contrasted with neighbouring high-resistance areas, caution is necessary that these are true archaeological elements rather than background-level resistance.

Area C

Area C comprises a small area in a paddock to the east of the ditch where a series of subtle earthworks are visible. The anomalies identified are shown in Figure 13.

Summary

Earth resistance survey was successful in detecting a number of anomalies of likely archaeological origin. In Area A rectilinear responses identified anomalies consistent with structures and enclosures on the castle mound. In Area B the very low background resistance (5 ohms) reduced the resolution of the survey, but investigation suggests that the series of enclosures have compacted interiors which may represented metalling. Within these interiors a series of lower-resistance anomalies suggests further features, although their identity is uncertain. Survey inn Area C identified concentric low-resistance anomalies, although the limited survey makes it difficult to determine whether these are archaeological or geological features.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

The investigations undertaken by the current research enhances our understanding of the historic development of Giant's Hill and the wider fen-edge landscape and has highlighted numerous areas which would repay further work. Earthwork survey supports previous research in identifying topographical features consistent with an apparently unfinished medieval castle. Although no written sources reference the construction of a fortification at Rampton, its close resemblance with the documented site at Burwell strongly suggests that Giant's Hill too represents a campaign fortress built by King Stephen in the early 1140s. The Gesta Stephani, our most informative source for Stephen's reign, indicates that the king built a series of fen-edge fortresses surrounding the Isle of Ely in order to contain the disruptive raids of Geoffrey de Mandeville. In this regard, the landscape context of Giant's Hill also supports an 'Anarchy' date for original construction as the castle appears to have been built in order to monitor movement along the north-south route historically known as The Portway. Located 1km to the west of Giant's Hill, The Portway was the primary road between Cambridge and Ely throughout the medieval period. Immediately north of Rampton parish the line of The Portway previously skirted the prehistoric enclosure of Belsar's Hill to join the Aldreth Causeway — one of only three overland routes between Ely and the fen-edge before permanent draining in the post-medieval period. Controlling movement along The Portway and the Aldreth Causeway beyond would thus have been fundamental for any campaign which sought to prevent access to and from the Isle of Ely.

The particular concern with movement along The Portway to the north of Giant's Hill towards the direction of Ely is highlighted by viewshed analysis for the site (Figure 14). The model shows that at an elevation of only 2m (slightly above standing height), the castle mound provides vistas along the entirety of The Portway in the northern portion of Rampton parish. The view afforded further south is comparatively poor, however, and further supports the premise that the primary stimulus for castle building was to exert power over the fenland

landscape to the north. Identification of structures on the castle mound may indicate that the original castle was, although unfinished, enhanced with built structures. A comparable situation seems to have occurred at Burwell, where recent research has also demonstrated that the earliest castle may have been furnished with stone-built structures despite never being completed. At Rampton, anomaly r6 in Area A bears particular close resemblance to the rectangular structure excavated at Burwell by T.C Lethbridge (1936, 128-133). The excavator interpreted the remains as a donjon, although its slight form is more consistent with the foundations of a tower. It is therefore possible that the earliest castle at Giant's Hill was supplemented with a similar construction which also possessed stone footings, although this interpretation can only be tentative. At both Rampton and Burwell the original twelfth-century castles were later used as manorial sites, and it may be telling that the stone walling identified at Giant's Hill in the 1940s was believed to be of fifteenth-century date.

Comparable problems of identification are also encountered when considering the archaeological evidence beyond the castle mound. Earthworks to the north of the castle ditch have hitherto been repeatedly interpreted as the remains of tofts which were abandoned when the castle was constructed, but the evidence from the current survey suggests such an assessment is far from certain. The form of the enclosures does not compare closely with a typical croft and toft arrangement, although it must be considered that medieval settlement character may differ in fen-edge environments such as Rampton. Perhaps more informative is the contrast between the enclosures to the north of Giant's Hill with the probable remains of further settlement between the castle and the parish church of All Saint's. The enclosure earthworks to the north of the castle ditch are far more pronounced, and whilst this may be the result of differential preservation, it more likely indicates an alternative origin. Furthermore, the current survey has found little information to support the premise that the banks of the enclosure project beneath the castle, and are thus earlier than the twelfth-century monument. Whilst earth resistance survey indicates that the interior of the enclosures may be surfaced and indeed may relate to occupation, two alternative scenarios believed to be more suitable with the archaeological evidence are forwarded here.

Firstly, the enclosures may be the product of the original phase of castle building, perhaps representing the remains of settlement for some of the workforce which was not levelled when construction was halted. A similar suggestion has been forwarded at Burwell, where recent research has similarly demonstrated that enclosures previously, believed to be tofts and crofts, in fact more closely resemble paddocks perhaps related to construction. A second possibility would be to view the enclosures at Rampton as the product of medieval or post-medieval activity associated with the later manor known through written records to have occupied the site. It may be significant that the parkland of the elite residence was located to the north of the castle, and documentary sources indicate that at least one structure named 'Hall Barn' stood somewhere immediately outside of the imparked area in the middle of the eighteenth century. Given the preservation of the earthworks the weight of probability makes it most likely that this post-medieval phase did indeed involve the construction of the enclosure network, perhaps in order to accommodate subsidiary buildings of the manor. 'Hall

Barn' may therefore have been the sole survivor of a complex of structures associated with the manor at Giant's Hill, which maintained and developed the earthworks of the incomplete twelfth-century castle.

It therefore seems most likely that the earliest medieval settlement at Rampton was focussed to the west of Giant's Hill and to the east of the church of All Saint's, a probable early medieval foundation which was rebuilt during the twelfth century. The church rebuilding may be significant given the relatively secure dating of the castle to King Stephen's fenland campaign, as it is worth considering that the role played by Rampton and its local population may have resulted in favourable royal patronage. Whilst the original military motivation behind castle building quickly subsided thus leaving the fortification unfinished, the site may never have been entirely abandoned. Indeed, this investigation has shown that the medieval residence may have stimulated the development of a marketplace immediately outside of its gates, probably the consequence of at least a reasonably permanent lordly presence. At some point in the medieval period the village of Rampton appears to have been re-planned, resulting in the distinctive Y-shaped plan of the historic settlement pattern with long thin strip fields still visible emanating to the north and south. Whether this arrangement was arrived at wholesale in a single phase or whether it was reached more piecemeal is uncertain, but at some point the medieval settlement between church and castle was abandoned and an alternative market site was probably established at the village green. Isolated from the main area of settlement, Giant's Hill continued to represent a focus of lordly power, albeit one of a different character to its original genesis as a royal campaign castle. Buildings related to the manorial site were still recognisable into the eighteenth century, and the precinct of Rampton Park continues to be preserved as a series of enclosed fields today. Whilst the complexity of the chronological sequence at Giant's Hill ensures that these conclusions must remain cursory, it is clear that further archaeological investigation would reveal further still the sequence of activity at this remarkably rich and extremely significant fen-edge site.

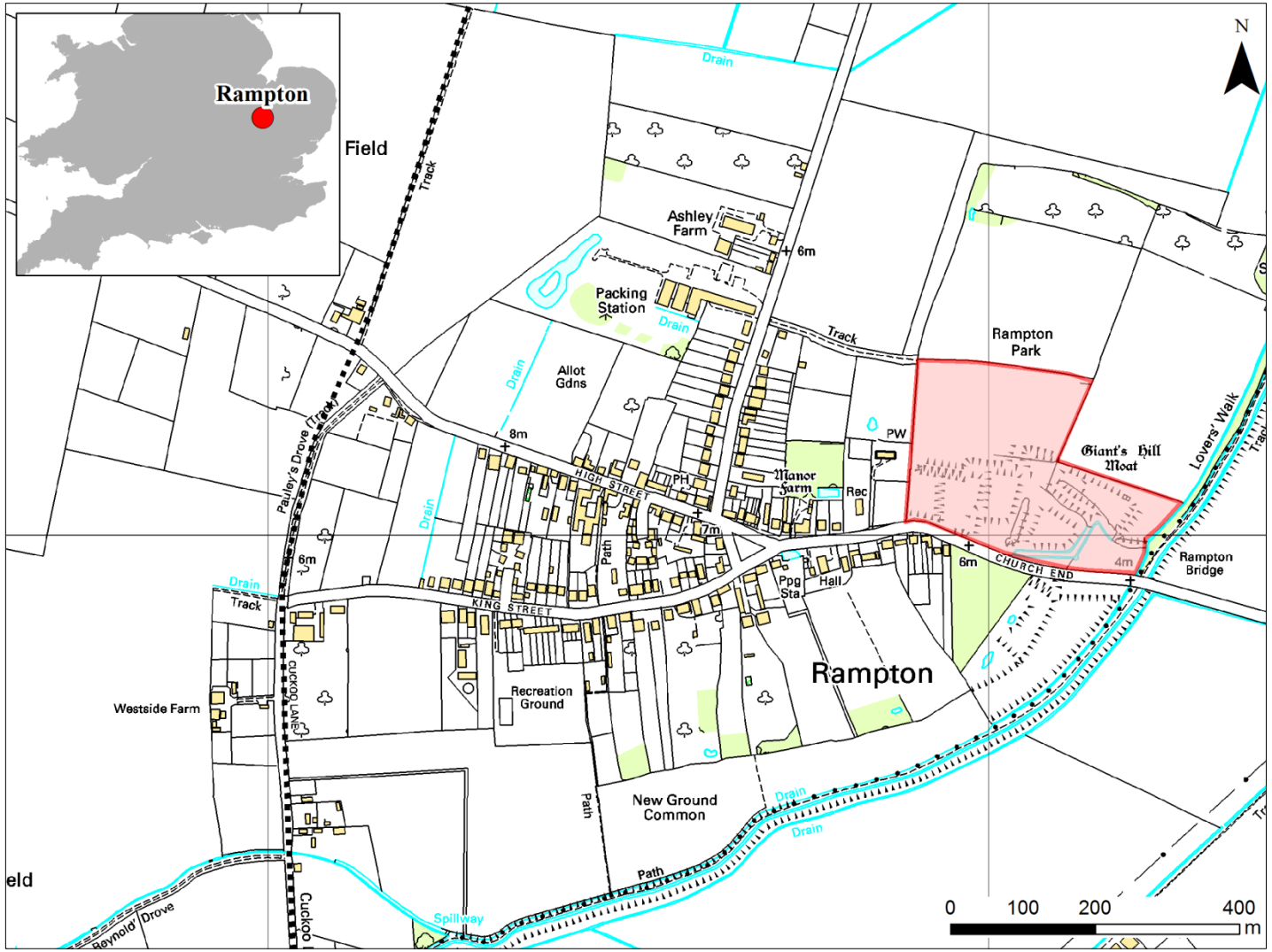

Figure 1: Location of the survey area in the local landscape and Rampton in southern Britain (inset). The survey areas is shaded and the dashed line to the west of the village represents the original alignment of the historical route known as The Portway.

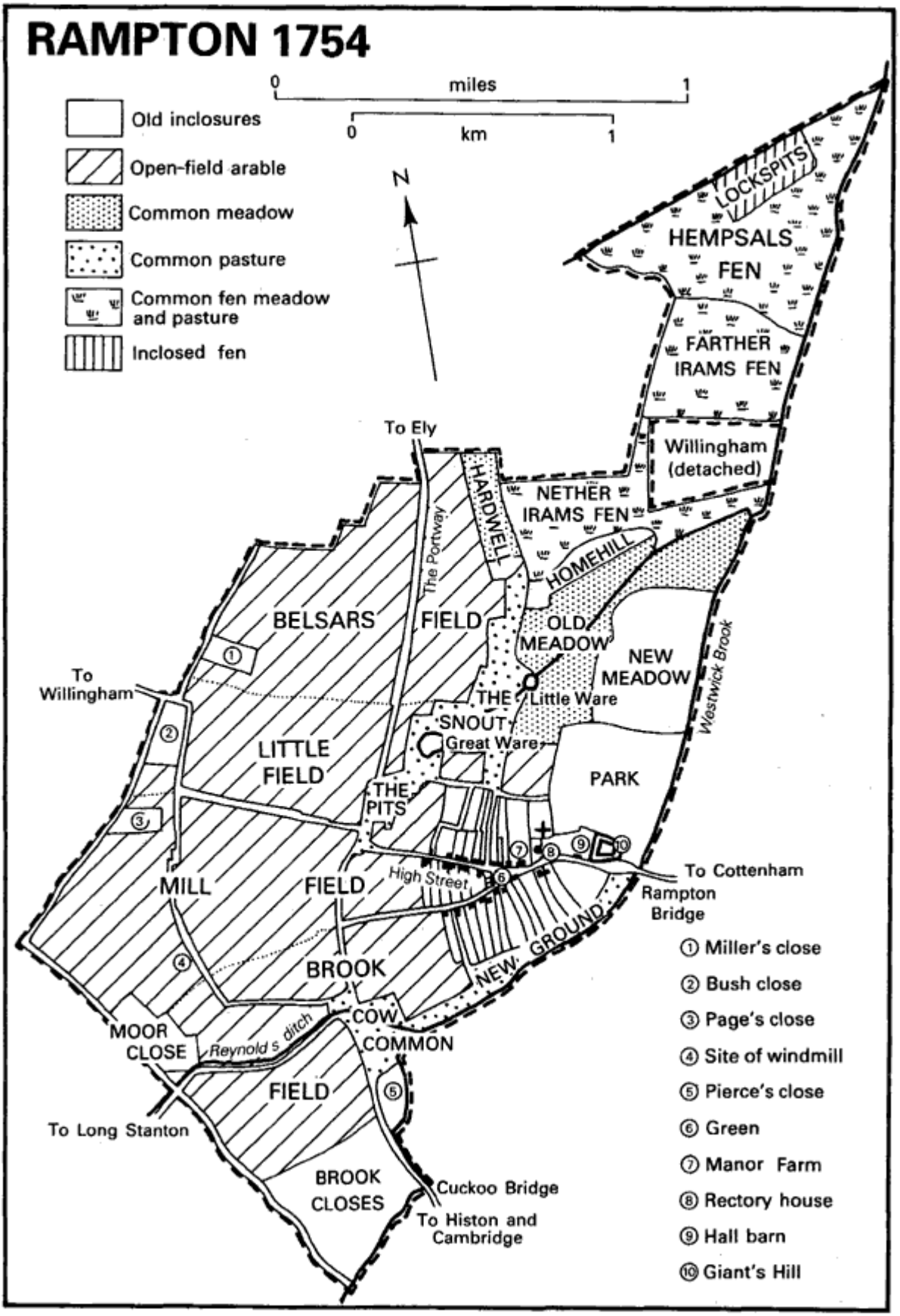

Figure 2: 1754 composite plan of Rampton parish, based on earlier eighteenth-century mapping (Source: VCH Cambs IX, Figure 13).

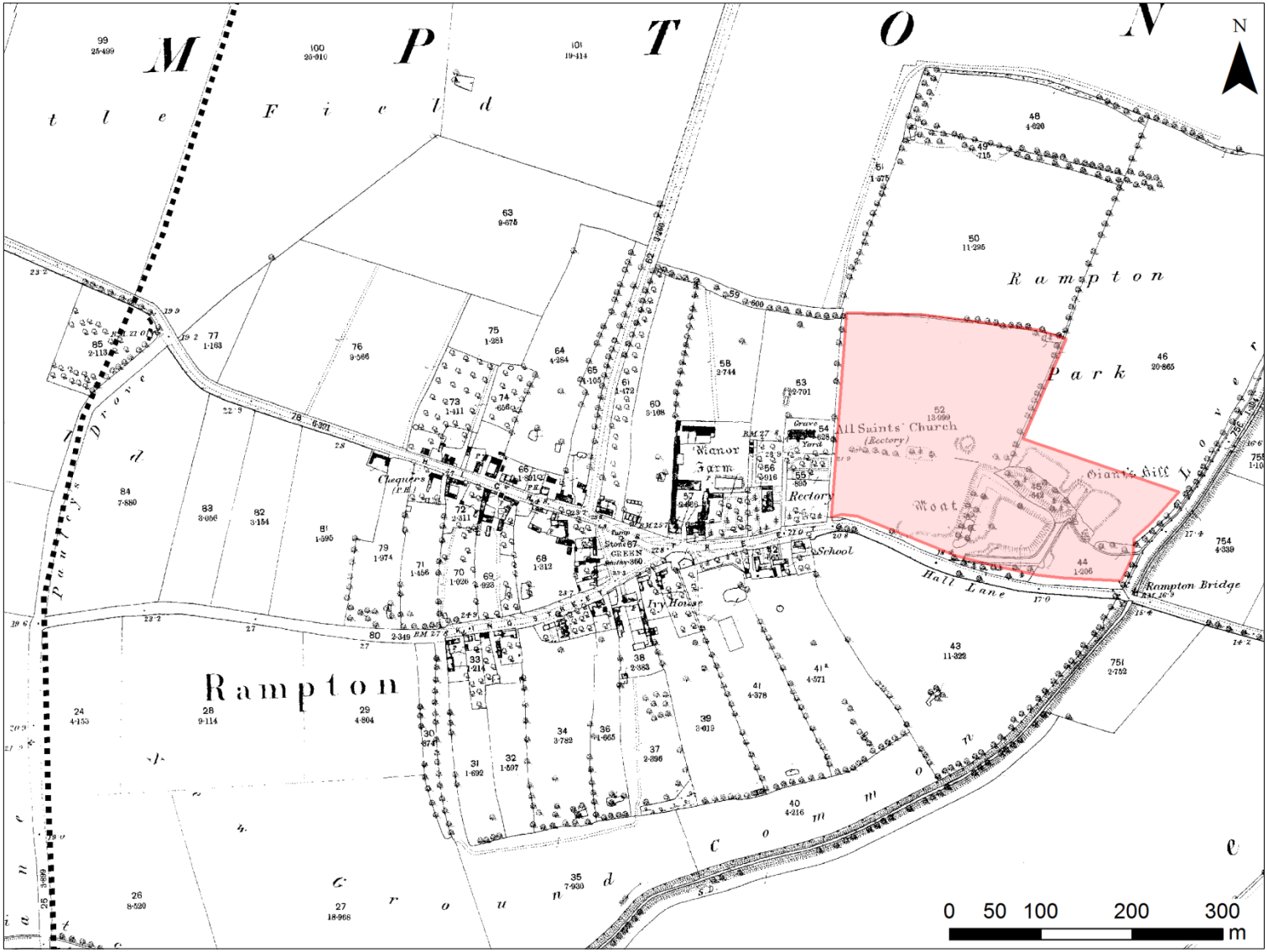

Figure 3: OS First Edition 25" map of Rampton. The survey area is shaded, and the line of The Portway dashed.

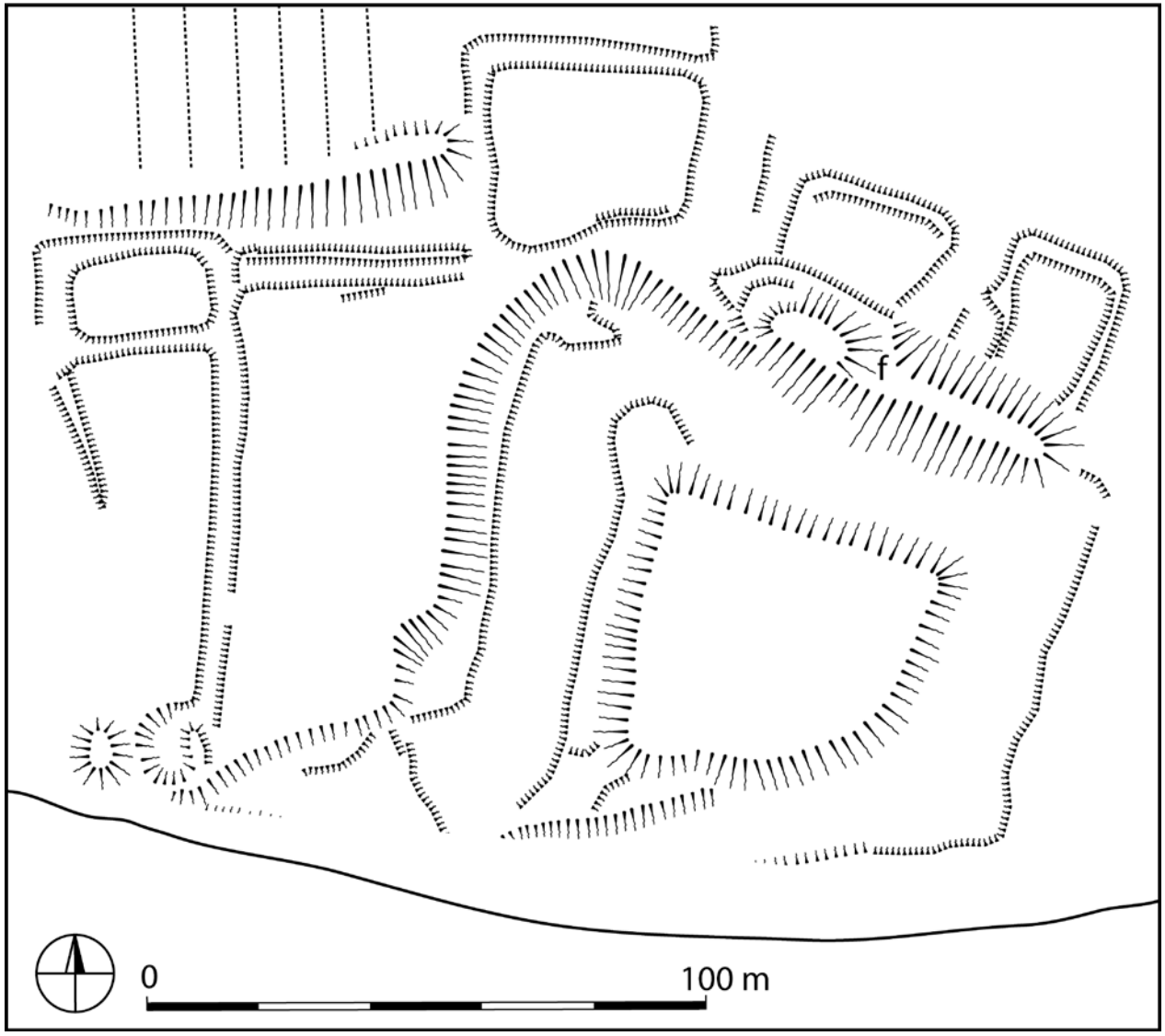

Figure 4: Hachured earthwork plan of Giant's Hill, Rampton.

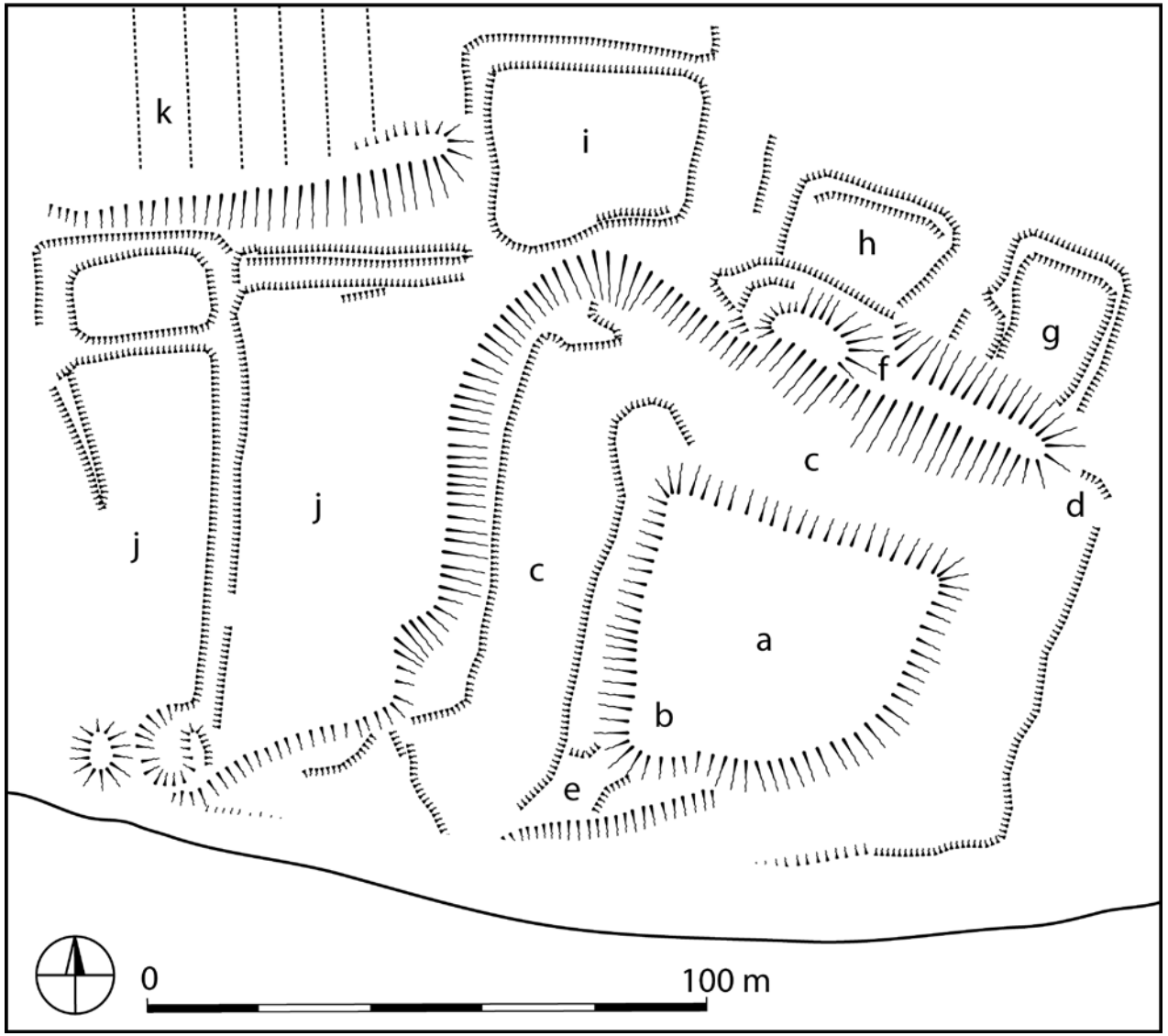

Figure 5: Annotated hachured earthwork plan of Giant's Hill, Rampton.

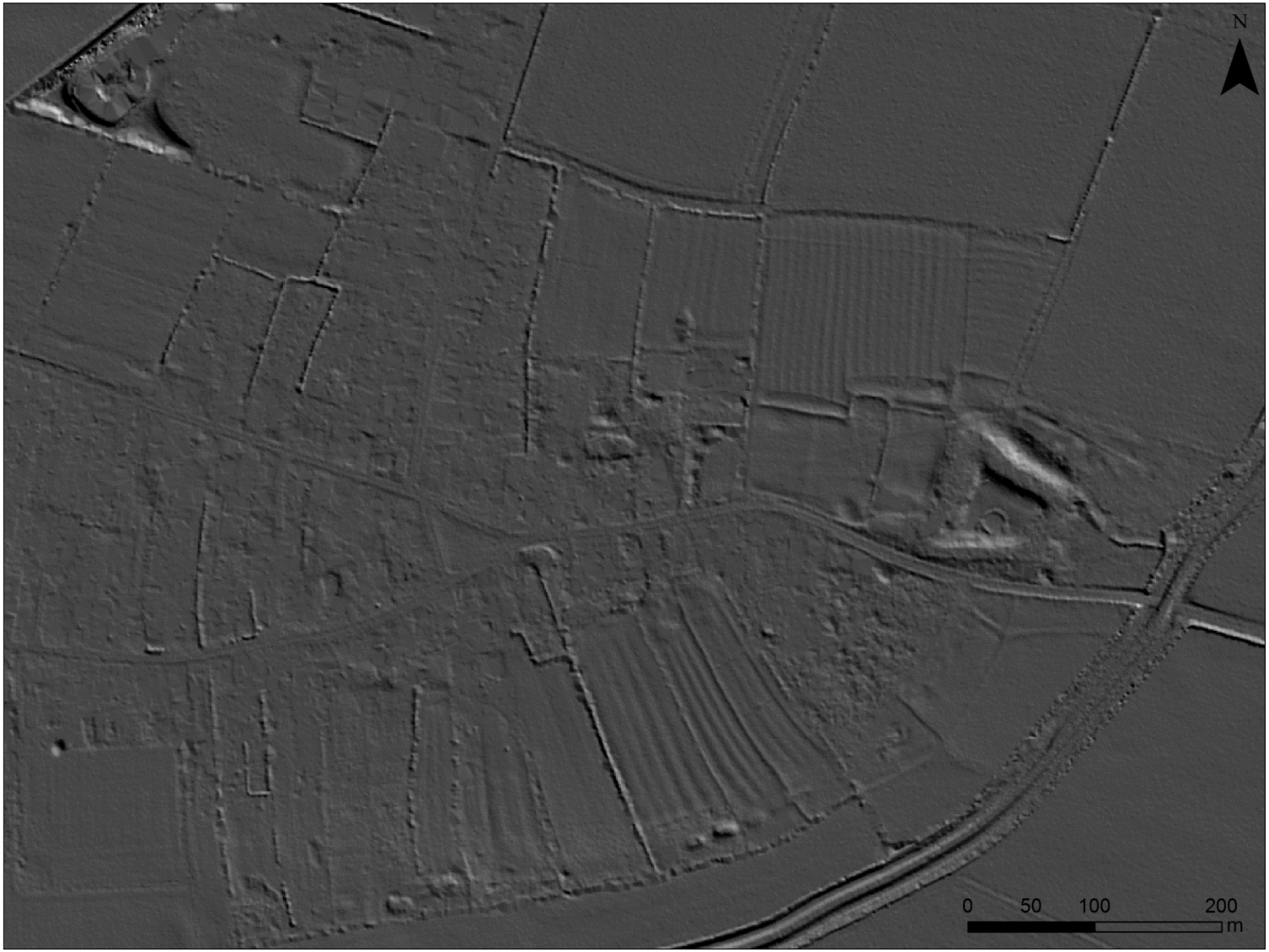

Figure 6: LiDAR hillshade plot of Rampton showing Giant's Hill in the eastern portion of the image

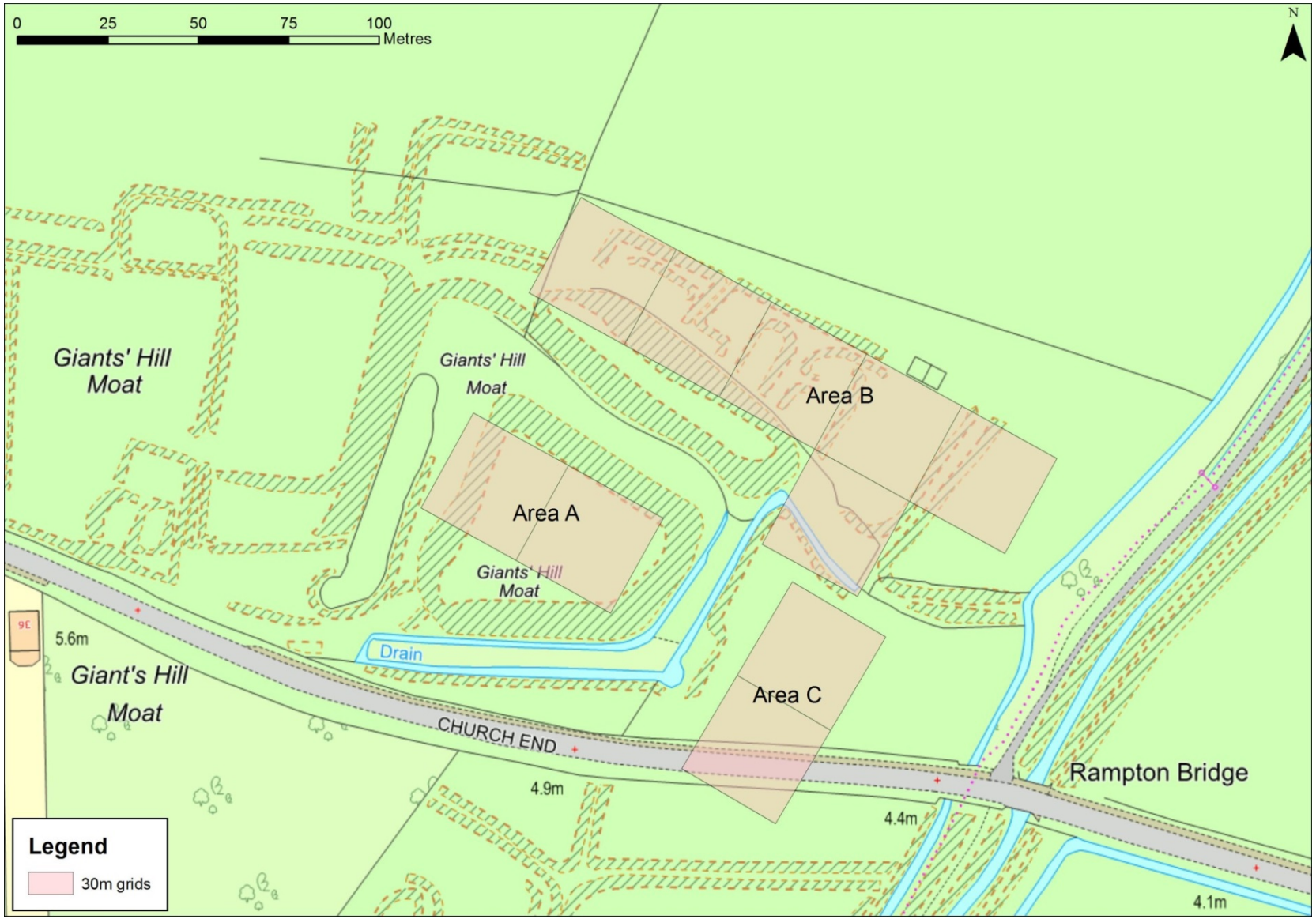

Figure 7: Areas of geophysical survey. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

Figure 8: Results of the earth resistance survey. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

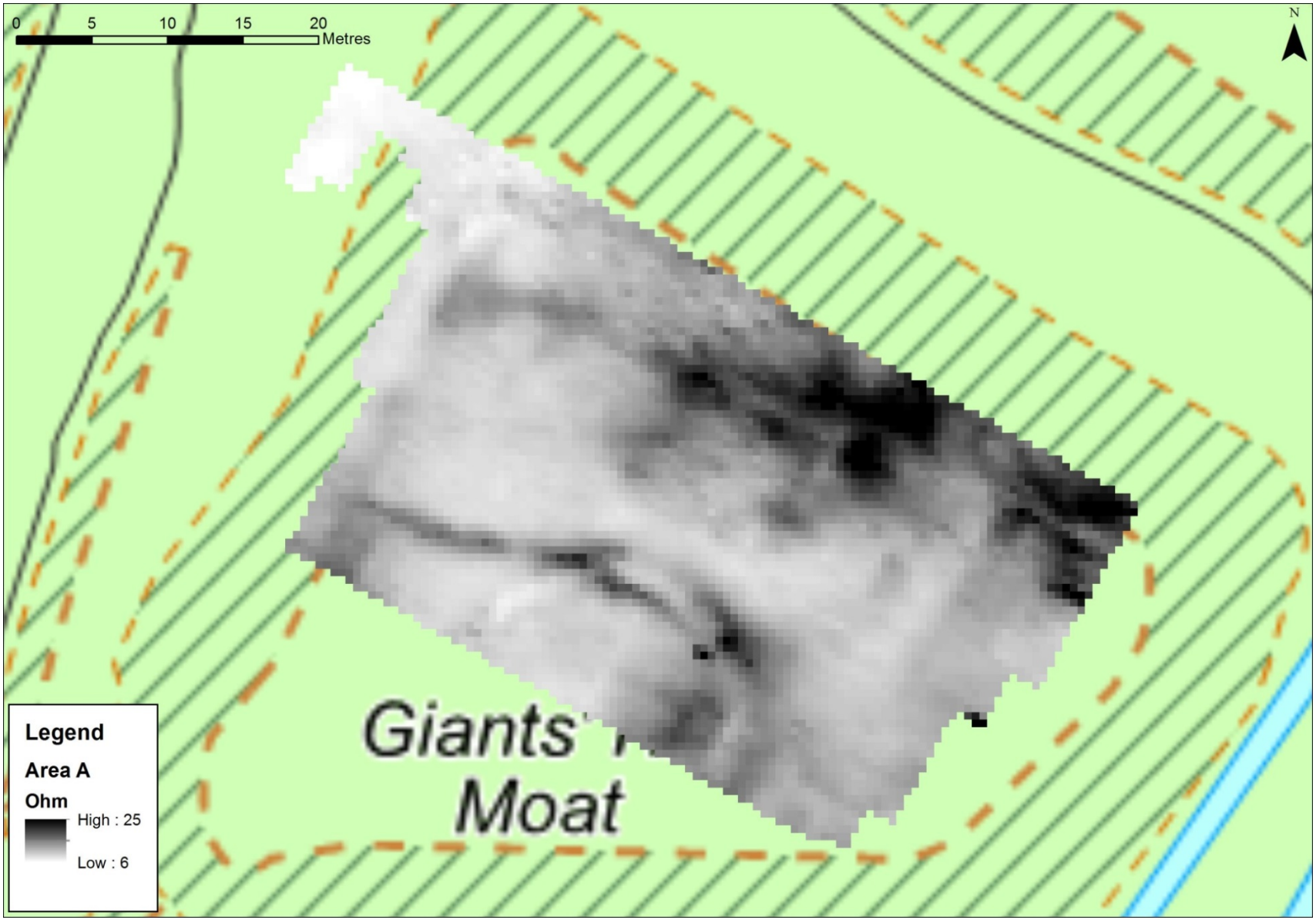

Figure 9: Area A earth resistance results. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

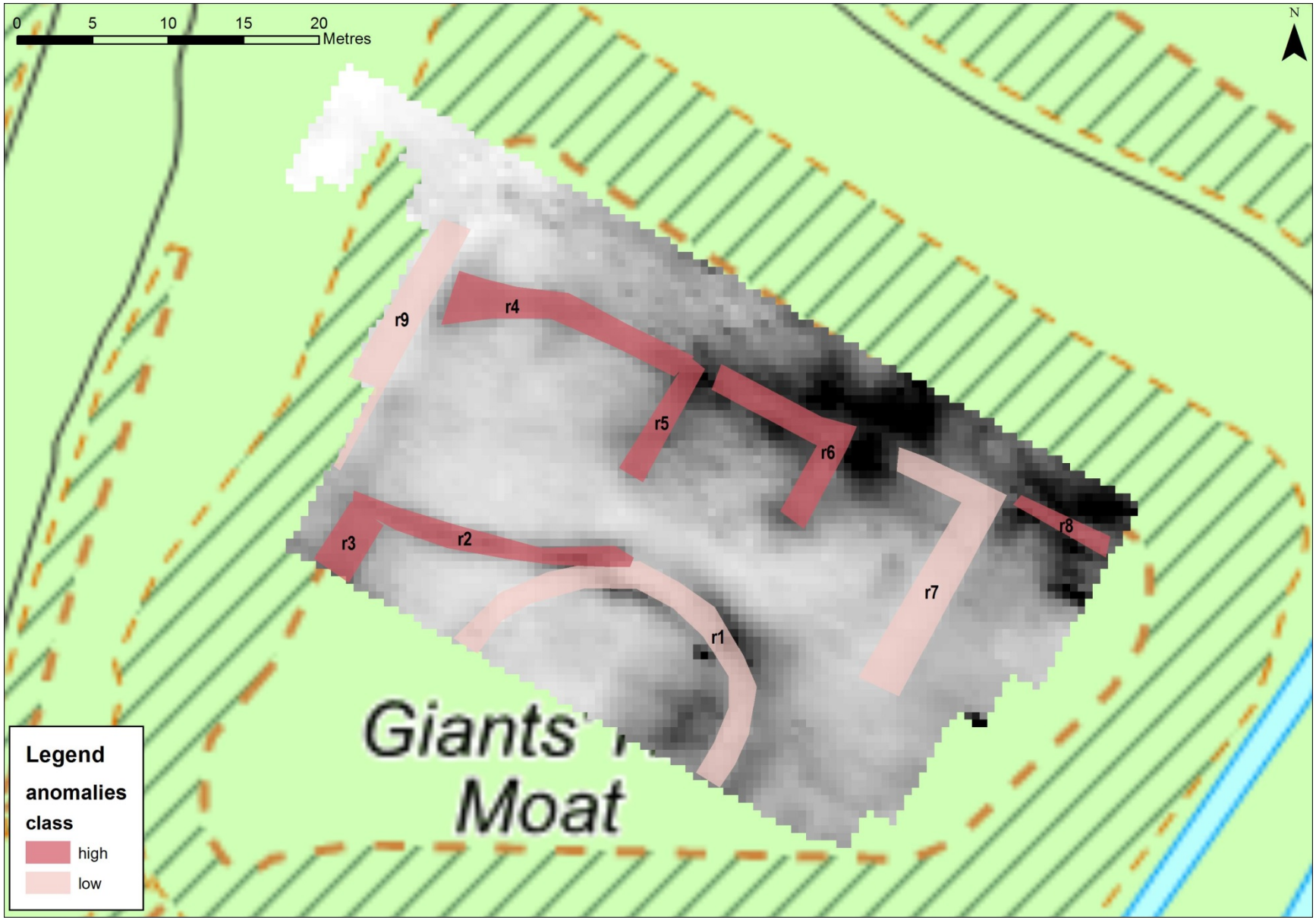

Figure 10: Interpretation of anomalies in Area A. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

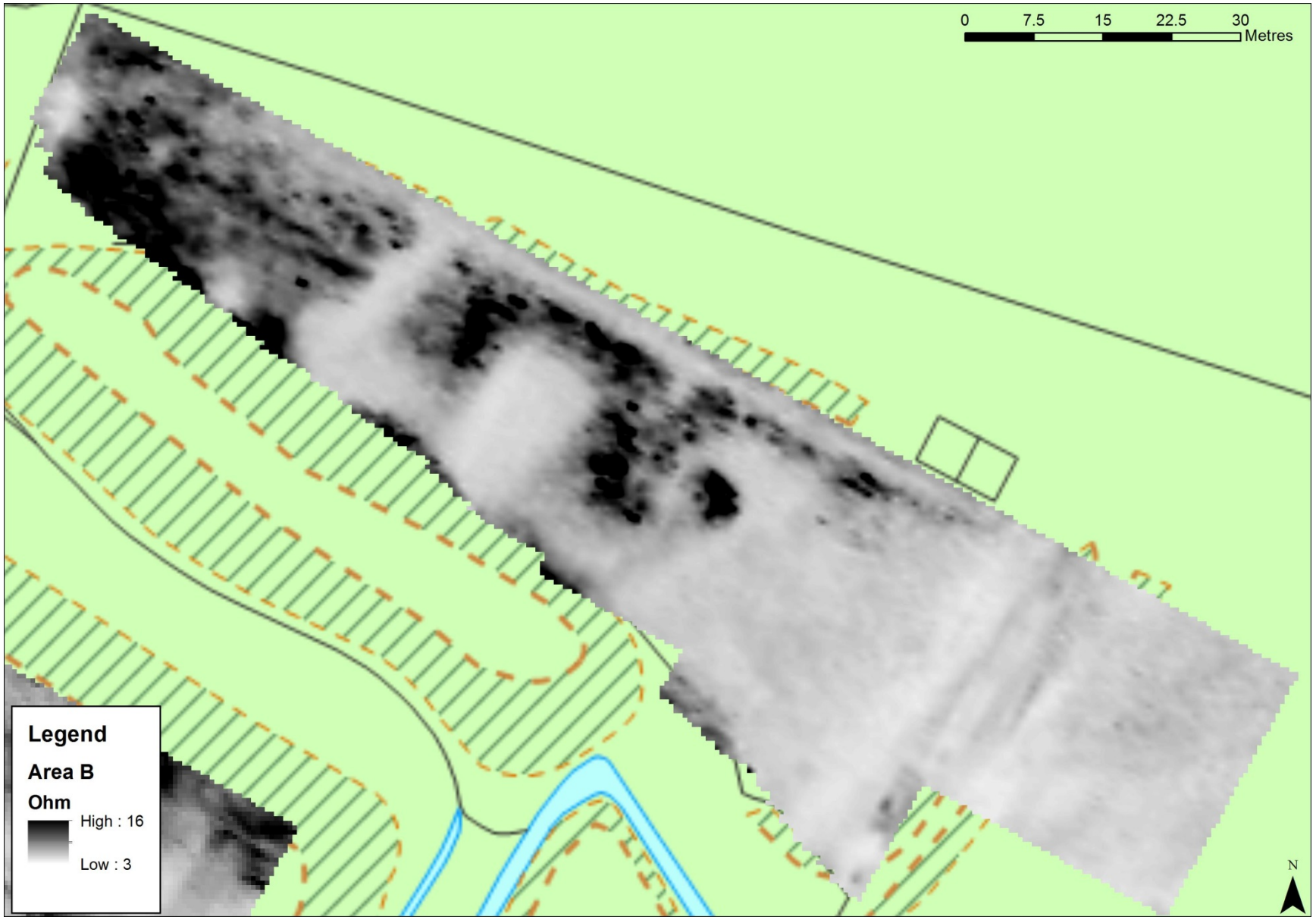

Figure 11: Earth resistance results in Area B. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

Figure 12: Interpretation of anomalies in Area B. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

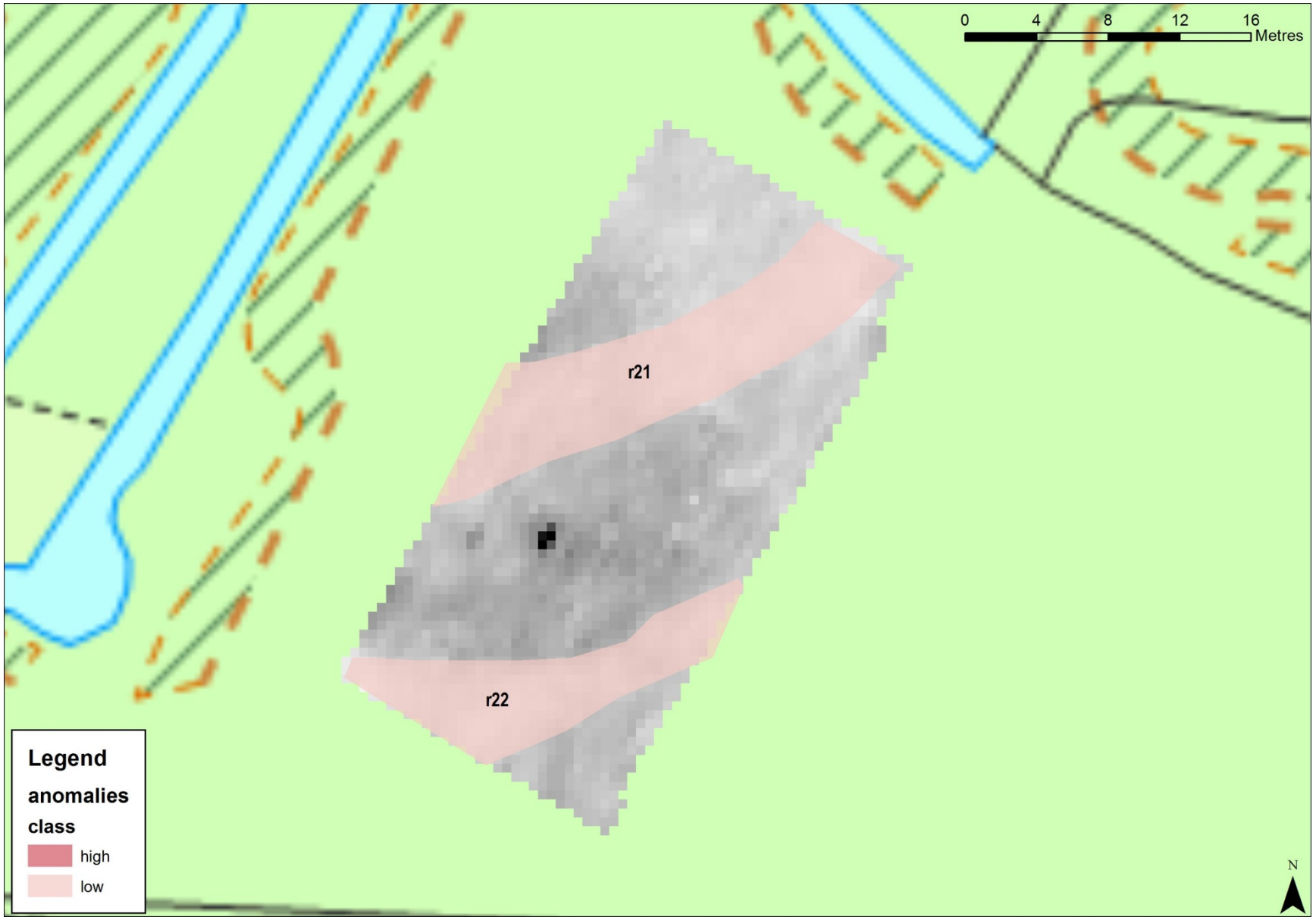

Figure 13: Anomalies identified in Area C. MasterMap © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2014. Ordnance Survey (231649).

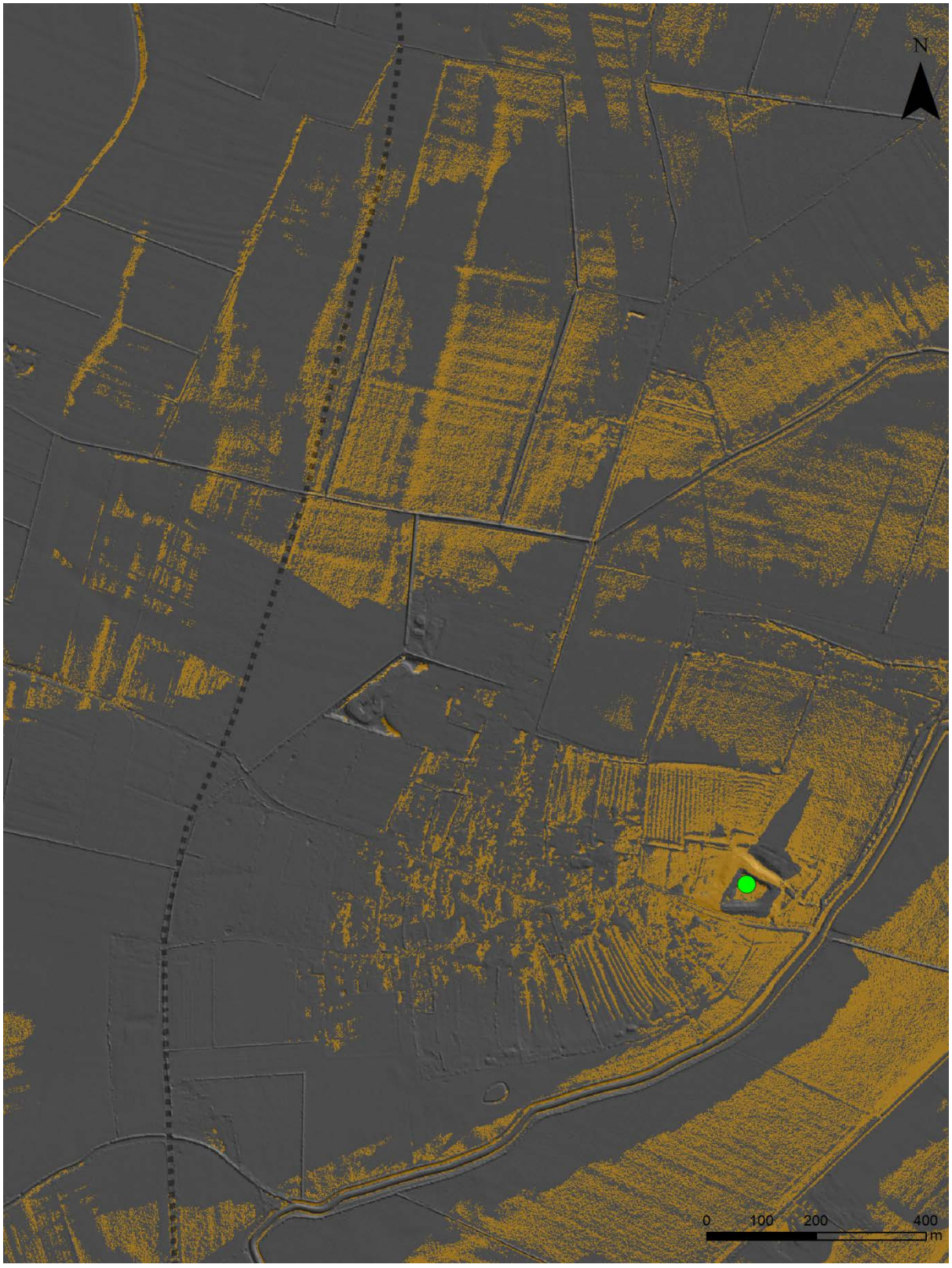

Figure 14: Viewshed of Giant's Hill, Rampton. The green dot represents the observer, located at an elevation of 2m. The orange shading represents visible areas, and the dashed line the route of The Portway. The castle clearly provides better views to the north. © Geomatics Agency 2014.

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