

APPENDIX 1

DESIGNATION HISTORY OF THE PERIMETER OF SALISBURY PLAIN

This appendix covers the deliberations over landscape designations in 1950, at the time when the location of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were being finalised. The Appendix includes material from that time on the interim treatment of areas under consideration for designation, and the map showing the possible area around the perimeter of Salisbury Plain. Supplementary evidence presented at the Westbury Bypass inquiry is used to set the context.

I am grateful to Ray Woolmore, retired officer of the Countryside Agency who has been involved for many years in compiling a record of the history of designation, for providing the information in this Appendix. The designation history of the Salisbury Plain area had largely disappeared from public knowledge until he made it available to the inquiry in 2008.

Westbury Bypass Public inquiry: Supplementary Proof to WHA Landscape/ Townscape Proof, July 2008

The escarpment area of Salisbury Plain was a candidate for designation in the period following the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. The government issued Circular 84/50 in 1950, outlining interim measures for areas under consideration for designation until such time as designations were confirmed. Circular 84/50 stated (para 8) that local authorities should consult the National Parks Commission (NPC) in the event of major development or other “urgent requirement” arising in an area likely to be designated as a National Park. The NPC first report 1950 refers to the interim protection through Circular 84/50, and the Commission drew up maps showing “the areas upon which certain Government Departments and Public Bodies consult the Commission concerning any proposals for development”.

The “England, South” map ... shows the northern and western escarpment of Salisbury Plain as one such area. The A350 forms the outer boundary between Warminster and Westbury, and the B3098 eastwards from Westbury, which broadly corresponds with the SLA boundary except where Westbury has expanded to the East since 1950.

This map illustrates three points:

- The Salisbury Plain escarpment was thought by the NPC to merit candidacy for designation at the time when countryside designation was under consideration following the 1949 Act
- The central area of Salisbury Plain is clearly excluded from the area: although the MoD land is not stated as the reason, it is known that the MoD objected to inclusion of any land in its control from statutory designation
- The area considered for designation around 1950 is not confined to the Plain itself but includes contiguous landscape at the foot of the escarpment, as does the SLA now

The area was not subsequently confirmed as a National Park or AONB. The reason for this is not known, but the same fate befell several candidate areas (for example, the Howgill/ Borrowdale Fells near Tebay in Cumbria, where the issue of earlier candidacy for National Park status was a consideration at the recent Whinash windfarm inquiry). In the case of Salisbury Plain escarpment, it is thought that the area did not progress to designation because it did not meet the minimum size criterion for National Parks set out in the Dower/ Hobhouse reports preceding the 1949 Act.

The appended map is archived at the Natural England office at John Dower House, Cheltenham.

Alan James

5 July 2008

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NATIONAL PARKS AND ACCESS TO
THE COUNTRYSIDE ACT, 1949

FIRST REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL PARKS
COMMISSION

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING
30th September, 1950

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*Presented to Parliament in pursuance of S. 4 (1) of the National
Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949*

*Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed
5th December 1950*

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Interim Protection of areas being considered as National Parks

8. Since the process leading up to the designation of a National Park is necessarily somewhat complex and must take some months, and since it must accordingly be several years before all the Parks can be designated, the need for some interim protection was apparent. Accordingly, after consultation with the Commission, the Minister of Town and Country Planning

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asked Local Authorities in Circular 84 of 15th March, 1950, to use their powers under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, and the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, in such a way that the development as Parks of the areas ultimately selected should, as far as possible, not be prejudiced during the interval that must elapse before these areas can be selected and Parks formally designated. Local Authorities were asked also to consult the Commission whenever it should appear to them to be desirable, and several such consultations have, in fact, taken place.

England and Wales Sheet 11



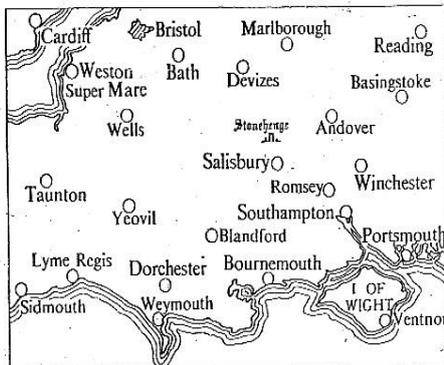
QUARTER-INCH
MAP OF
GREAT BRITAIN

(Fourth Edition)

WITH NATIONAL GRID

SHEET 11

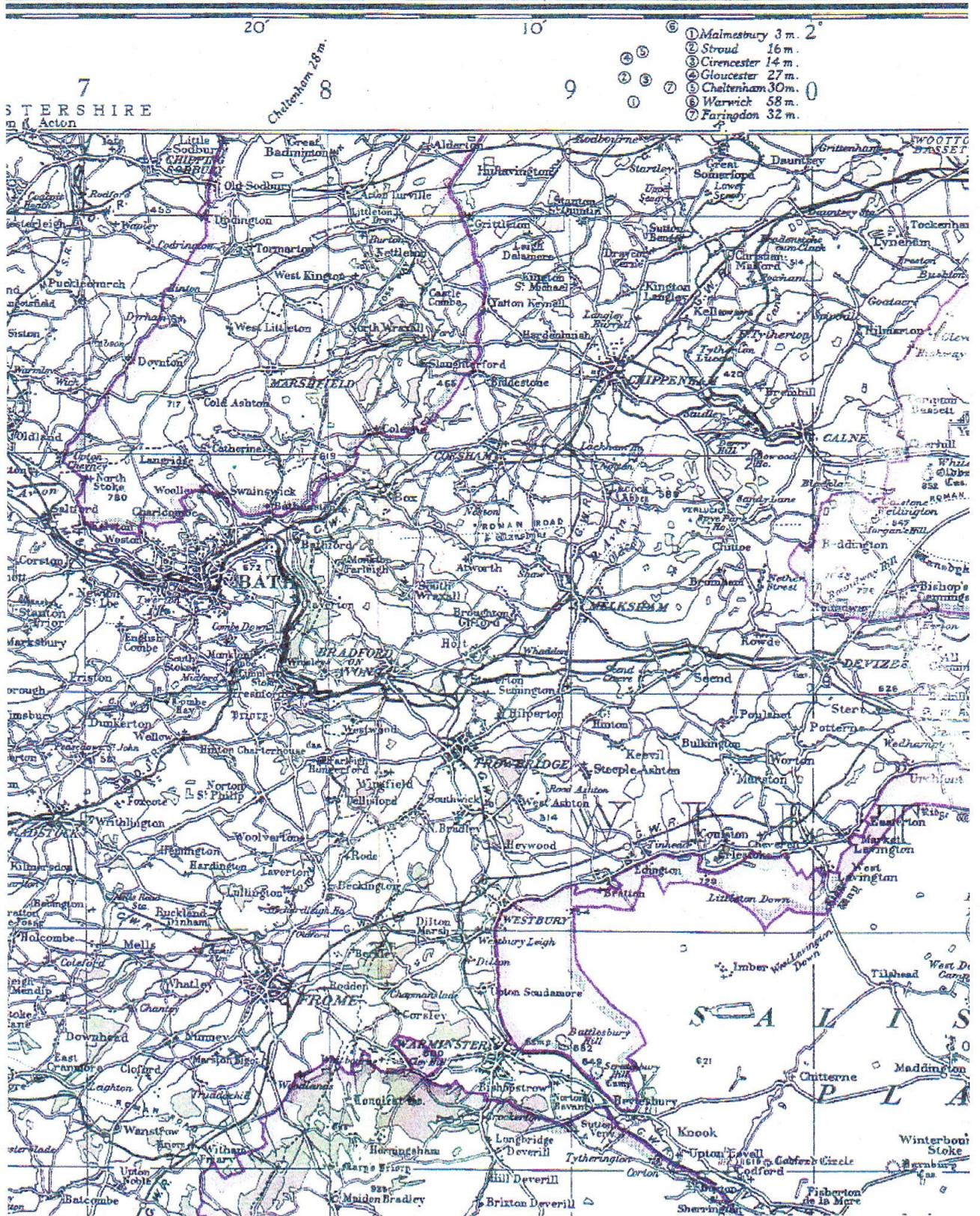
ENGLAND, SOUTH



NATIONAL PARKS COMMISSION

This map, specially prepared for the National Parks Commission by Ordnance Survey, shows in purple the areas upon which certain Government Departments and Public Bodies consult the Commission concerning any proposals for development.

ENGLAND, SOU



7
WILTSHIRE
m of Acton

Cheltenham 28 m.
8

- ① Malmesbury 3 m. 2'
- ② Stroud 16 m.
- ③ Cirencester 14 m.
- ④ Gloucester 27 m.
- ⑤ Cheltenham 30 m.
- ⑥ Warwick 58 m.
- ⑦ Faringdon 32 m.

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