

A new henge discovered at Stonehenge

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Archaeologists from the University of Birmingham have been involved in re-writing history, following the discovery of a major ceremonial monument less than one kilometre away from Stonehenge.

The new henge was discovered just two weeks into a three year international study that forms part of the multi-million Euro Stonehenge Hidden Landscapes Project. The aim of the project is to map 14 square kilometres of the Stonehenge landscape, to recreate visually the iconic prehistoric monument and its surroundings and transform how we understand the landscape.

The team involved in the project brings together the most sophisticated geophysics team ever to be engaged in a single archaeological project in Britain. The find, has been described by [Professor Vince Gaffney \(/staff/profiles/artsandlaw/gaffney-vince.aspx\)](#), Project Leader for the study, as one of the most exciting discoveries there in 50 years.

Describing the incredible discovery, Professor Gaffney said, "It seemed to have a large-ditched feature, but it seemed to be made of individual scoops rather than just a straight trench. When we looked more closely we then realised there was a ring of pits about a metre wide going all the way around the edge."

"When you see that as an archaeologist, you just look at it and think, that's a henge monument it's a timber equivalent to Stonehenge."

Professor Gaffney, who this week also won the Best Archaeological Book prize at the prestigious Archaeological Awards, continued, 'This find is remarkable. It will completely change the way we think about the landscape around Stonehenge.'

The monument is one of the most studied monuments on Earth but this demonstrates that there is still much more to be found. The presumption was this was just an empty field - now you've got a major ceremonial monument looking at Stonehenge.

The new 'henge-like' Late Neolithic monument is believed to be contemporaneous to Stonehenge and appears to be on the same orientation as the World Heritage Site monument. It comprises a segmented ditch with opposed north-east/south-west entrances that are associated with internal pits that are up to one metre in diameter and could have held a free-standing, timber structure.

The project, which is supported by the landowner, the National Trust, and facilitated by English Heritage, has brought together the most sophisticated geophysics team ever to be engaged in a single archaeological project in Britain.

- [Archaeologists unearth Neolithic henge at Stonehenge \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-10718522\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-10718522) - BBC News (with video)



Photograph of archaeologists with equipment