



# Monk's Down

Site Code 1.009

OS Grid Ref: ST 939 208 (Map 184)

GPS N50:59.194 W2:05.297

Owned and farmed by: Kevin Follett  
Chapel Farm  
Catkins Cottage  
Water Street  
Berwick St John  
SHAFTESBURY  
Dorset  
SP7 0HS  
Tele: 01747-828785

Wind Direction NNW - NNE (340' – 030')  
Best: N (005°)  
Height AMSL 820ft (269m)  
Top to Bottom 245ft (80m)

Nearest Phone: Berwick St John village  
Nr Talbot Inn Pub

Pilot Grades HG Club Pilot  
PG Club Pilot  
**Site briefing advisable**

Casualty Units: Odstock Hospital  
Salisbury

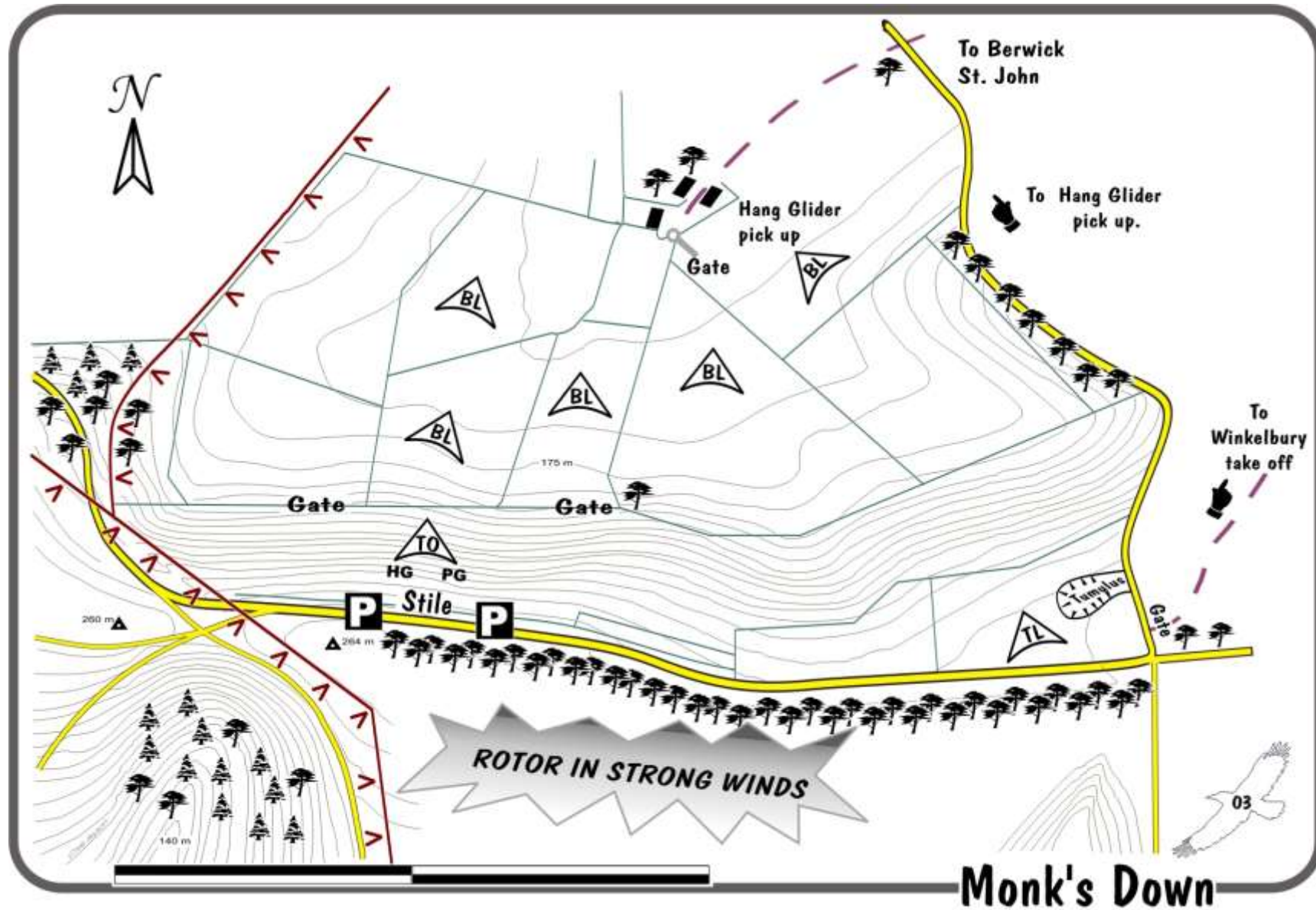
Notes by Alastair Florence

## General Site info

Monk's Down is in effect a large bowl with a short tree covered spur to its Western side. To the East the hill curves out Northward toward Winklebury.

The site provides pleasant flying. Top landing particularly in a stronger wind can be difficult on hang-gliders or paragliders but there is normally ample bottom land, hence the site is suitable for low airtime pilots.

The site works well in thermic conditions and is a good XC start point. Access is also easy.



## Directions

**From Shaftesbury** - take the A30 towards Salisbury, drive through Ludwell and take the right hand turn signed for Ashmore (Dennis Lane). Take the next left and follow signs to Rushmore.

**From Salisbury** - take the A30 Shaftesbury Road. Turn off left toward Berwick St. John. Drive through the village and turn right opposite the Talbot Inn. The road bends sharp right and follows a stream on the left. Bear left up the hill, at the top turn right. You are now driving above Monk's Down.

**From Blandford** - Travel around the Blandford bypass toward the north past the roundabout for the A354 for Salisbury. Go to the following roundabout and turn right. Follow this road for 6.6 miles turning to the right immediately after a large bowl on your left, signposted to Compton Abbas airfield. Turn right at the T-junction and follow this road, passing Compton Abbas airfield on your left, for 2 miles. Cross over the crossroads, signposted to Ludwell. After a further 1.2 miles take the road on your right and after a further 0.35 miles take the next right, signposted to Rushmore. Follow this road for 2 miles. Monk's Down is on your left.

## Parking

There is a stile in the fence line at the site entrance. Do not block access to others by parking in front of the stile. Park as tight as possible to the fence on the grass verge. The road is narrow so take care not to obstruct the roadway.

## Access

Simply hop over the stile, set up and launch.

## Hazards

The site has been known to be turbulent on strong Northerly days owing to the ridge out in front.

There is also a possibility of rotor from the Winklebury ridge when the wind is off to the east, particularly to the east side of the ridge.

As with most bowls if the wind is off the hill, it is possible for it to be dragged up the slope giving the impression it is on. Look for direction indicators out in front.

If you are blown back here the trees will be waiting to catch you, take care to keep out in front on stronger days. If you are blown back over the trees you will almost certainly experience severe rotor in their lee.

To the west of the site, power cables run across and down the hill and onto the western spur. Beware in this corner that particularly when there is east in the wind that a venturi effect can increase wind speed in this area causing you to be blown back.

Be on the lookout for low flying aircraft. The site is very close to Compton Abbas airfield.

## Launching

The close proximity of the trees behind the road can give the illusion that the wind is stronger than it really is.

Launch here is pretty straight forward. Allow enough distance between you and

the top fence in case of difficulties during a launch.

**Top Landing** Hang-glider landing can be extremely tricky here due to the limited space and the slope at landing generating lift. Paragliders please give hang-gliders space if they are obviously trying to land.

Paraglider landing can also be tricky on stronger days as the space is limited by the fence at the top and trees beyond. Be careful not to get blown back into the trees in venturi.

It can be useful to loose height out in front then try and land on the more gently sloping area to the east of launch.

Be prepared to big-ear to get down on this site.

Hang-glider top landing is also available on the far side of the road from the normal landing area on the path that leads from the gate to the Winklebury slope. This landing area is flatter and easier to get a high performance glider into. The main landing area slopes quite a lot in some areas, so be prepared for an early over-shoot as there is a wire fence just before the slope drops off. The Winklebury track landing area is unofficial.

**Bottom Landing** Slope landing is possible here as there is little scrub cover on the slope and although steep the slope is fairly smooth.

You may bottom land in any grass covered field below. Avoid cropped fields. Use gates to exit fields and close them behind you.

If you get caught out by increasing wind speed whilst flying it is safer to push forward and bottom land rather than attempt a top landing and risk being blown back.

**XC** The site has several reliable trigger points and works well in thermic conditions.

Good height gains are easily achievable here.

It is advisable to ensure you have hooked a good thermal or stay in front of the hill until you build up some height before committing to going over the back. As mentioned being caught low behind the trees is a bad idea.

XC is possible toward Swanage or Weymouth dependent on wind direction. Particularly with east in the wind, be aware of Compton Abbas ATZ to the south-west of the site.

## **Flying Generally**

This site can become crowded, particularly on light wind days.

The site is good for soaring or XC and in the right conditions it is possible to push well out in front of the hill.

With a NNW it is possible to fly over to Winklebury and back.

The site can produce evening 'restitution lift' during summer time giving very pleasant soaring conditions.

Other than sometimes difficult top landing the site is good for experienced and low airtime pilots alike.

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