



INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title A5225 Wigan, Hindley & Westhoughton Bypass.	Details Archaeological Assessment
Road Number A5225	Date January 1994
The Greater Manchester Contractor Archaeological Unit	
County Lancashire	
OS Reference SD60	
Single sided <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Double sided A3 <input type="checkbox"/> Colour <input type="checkbox"/>	

A5225 WIGAN, HINDLEY AND WESTHOUGHTON BYPASS

OBJECTORS' ALTERNATIVE – KNUTSHAW BRIDGE SECTION

An Archaeological Assessment

The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit

January 1994

DRAFT

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. The Setting	2
3. Historical Background	3
4. Gazetteer of Sites	5
5. Conclusions	7
6. Recommendations	8
Sources	9
<i>Map</i>	End page

1. Introduction

1.1 The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Parkman Engineering Consultants to carry out an assessment of the archaeological implications of the Objectors' Alternative - Knutshaw Bridge section for the A5225 Wigan, Hindley and Westhoughton Bypass. The aim was to identify sites of significance along the proposed route and, where necessary, make recommendations.

1.2 A survey was undertaken and this report presents a summary of the findings.

1.3 The survey consisted of the examination of published and unpublished map series, aerial photographs, documentary material from a variety of published and manuscript sources, and field survey of the route, in order to relate the research findings to the existing landscape.

1.4 This survey follows an earlier report by the GMAU on the M6 to M61 Link - Wigan, Hindley and Westhoughton Bypass, carried out in 1991. The present revised survey extends over a wider route corridor than the earlier report.

1.5 Complete land access was not sought at this stage and field work was restricted to public rights of way.

2. The Setting

2.1 GEOLOGY

The solid and drift geology of the study area is displayed on the Ordnance survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, sheet numbers 84 and 85.

2.1.1 Solid

The solid geology of the study area is composed of the Lower Coal Measures, otherwise known as the Westphalian A series of the Carboniferous period. This includes several coal seams as well as local sandstones.

2.1.2 Drift

The study area is overlain by glacially deposited boulder clay.

2.2 TOPOGRAPHY

The study area centres on Hunger Hill *c* 140m OD, which is the highest point within the area. The land slopes away on all sides, particularly to the north and east towards the narrow valley of Knutshaw Brook. The southern part of the site is now part of an opencast works, which has provided an artificial landscape in this area.

3. Historical Background

3.1 PREHISTORIC

No sites from the prehistoric period have been identified within the study area or in the immediate vicinity. Although this does not necessarily imply an absence of prehistoric activity, the local geological conditions may in this case be a significant factor in accounting for the paucity of sites. The boulder clay subsoil of the area is not generally regarded as providing ideal conditions for settlement during this period. The heavy, poorly drained soils were not conducive to early farming techniques and there is growing regional evidence for prehistoric settlement concentrating on sand and gravel beds adjacent to rivers and mosslands.

3.2 ROMAN

No sites from this period have been identified within the study area or in the immediate vicinity. The nearest identified site is the proposed line of the Roman road between Manchester and Blackrod, which is thought to follow the line of the modern A6 (Watkin 1883, 47).

3.3 MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL

The study area lies within the townships of Rumworth and Over Hulton. The place-names of both of these townships derive from Old English forms suggesting pre-Conquest settlement. However, in each case there is no evidence for this settlement being located within the study area.

The township of Over Hulton formed part of the manor of Hulton, together with the townships of Middle Hulton and Little Hulton. In c 1200 three-quarters of Hulton was held by the Worsley family, with the remaining quarter held by the Hulton family in Over Hulton. The Hultons of Hulton were based at Hulton Park c 0.7km to the south of the study area. The Hulton family would also appear to have acquired the manor of Rumworth during the early part of the 14th century (Farrer & Brownbill 1911, 6). The Hulton line of succession continued through to the present century and thus it would seem likely that from the medieval period onwards this family were the principal landowners within the study area.

The earliest evidence for occupation within the study area is provided by datestones, with both Higher Hunger Hill Farm (Site 10; see section 4, *Gazetteer of Sites*) and Greenfields (21) having 17th-century examples. The A676, which crosses the site, follows the line of the Bolton and Westhoughton turnpike road (11).

3.4 INDUSTRIAL

The principal industry located within the study area has been coal mining, with a number of coal pits being shown on the Ordnance Survey First Edition. Yates's map shows coal pits to the east of the study area and it is possible that mining was taking place within the study area itself prior to the 19th century. The Victoria Colliery site (13),

established between 1845 and 1892, would appear to be the largest below ground workings in the area; it would certainly appear to extend to the north-west of its surface buildings, with an air shaft being shown on the 1909 and 1929 maps in this direction. In recent years a large opencast site has been established on the southern side of the study area and this now represents the largest site of coal extraction.

The brick croft site (1) in the south of the study area is likely to be related to this mining industry, as bricks were used both for surface structures and shaft linings.

The line of the former Bolton and Leigh Railway (3), which crosses the southern part of the study area, is a site of some importance in terms of railway history. The Act for its construction was Lancashire's first successful public railway bill, and the line was the first in the county to be opened for public transport (Basnett 1953, 157). The line, which was engineered by George Stephenson, ran from the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal in Bolton to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Leigh. Although passenger carrying took place, the principal purpose of the line was to facilitate coal transport in the area.

4. Gazetteer of Sites

The following gazetteer lists those sites identified by the GMAU survey along the proposed Objectors' Alternative - Knutshaw Bridge section for the A5225 Wigan, Hindley and Westhoughton Bypass. Italicized numbers after the site title refer to the Gazetteer of Sites in the earlier GMAU report (GMAU 1991). The abbreviations FW, M and AP refer to the method of identification, ie field walking, map research or aerial photograph analysis. SMR refers to the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record held by the GMAU.

1) SD 6810 0674
Brick Croft (109) M

One of a group of twelve structures associated with a 'brick croft' is contained within the study area and shown on the 1849 map. By 1895 the site would appear to be part of a larger brick works. Described as Hulton Brick Works on the 1909 and 1929 maps. The site now forms part of an opencast site.

2) SD 6815 0672 (linear)
Tramway M

This tramway is shown on the 1849, 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps and joins with the main railway line. The site now forms part of an opencast site.

3) SD 6838 0680 (linear)
Railway M FW

The line of the former Bolton and Leigh Railway built by George Stephenson in 1828. On the 1909 map the line is owned by the London & North Western Railway and is called the Bolton and Kenyon Line. By the 1929 map it is owned by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway. The line is now dismantled and survives as an embankment.

4) SD 6858 0683
Coal pit M

Shown on the 1849 map. The site is vacant on the 1895 map. The site now forms part of an opencast site.

5) SD 6860 0696
Coal pit M

Shown on the 1849 map. The site is vacant on the 1895 map. Site not accessible.

6) SD 6860 0701
Herron Bank Farm M FW

An irregular shaped building and a T-shaped building together with three ponds are shown on this site on the 1849 map. The access track to the farm is carried over the railway by Canby Bridge on this map. A similar arrangement of buildings is shown on the 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps. The house is a 2-storey building constructed of handmade brick with a slate roof and ridge and gable stacks. It appears to have replacement windows.

7) SD 6863 0705
Coal pit M

This site is shown on the 1849 map. Shown as a small area of spoil on the 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps. The site would now appear to underlie a modern housing estate.

8) SD 686 071
Coal pits M

A group of three coal pits is shown on this site on the 1849 map. The site is vacant on the 1895 map. Site not accessible.

9) SD 6850 0716
Mining subsidence (112) FW

A large shallow hollow, possibly caused by subsidence due to coal mining.

10) SD 6823 0713
Higher Hunger Hill Farm (111) M FW
SMR 4570

An irregular shaped structure, a rectangular structure and three small rectangular structures are shown on this site on the 1849 map. A similar arrangement of buildings is shown on the 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps. Much of the complex has been demolished; however, a 2-storey stone-built structure survives which has a datestone 'R-E TL1676'. This building has been heavily modernized and enlarged but retains some chamfered stone mullion windows with hood moulds.

11) SD 6836 0722
Turnpike road M

This road is shown on the 1849 map and was

managed at this time by the Bolton and Westhoughton Trust.

12) SD 6846 0724
Pond M

A pond is shown on this site on the 1849 and 1895 maps.

13) SD 6842 0729
Colliery M FW

Two structures are shown on this colliery site on the 1895 map. The site is called Victoria Colliery on the 1909 and 1929 maps, with several surface structures shown and a single shaft. The site is now a grassed over area of spoil.

14) SD 6850 0732
Knutshaw Bridge M

An L-shaped structure is shown on the 1849 map. A larger elongated building is shown on the 1895 map; on the 1909 and 1929 maps this is shown as a row of seven structures.

15) SD 6858 0733
Knutshaw Bridge M

This bridge carries the turnpike road over Knutshaw Brook on the 1849 map.

16) SD 6839 0737
Pond M

This site is shown on the 1849, 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps.

17) SD 6817 0742
Pond M AP

This site is shown on the 1849, 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps. Site not accessible.

18) SD 6820 0755
Sandstone quarries M AP

Two small sandstone quarries one of which is described as 'old quarry' are shown on the 1849 map. An air shaft is marked by this site on the 1909 and 1929 maps. Site not accessible.

19) SD 6850 0758
Quarry M

A sandstone quarry is shown on this site on the 1849 map. Site not visible from the roadside.

20) SD 6815 0778 (linear)
Green Lane M

This lane is shown on the 1786 and later maps.

21) SD 6808 0790
Greenfields M FW

A building is shown on this site on the 1786 map. An irregular shaped structure and an elongated structure are shown on this site on the 1849, 1895, 1909 and 1929 maps. The site is now called Greenfields, but on the 1929 and earlier maps is named Grundy's. The irregular structure is a 2-storey building with a graduated stone slate roof and a gable stack. The building has a rendered exterior and modern windows. There is a datestone of 'EC[or EG] 1687' on the east gable. The elongated structure is now a separate property and forms a house and outbuildings in a continuous range. The house is 2-storey with a slate roof, rendered exterior and modern windows. The outbuildings are built in coursed stone rubble.

5. Conclusions

5.1 The farm sites of Greenfields (21) and Higher Hunger Hill (10) represent the earliest elements of the historic landscape which are identifiable within the study area. Both are of 17th-century date and would appear to retain at least some original elements in their structural fabric. The farmhouse at Hermon Bank (6) appears to be a late 19th- or early 20th-century structure.

5.2 The remaining sites within the area date from the industrial period and are primarily related to the coal-mining industry. The Victoria Colliery (13) probably represents the largest of the underground workings, although several other coal pits are probably earlier in date. There is some potential for early workings surviving.

5.3 Of the surviving industrial sites within the study area the embankment of the Leigh and Bolton railway (3), originally designed by George Stephenson, must be considered to be of particular importance.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Should any of the buildings at Greenfields (21) or Higher Hunger Hill (10) be directly affected by the proposed scheme it is recommended that a measured survey of the structures should take place.

6.2 The line of the Bolton and Leigh railway survives as an embankment through the study area (3) and it is recommended that every effort is made to retain this industrial earthwork feature. Should the embankment be directly affected it is recommended that a measured and photographic survey is made of the site.

6.3 It is recommended that a watching brief is carried out along the line of the route during the removal of topsoil.

6.4 It is recommended that a field visit along the length of the fixed line is carried out once this has been established, and this in turn may lead to further recommendations.

6.5 The GMAU would welcome an early discussion on the implementation of these recommendations.

Sources

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basnett L 1953 'The History of the Bolton and Leigh Railway based on the Hulton Papers (1824-1828)' *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 62 (for 1950-1), 157-76.

Farrer W & Brownbill J 1911 (eds) *The Victoria County History of Lancaster*, vol 5. London.

GMAU 1991 M6-M61 Link: Wigan, Hindley and Westhoughton Bypass: An Archaeological Assessment. GMAU report.

Watkin W T 1883 *Roman Lancashire*. Liverpool.

MAPS

1786 William Yates's Map of Lancashire, approx. 6/10" to 1 mile.

1849 (Surveyed 1845-6) Ordnance Survey First Edition 6" to 1 mile, Lancashire sheet 94.

1895 (Re-Surveyed 1888-92) Ordnance Survey Second Edition 6" to 1 mile, Lancashire sheet 94.

1909 (Re-surveyed 1892, revised 1907) Ordnance Survey 1:2500, Lancashire Sheet XCIV.4.

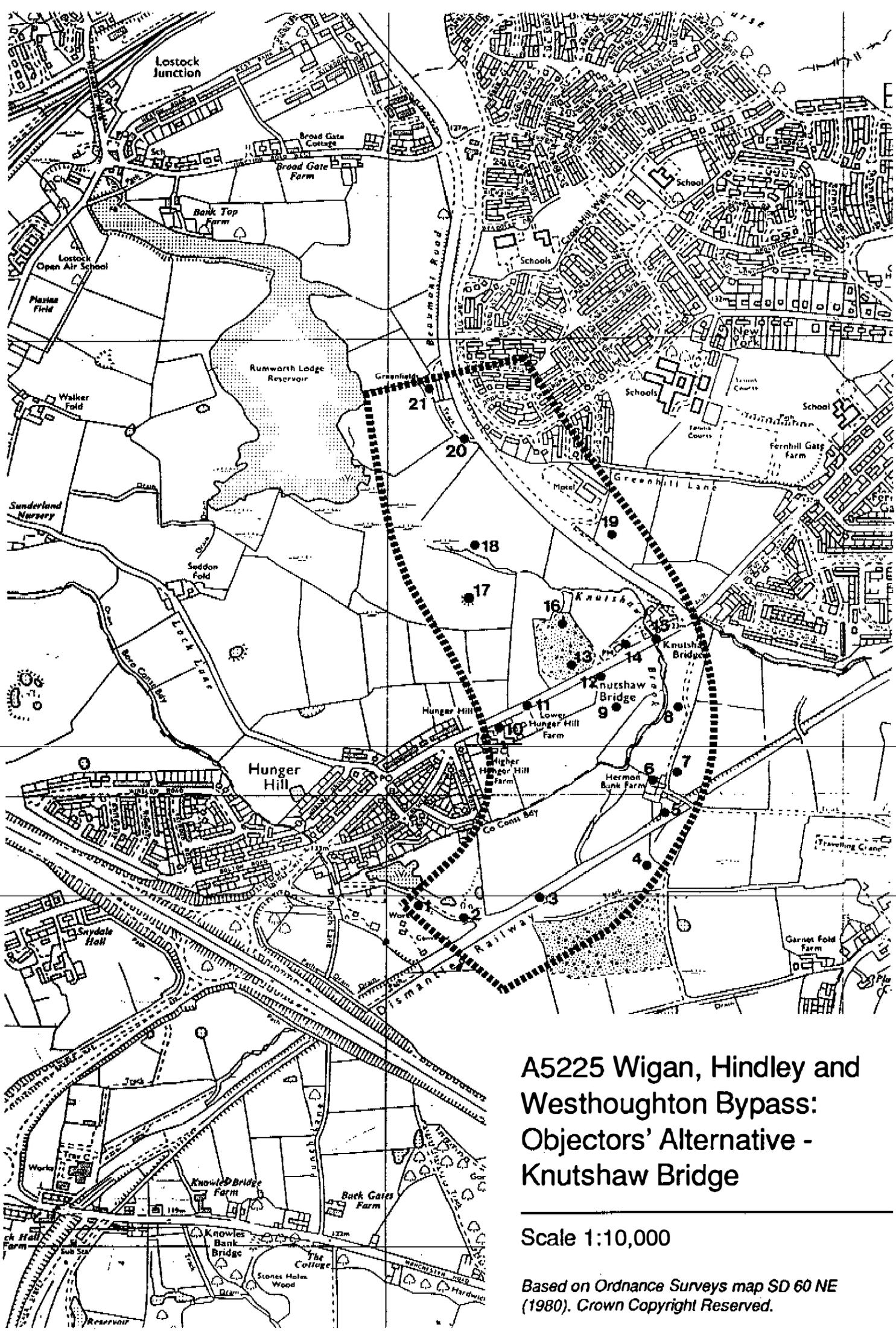
1929 (Re-surveyed 1892, revised 1927) Ordnance Survey 1:2500, Lancashire Sheet XCIV.4.

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Held at the Greater Manchester Geological Unit, Peel House, Eccles:

1977, 1979 & 1984 black & white verticals at a scale of 1:10,000

1988 colour verticals at a scale of 1:10,000.



**A5225 Wigan, Hindley and
Westhoughton Bypass:
Objectors' Alternative -
Knutshaw Bridge**

Scale 1:10,000

Based on Ordnance Surveys map SD 60 NE
(1980). Crown Copyright Reserved.