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Contractor RPS	
County Derbyshire	
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A Report for

RPS CONSULTANTS

on a

Geophysical Survey

carried out at

Mottram-Tintwistle By-pass, Greater Manchester/Derbyshire

June 2000

Job Ref. No. 1469



Author

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1 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The survey did not appear to locate any evidence of the three cropmarks or earthworks that had been noted in the archaeological appraisal of the proposed by-pass route corridor. The positive linear anomalies abstracted from the Tintwistle site are thought to be of natural origin. However, those at the Mottram in Longendale site may be of an archaeological origin although they are difficult to interpret.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background synopsis

Stratascan was commissioned to carry out a geophysical survey over two sites along a proposed corridor earmarked for a by-pass development. These sites contain cropmarks or earthworks of possible archaeological significance which required investigation prior to development.

2.2 Site location

The sites are located at Tintwistle and Mottram in Longendale which are situated to the north and north-west of Glossop and to the cast and south east of Stalybridge respectively. The site at Tintwistle is located at OS ref. SK 029976 and the site at Mottram in Longendale is at OS ref SJ 994062.

2.3 <u>Description of site</u>

Both sites are laid down to pasture. The site at Tintwistle sloped steeply towards the south and east with a sharp drop along the southern edge of the field down to the A628.

The site at Mottram in Longendale is used as the Mottram showground and slopes gently southwards. The west side of the site contained numerous showring/stock fences as well as a large number of posts for the erection of temporary fences. Two apparently small local quarries located in the south could not be surveyed. To the east were a number of boreholes.

The underlying geology of the proposed route corridor comprises Kinderscout Grit and Pure Hill Grit of the Upper Carboniferous Millstone Grit series. This is overlain by glacial boulder clay. The overlying soils at the Tintwistle site are known as Rivington 2 which are typical brown earths (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 1 Northern England) and consist of well drained coarse loamy soils over rock. The overlying soils at the Mottram in Longendale site are known as Wilcocks 1 which are Cambic stagnogley humic soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 1 Northern England). These consist of slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey upland soils with a peaty surface horizon.

2.4 Site history and archaeological potential

An archaeological assessment of the route corridor by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit identified a number of sites of archaeological potential. Three such

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sites were chosen for further investigation in the form of geophysical survey. The site at Tintwistle contained a sub-circular shaped cropmark of c.15m in width which was identified from aerial photographic sources as an interrupted dark ring. Cropmarks were also noted from aerial photographs at Mottram in Longendale in the form of a large rectangular-shaped cropmark. On the ground at the Mottram in Longendale site a number of 'amorphous' earthworks had been noted.

2.5 Survey objectives

The objective of the survey was to locate features which may be associated with the cropmarks and earthworks and which may be of archaeological significance.

2.6 Survey methods

Magnetometry was used to survey both sites. More information regarding this technique is included in the Methodology section below.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Date of fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out over five days from Monday 28th June to Friday 1st July 2000 when the weather was variable.

3.2 Grid locations

The location of the survey grids for the site at Tintwistle has been plotted in Figure 3. The steep gradient of the slope has meant that the plotting of the magnetometer greyscale results appears to be out of place. However, the referencing information provided in Figure 3 is correct.

The location of the survey grids for the site at Mottram in Longendale has been plotted in Figure 9.

3.3 <u>Description of techniques and equipment configurations</u>

Although the changes in the magnetic field resulting from differing features in the soil are usually weak, changes as small as 0.2 nanoTesla (nT) in an overall field strength of 48,000nT, can be accurately detected using an appropriate instrument.

The mapping of the anomaly in a systematic manner will allow an estimate of the type of material present beneath the surface. Strong magnetic anomalies will be generated by buried iron-based objects or by kilns or hearths. More subtle anomalies such as pits and ditches can be seen if they contain more humic material which is normally rich in magnetic iron oxides when compared with the subsoil.

To illustrate this point, the cutting and subsequent silting or backfilling of a ditch may result in a larger volume of weakly magnetic material being accumulated in the trench

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compared to the undisturbed subsoil. A weak magnetic anomaly should therefore appear in plan along the line of the ditch.

The magnetic survey was carried out using an FM36 Fluxgate Gradiometer, manufactured by Geoscan Research. The instrument consists of two fluxgates mounted 0.5m vertically apart, and very accurately aligned to nullify the effects of the earth's magnetic field. Readings relate to the difference in localised magnetic anomalies compared with the general magnetic background.

3.4 Sampling interval, depth of scan, resolution and data capture

3.4.1 Sampling interval

Readings were taken at 0.5m centres along traverses 1m apart. This equates to 800 sampling points in a full 20m x 20m grid. All traverses are surveyed in a "parallel" rather than "zigzag" mode as this results in a heading error.

3.4.2 Depth of scan and resolution

The FM36 has a typical depth of penetration of 0.5m to 1.0m. This would be increased if strongly magnetic objects have been buried in the site. The collection of data at 0.5m centres provides an optimum resolution for the technique.

3.4.3 Data capture

The readings are logged consecutively into the data logger which in turn is daily down-loaded into a portable computer whilst on site. At the end of each job, data is transferred to the office for processing and presentation.

3.5 Processing, presentation of results and interpretation

3.5.1 Processing

Processing is performed using specialist software known as Geoplot 3. This can emphasise various aspects contained within the data but which are often not easily seen in the raw data. Basic processing of the magnetic data involves 'flattening' the background levels with respect to adjacent traverses and adjacent grids. 'Despiking' is also performed to remove the anomalies resulting from small iron objects often found on agricultural land. Once the basic processing has flattened the background it is then possible to carry out further processing which may include low pass filtering to reduce 'noise' in the data and hence emphasise the archaeological or man-made anomalies.

The following schedule shows the basic processing carried out on all processed magnetometer data used in this report:

Zero mean grid Zero mean traverse Threshold = 0.25 std. dev.

Dannika

Despike

A radius = 1 = 1 radius : Threshold = 3 std. dev.

Spike replacement = mean

3.5.2 Presentation of results and interpretation

The presentation of the data for each site involves a print-out of the raw data both as grey scale (Figures 4 and 10-12) and trace plots (Figures 5, 6 and 13, 14), together with a grey scale plot of the processed data (Figures 7 and 15-17). Magnetic anomalies have been identified and plotted onto an 'Abstraction and Interpretation of Anomalies' drawing for each site (Figures 8 and 18).

4 RESULTS

4.1 General observations

Generally, the anomalies abstracted from both sites are relatively feint in appearance. The majority of these anomalies besides modern debris or disturbance are positive rectilinear and curvilinear anomalies. However, there does not appear to be any anomalies relating to the cropmarks or earthworks located in the archaeological assessment.

4.2 Archaeological Appraisal

4.2.2 Tintwistle

Figure 8 shows the abstraction of anomalies for the site at Tintwistle. Around the south and west boundaries of the field an area of magnetic debris and disturbance can be seen. This is likely to be modern in origin.

Away from the boundaries a number of very feint positive linear anomalies have been abstracted. Many of these anomalies have been located running downslope. Due to the steep gradient of the survey area the anomalies are thought to be the result of pedological/geological effects.

There does not appear to be any anomalies of particular archaeological significance and, indeed, none relating to the circular cropmark which had been observed from aerial photographs.

4.2.3 Mottram in Longendale

The most notable anomaly seen in the survey results from Mottram showground is an area of strong magnetic debris along the west side. This correlates with a cinder path used as access on to the showground. Other areas of magnetic debris/disturbance have been abstracted in Figure 18 along with a large number of ferrous spikes scattered across the whole site. These are likely to be modern in origin with much of it probably relating to litter from past events which was noted on site.

A further category of anomalies abstracted in Figure 18 are a number of feint positive linear anomalies. These can be seen in two general clusters, in the centre of the survey area and towards the south eastern corner. It is difficult to interpret the function of these anomalies or their archaeological significance as they have no distinct characteristics or

recognisable forms. It is possible that they are of archaeological potential but this would need to be clarified through further investigation.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey at Tintwistle located numerous feint positive anomalies. However, their general direction downslope may be indicative of their cause relating to pedological or geological effects. The survey did not locate any evidence of the circular cropmark seen from aerial photographs on the site.

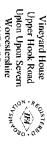
The survey at the Mottram in Longendale site also located a number of fcint positive anomalies. However, their significance as archaeological features is difficult to ascertain. Therefore, it is recommended that they are investigated further.

Survey airea

Upper Hook Road Uptent Upon Severn WRR OSA

Sites centred on NGR Scale Project Title Figure No. 1:50 000 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN Geophysical Survey, Mottram-Tintwistle By-Pass RPS CONSULTANTS STRAINSCAN. Job no. 1469 SJ 994062 & SK 029976 9m 1km 2km June 2000 Drawn EJFM Checked PPB

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Drawn EJFM Checked June 2000 Site centred on NGR SJ 994062 1469 Job no. Figure No. 2b

Client
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Project Title

Geophysical Survey, Mottram-Tintwistle By-Pass

MOTTRAM IN LONGENDALE PLANFOR THE SITE AT DETAILED LOCATION

1:12 500

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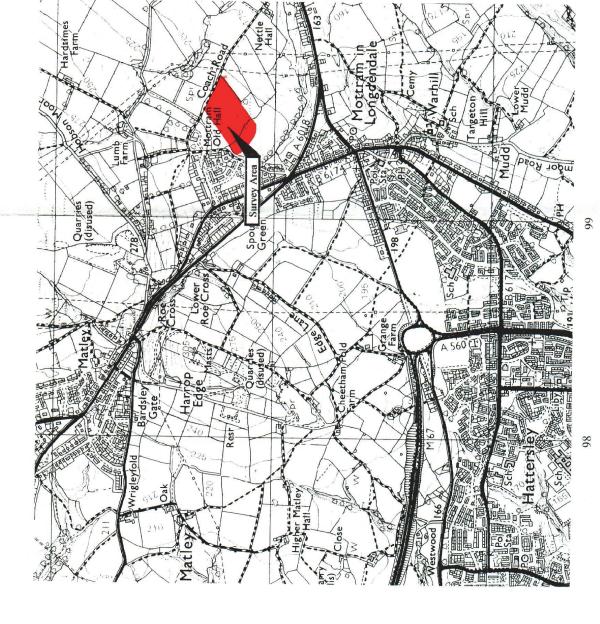
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ORIGINAL IN COLOUR

ORIGINAL AT A3



95

97 98 Arnfield Reservoir Arnfield Intwistle Low Moor Stonebrake Quarries (disused)

Site centred on NGR SK 029976

Figure No.

Job no.

Date June 2000

Drawn EJFM Checked PPB

1469

ORIGINAL IN COLOUR

ORIGINAL AT A3

03

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PLANFOR THE SITE AT TINTWISTLE DETAILED LOCATION Project Title

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