



Planning, Transport
and Environment

INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title A63 Melton grade separated junction.	Details Additional Geophysical Survey.
Road Number A63.	Date October 1995.
Contractor AW + P.	
County Humberside.	
OS Reference	
Single sided ✓ Double sided A3 1 Colour 1A3.	

✓
**A63 Melton Grade
Separated Junction**

**Additional Geophysical
Survey**

Interpretative Report

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A63 MELTON GRADE SEPARATED JUNCTION, NORTH HUMBERSIDE

ADDITIONAL GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY: INTERPRETATIVE REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological desk-top survey¹ was carried out by Anthony Walker and Partners (now Barton Howe Warren Blackledge) in advance of finalising the route of this road improvement scheme. The most important archaeological site identified by this survey was a large cropmark site in South Lawn, to the north of the existing A63 and east of the existing road junction.
- 1.2 A geophysical survey was commissioned to provide more detailed information about the archaeological remains in this area. This work was carried out in January to February 1993 by Geo-Services International (UK) Ltd², and was followed by trial excavations undertaken in July 1994 by Northern Archaeological Associates³.
- 1.3 Following changes to the proposed layout of the road improvement scheme in June 1995, shown on drawing number DTL 0508/035 (September 1995), a supplementary desk-top survey⁴ recommended that the area of geophysical survey should be extended to the north and north-west, as far as Melton Bottom. This work was undertaken by Geo-Services International (UK) Ltd in August 1995⁵.

2 SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

2.1 Initial geophysical survey

- 2.1.1 The initial geophysical survey covered an area of 5 hectares in the southern part of the South Lawn, bounded by the existing A63 to the south, the grounds of Home Farm to the west, and the grounds of Woodside and Melton Hill Lodge to the east.
- 2.1.2 The survey identified five groups of rectilinear enclosures ('a' to 'e' in figure 1) associated with two linear ditch systems ('f' to 'g' and 'h' to 'i' on figure 1). While enclosure 'a' was not aligned with the linear ditch systems, and therefore need not be contemporary, all the other enclosures were. However, it was clear from the survey that the linear ditch systems and enclosure groups 'b' to 'e' must represent several phases of activity. Traces of extensive ridge and furrow cultivation were also visible, as were several strong isolated anomalies probably of more recent origin.
- 2.1.3 The overall complex was interpreted as an Iron Age (approximately 700BC to AD 71) and/or Roman-British (AD 71 to approximately AD 450) "ladder settlement", a type of site which is characteristic of the region but which has rarely been subject to detailed excavation. The rectilinear enclosures were interpreted as being compounds for domestic and/or industrial occupation, although some could have

been fields. The linear ditch complexes were initially interpreted as trackways flanked by ditches.

2.2 Trial excavations

2.2.1 The trial excavations were undertaken in July 1994. The work, which was defined in a detailed specification prepared by Anthony Walkers and Partners⁶, was designed to confirm the interpretation of the geophysical survey results and to determine the condition, complexity and importance of the buried remains in various parts of the site which would be affected by the route as then proposed. A total of 10 trenches (A to J) were excavated, with an overall area of 1065 square metres. Trenches A to C and E to H sampled unenclosed areas in which few or no features were known. No excavation took place in enclosure group 'b', as it was at the time outside the area of the proposed scheme corridor.

2.2.2 The Iron Age/Romano-British date of the complex was confirmed although enclosure 'a' contained both prehistoric and medieval buildings; the date of the enclosure itself was left in doubt. Enclosure 'c' contained a number of rectilinear and circular buildings representing several phases of Iron Age and Romano-British occupation. Relatively little evidence was obtained from enclosure group 'd', but at least two phases of activity were recognised, one of them being contemporary with the occupation of enclosure 'c'. Parts of enclosure 'e' were covered by a thick soil deposit, which had protected the underlying features from damage. A burial, probably of Iron Age or Romano-British date, was found outside enclosure 'e'.

2.2.3 In places, the linear ditches were very large, and it is unlikely that they could have been flanking trackways. The north-south linear ditch system ('h' to 'i') was formed of three very large ditches and a fourth smaller one. However, two of the large ditches were already full when the main enclosure ditch for enclosure 'c' was dug, while the largest ditch was contemporary with enclosure 'c'. One of the earlier ditches had then been re-evacuated to a shallower depth after the enclosure ditch had filled up. The east-west linear ditch system ('f' to 'g') displayed an equally complex sequence, although different in character.

2.2.4 Large quantities of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery were recovered, including a highly significant collection of material imported from the Roman Empire at the end of the Iron Age. A large collection of animal bone was also found and, in addition to the burial, human remains came from two of the ditches.

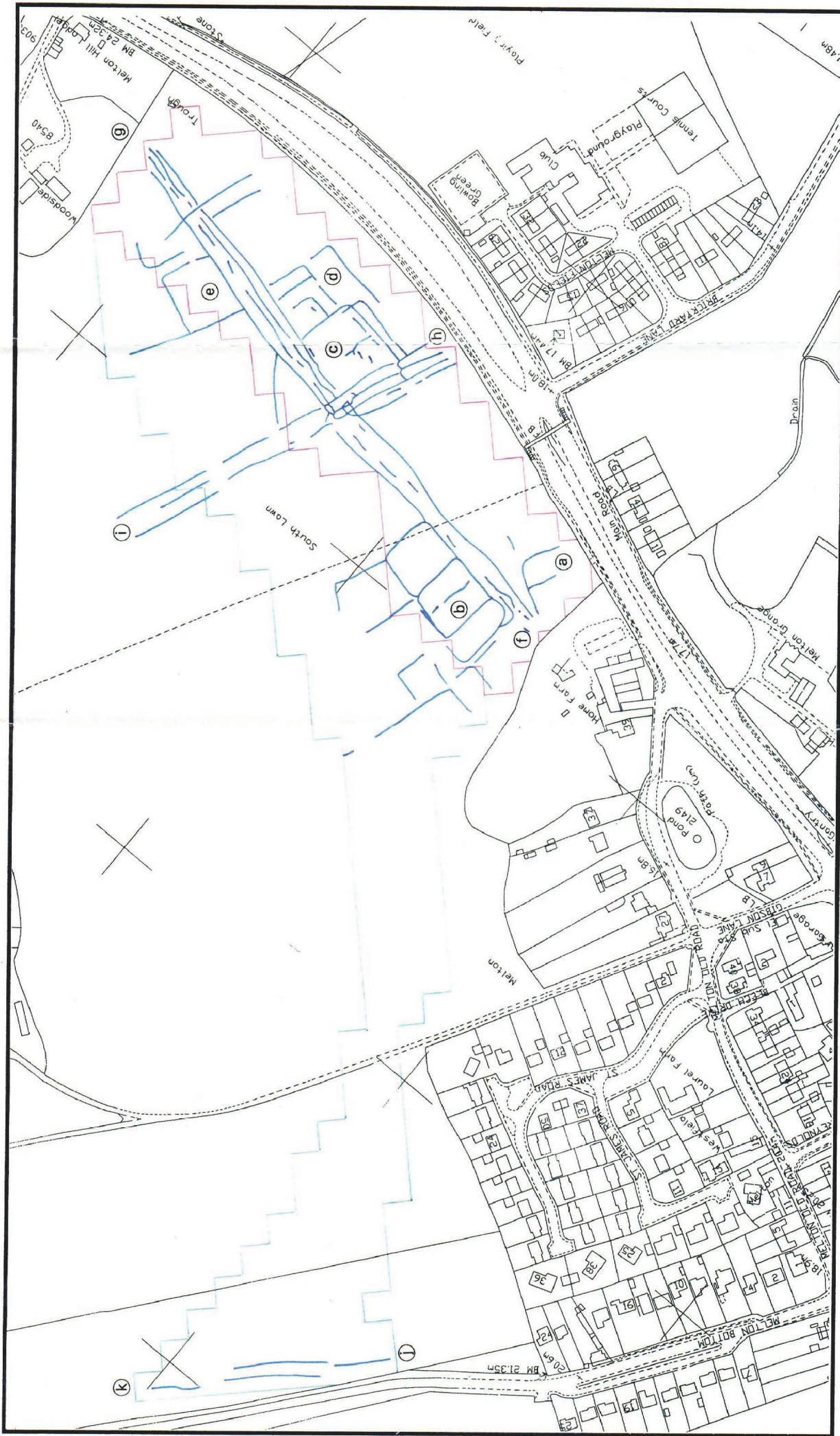
3 ADDITIONAL GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

- 3.1 In August to September 1995, the geophysical survey was extended from the original 5 hectares to 11.24 hectares. The extension ran along the northern edge of the initial survey area, with a narrow strip running off to the north-west and linking to a roughly triangular survey area adjacent to Melton Bottom (see figure 1).
- 3.2 The methodology used in the additional geophysical survey was defined in a detailed specification prepared by Barton Howe Warren Blackledge⁷, and the original contractors were employed. This enabled the compatibility of the results between the two survey areas to be maximised.
- 3.3 The density of archaeological features identified in the area immediately north of the original survey area is, in general, less than in the original survey area itself, and the features are less well-defined. The geophysical survey report comments that this appears to be partly due to increasing topsoil depth, rather than absence of features. It should be noted that the area to which this comment applies lies to the south of a prominent curvilinear lynchet which crosses South Lawn from north-west to south-east. Only for significant features were identified crossing the line of the lynchet; however, the depth of soil underlying any archaeological features will be greatest under this lynchet, and some shallower features may be completely masked by it.
- 3.4 The extended geophysical survey has identified a group of at least four additional enclosures attached to the north and north-west sides of enclosure group 'b', with further single ditches running northwards from them. It is not clear whether these single ditches represent parts of additional enclosures. The west side of enclosure group 'b' as originally recognised is formed by a double ditch, which could represent a track giving access to these additional enclosures.
- 3.5 A single ditch runs north-eastwards from the north-west corner of enclosure 'e', continuing the line of the west side of the enclosure. Again, it is unclear whether this represents one side of a field or another settlement enclosure.
- 3.6 The northward continuation of linear ditch system 'h' to 'i' has been confirmed, although only two ditches were recognised. This system is known from aerial photographs to extend much further to the north-east.
- 3.7 A possible additional linear ditch system ('j' to 'k') has been identified adjacent to Melton Bottom. It is not known whether this forms part of the Iron Age/Romano-British landscape, or is a track of medieval or later date, possibly a former line of the present Melton Bottom.
- 3.8 Although a number of isolated anomalies of varying size and form were identified in the narrow strip linking the South Lawn area with the Melton Bottom area, none of these are thought, at this stage, to be of archaeological significance. They most probably relate to post-medieval or modern disturbance. One clearly represents a ferrous pipeline, another

relates to a hedgeline, while others probably relate to iron objects in the topsoil.

4 REFERENCES

- 1 Anthony Walker and Partners, December 1992, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction: Archaeological Desk-Top Survey Report**
- 2 Geo-Services International (UK) Ltd, February 1993, Melton Grade Separated Junction: Geophysical Investigation**
- 3 Northern Archaeological Associates, November 1994, An iron Age and Romano-British "Ladder" Settlement at Melton, North Humberside**
Anthony Walker and Partners, December 1994, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction - Archaeological Trial Excavations: Interpretative Report
- 4 Barton Howe Warren Blackledge, June 1995, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction: Welton Parish Council Alternative - Cultural Heritage Stage 2 Assessment Report**
- 5 Geo-Services International (UK) Ltd, September 1995, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction: Archaeological Geophysical Investigation - Final Interpretative Report**
- 6 Anthony Walker and Partners, April 1994, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction, North Humberside: Contract and Specification for Archaeological Trial Excavation**
- 7 Barton Howe Warren Blackledge, July 1995, A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction, North Humberside: Contract and Specification for Additional Geophysical Survey**



PROJECT A63 MELTON GRADE SEPARATED JUNCTION		FIGURE 1	
TITLE ADDITIONAL GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS		SCALE 1:2,500	
LEGEND MAJOR GEOPHYSICAL ANOMALIES AREA OF 1993 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AREA OF 1995 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY		BH&W BARTON HOWE WARREN BLACKLEDGE	
NOTE: RIDGE AND FURROW AND NON-ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANOMALIES OMITTED FOR CLARITY			