



Planning, Transport
and Environment

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A65 Improvements
Westhouse, North Yorkshire

Desktop Appraisal

June 1993



West Yorkshire
Archaeology Service

Desktop Appraisal for A65 Improvements

Westhouse, North Yorkshire, SD 670741

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A65 Improvements, Westhouse

North Yorkshire

1. Report summary

Client

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Site location

The archaeological assessment area lies between SD 664744 and SD 675737. It covers a corridor of land 1375m long and c. 50m wide, which is wider at the ends where roundabouts are to be sited. The desktop survey was conducted between 24th March 1993 and 1st April 1993, and the fieldwork was undertaken on 5th April 1993.

Objectives

To carry out a rapid desktop and field appraisal along the proposed Westhouse improvement section of the A65 in order to assess the archaeological potential of the proposed road corridor.

Method

A document search was carried out using the North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the West Yorkshire Archives Service, Yorkshire Archaeology Society and Yorkshire Dales National Park resources. North Yorkshire Archives were contacted but neither their general index nor map index contained entries for the area in question. The document search was followed by a site walk-over survey.

Results

The site visit confirmed the presence of cropmarks, already known from existing aerial photographs, and located more evidence of field systems. There was no evidence to suggest that these were any earlier than medieval in date.

2. Introduction

Assessment brief

West Yorkshire Archaeology Service was commissioned to carry out a preliminary archaeological assessment along the line of the proposed improvement to the A65 at Westhouse. This report contains the results of a rapid desktop appraisal of the archaeological potential of the site and its immediate environs, together with the results of a field survey along the corridor of the proposed development. The aim of the assessment is to draw together archaeological information concerning the site and to evaluate its archaeological potential.

Geographical setting

The site lies c. 2km north of the River Great Ouse and c. 10km south of Ingleborough and Wharfedale which rise to 700m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The site varies between c. 120m and c. 150m OD as it crosses spurs or small streams. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Limestone. All the site is presently pasture.

3. Results of desktop appraisal

This section gives the general background to the study area, specific archaeological features are numbered and shown on Fig. 1.

Roman road 722 (Margary 1967, 408) which linked Skipton and Ingleton may well have continued to Overborrow near Kirby Lonsdale. Although this would broadly be on the same route as the A65 no details are known of its supposed course.

Westhouse is first mentioned in 1387. Its name is taken to mean that it is a western satellite of Thornton in Lonsdale (Smith 1961, 250). Galegreen is first mentioned in 1747 and Kirkstead in 1781 (Smith 1961, 250).

Plots of aerial photographs for the Dales National Park survey show evidence of ridge and furrow agriculture occurring to the north-west, west and east of Higher Westhouse, but not within the study area.

With the exception considered below (3) field boundaries on the first edition 6" to the mile Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1850 are the same as on the present map.

No estate or enclosure maps were found for the area and there were no references in the Yorkshire volume of the *Victoria County History* (Page 1913) or in the volumes of the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*.

4. Results of field work

1. Medieval agriculture SD 66497441

Strip lynchets are plotted by the Dales National Park Survey at Galegreen crossroads north of, and broadly parallel to, the A65.

2. Medieval agriculture SD 67517375

Ridge and furrow runs north-east to south-west down the slope. The distance from ridge to ridge is c. 4m.

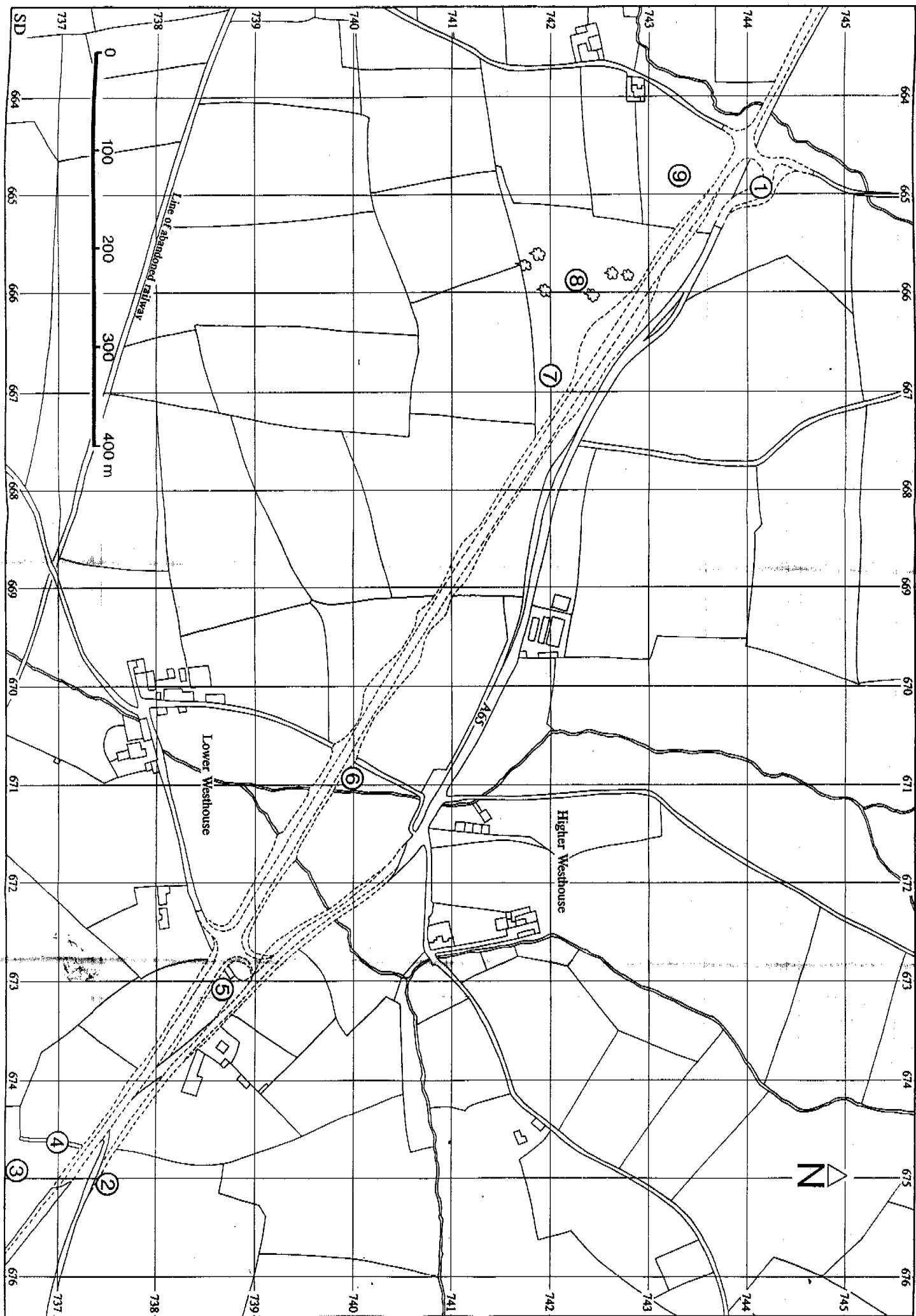
3. Field boundary SD 67497366

A former field boundary runs north-north-east to south-south-west across the field. It shows as a slight height difference. This is the boundary shown on the first edition 6" to the mile OS map but it could be of any date before 1850.

4. Trackway SD 67467370

A c. 3m wide trackway is defined by parallel walls and, towards the north of the eastern wall, also by trees and shrubs. At its southern end a wall was built to block the trackway but from this point a path carries the line over a railway bridge. This trackway is marked on the OS first edition 6" to the mile map and was probably abandoned c. 150 years ago when the railway was built. This date would be consistent with estimated age of the trees which, from the circumference of their trunks, may be

Fig. 1 Westhouse: Potential archaeological sites. The proposed road shown by dashed lines.



dated to between 100 and 200 years old.

5. **Lynchets SD 67317386**
Slight negative lynchets c. 0.2m deep run around the northern corner of this field.
6. **Medieval agriculture SD 67097400**
Ridge and furrow runs north to south, parallel to the stream, in this field. The distance between ridges is c. 4m.
7. **Medieval agriculture SD 66687420**
Ridge and furrow runs across the present field. The distance between furrows is c. 4m.
8. **Strip lynchets SD 66597422**
Clearly defined strip lynchets run around the contours of the slope following the two tree lines.
9. **Medieval agriculture SD 66487433**
Ridge and furrow runs across this field. The distance between ridges is c. 4m.

5. Discussion

The strip lynchets 1 and 8 indicate the pressure caused by the shortage of level land. However, outside the study area the valley slope immediately to the west of 1 (Fig. 1) was even more heavily terraced by strip lynchets. Strip lynchets can be prehistoric although a medieval date is more usual (Taylor 1975, 88-92).

Trackway 4 could predate 1850. It may perpetuate the line of a medieval track leading from Upper Westhouse to outlying fields. However, without the benefit of documentary evidence this assertion is difficult to prove and even excavation is unlikely to supply an accurate date.

Most of the potential archaeological features observed (1, 7, 8 and 9; Fig. 1) are to the west of Westhouse which reinforces the results of the Dales National Park Survey (see section 3). These surviving remains are on steep slopes which would only be ploughed when absolutely necessary.

This brief appraisal has identified potential archaeological features within the proposed road corridor. Without more detailed documentary or archaeological records for this area it is difficult to make reasonable judgment as to the significance of these features. In general the evidence suggests a former medieval landscape.

There may be grounds for carrying out more detailed survey work on some of the extant earthworks within the corridor, although overall, there are limited implications for the road scheme. However, the final decision on the archaeological requirements will lie with the north Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record Office.

Acknowledgements

Documentary research, fieldwork and report by Jamie Wright B.Sc., Field Officer.
Figure by Andy Swann MAAIS, Senior Illustrator.

Sources consulted

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Yorkshire Archaeology Society Library
Yorkshire Dales National Park Archaeology Section

