L0007 CRYPTO RISK REDUCTION HUDSWELL - DOWNHOLME

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT
OSA REPORT No: OSA00DT03

August 2000

OSA

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Report Summary

REPORT NUMBER: OSA00DT03

REPORT DATE: August 2000

SITE NAME: Hudswell - Downholme

COUNTY: North Yorkshire

PARISHES: Hudswell 1027
Downholme 1019

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 11602 97898 to NZ 13856 00301

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1.0 Introduction

This report was commissioned by Earth Tech Engineering Limited, and provides an assessment of the impact of a proposed route for a water pipeline between Hudswell and Downholme, near Richmond, North Yorkshire. This desktop assessment follows the preliminary impact assessment produced by On-Site Archaeology prior to the finalising of the pipeline route.

The works will involve small diameter mainlaying (63 and 150mm diameter) preferably following along road verges, adjacent to the road in the fields to either side, and skirting village centres in that order of preference. The proposed pipeline route is illustrated in Figure 1.

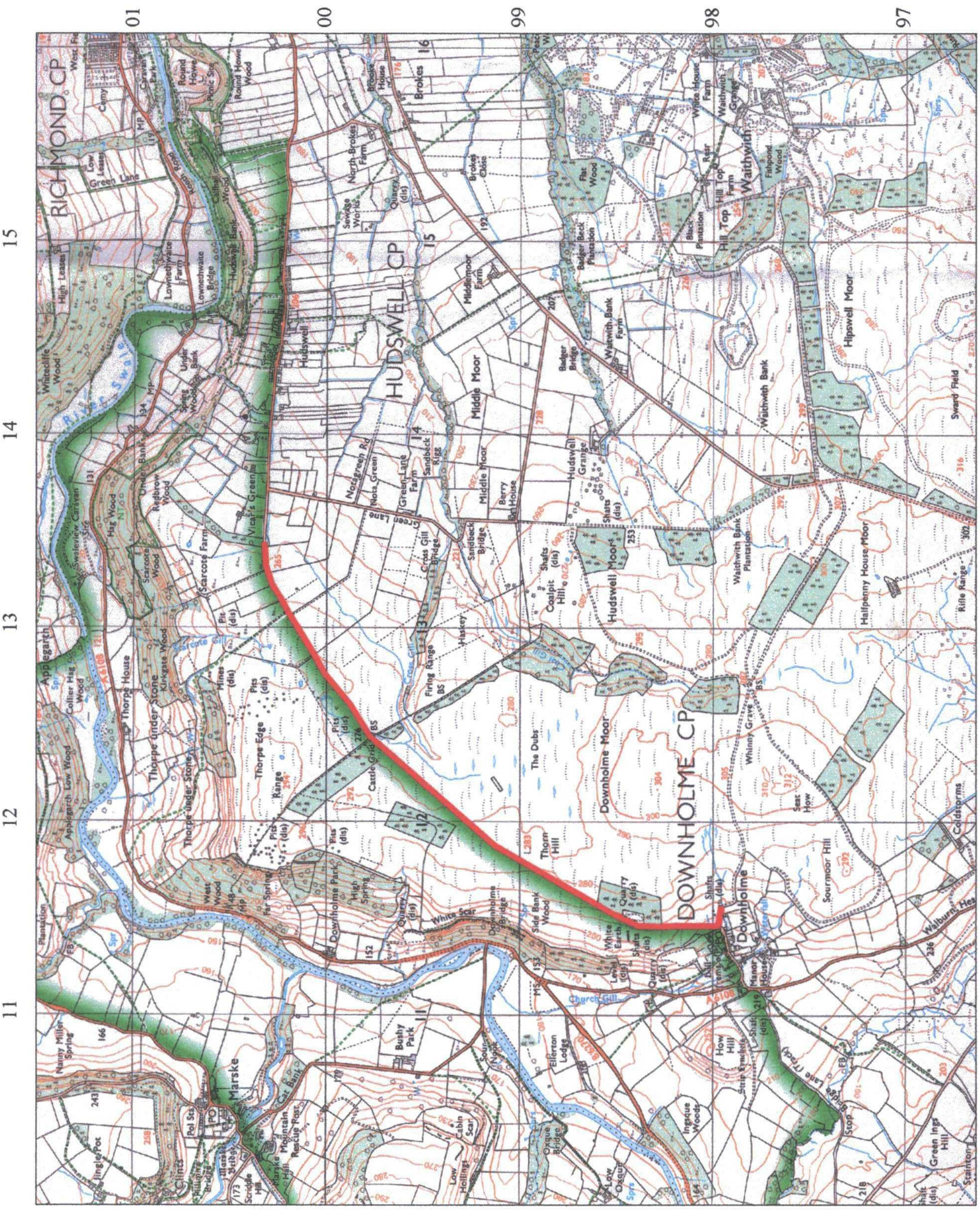

Figure 1: Pipeline Route.

Reproduced from the 1989 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

2.0 Site Location, Geology, Topography and Land Use

The proposed route of the pipeline crosses the parishes of Downholme and Hudswell. They are situated at the eastern end of the valley of Swaledale on the slopes overlooking the river from the south. The town of Richmond, which is generally held to lie at the mouth of the dale, is only 2km from the eastern end of the pipeline. The majority of the pipeline route lies on the high moorland between the two villages. This is generally unenclosed rough grazing and covered in heather or bracken. At the eastern end of its course the route passes through enclosed pasture land as it approaches the village of Hudswell. The proposed course has been directed to follow the modern road that runs between the two villages.

According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology of the area is predominantly Sandstone and Millstone Grit, both overlain by peat and boulder clay. Around the steep scarps slopes cut through by the river, there are alternating outcrops of cherts and limestones, again overlain by boulder clay.

The land-use of the area is almost entirely permanent pasture and hay meadows. The open moorland if often used for grouse shooting and accordingly the heather is kept to an optimum length by periodic burning.

3.0 Archaeological Background

The area surrounding Downholme and Downholme Moor stands in a strategically important position overlooking the River Swale. Swaledale today appears to be a remote and timeless part of the Yorkshire Dales but it has always acted as an important east-west route across the Pennines giving access from the Vale of York to the Eden Valley and Cumbria. The area has been relatively little studied by archaeologists whose attention has largely been focused on the rich Medieval and Roman sites to the east at Richmond and Catterick. At Catterick, for example, excavations have revealed the remains of the Roman town and *vicus* of *Cataractonium* which lay on the main north-south Roman road of Dere Street. Both historical and archaeological sources have shown that Catterick continues in importance during the post-Roman period as a royal centre and strategic settlement. Only 4km to the east, Richmond stands in an even greater strategic location in the northern Vale of York overlooking the River Swale. Here William the Conqueror built a castle to provide a strong military presence commanding the main routes from Scotland. The town remained an important military and ecclesiastical centre from the 11th century.

To the west in Upper Swaledale, recent archaeological survey and excavation by Andrew Fleming has identified the remains of extensive field systems and settlement enclosures dating mainly from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Most of this work has concentrated to the west of Downholme on the moors between Marrick and Healaugh where he has plotted the pattern of low degraded field walls that still survive in the heather and bracken of the now open moorlands. In addition several Iron Age enclosures and many Romano-British settlement sites are still visible as earthworks in the enclosed grasslands of the dale sides. In the Downholme area sites such as these are not as clearly visible on the surface as they are likely to have been masked or damaged by the extensive Medieval ploughing that took place here.

Other prehistoric activity is further indicated by the burial mounds, cairns and cup and ring marked stones of the Neolithic and Bronze Age which are spread throughout the valley. The discovery of flint microliths on the moors around Maiden Castle shows that even earlier, during the Mesolithc, hunters and gatherers were also passing through this area.

The Roman presence in Swaledale is largely in the form of small-scale settlements and farms, few of which have been excavated. However there are indications that lead mining was taking place in the Roman period on Marrick Moor to the west of Downholme. Fleming has argued convincingly that the road which carried the products of lead mining down to the Roman centre at Aldborough runs just west of Downholme and is partly fossilised in the modern pattern of lanes and field boundaries. The Downholme area was also crossed by a major road during the Middle Ages when the main road between Richmond and the upper reaches of Swaledale ran through the village (see below).

In the Middle Ages Swaledale was known for its two nunneries at Ellerton and Marrick but these were never as wealthy as the Abbeys of Coverham and Jervaulx, in Wensleydale to the south. During the post-Medieval period the growth of lead mining transformed the valley,

especially in the higher reaches of Upper Swaledale, where many people were employed in the mining industry and the landscape still bears witness to this industry.

4.0 Methodology and Study Area

The study area consisted of a strip of land extending approximately 1km either side of the proposed route of the pipeline. Within this area each of the 10 kilometre squares was searched for the presence of sites of archaeological or historical significance. This desk top study was based on enquiries made at archives, libraries and institutions likely to hold relevant information. All relevant maps, publications and record photographs were consulted.

Searches were made of the computerised Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) held by North Yorkshire County Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Parkas well as the National Monuments Record (NMR) in Swindon. This data was plotted against the proposed pipeline routes and is listed below. The scale of aerial photography cover held by/referenced in the NYCC SMR and the NMR in Swindon was also assessed and all relevant photographs were examined. In addition, the location of Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) sites within the study area was identified, and the boundaries of the SAM areas plotted against the proposed pipeline route. All relevant Tithe and Enclosure maps of the area held in the North Yorkshire County Record Office (NYCRO) were also consulted as were published discussions and articles relating to the archaeology of the area.

The route of the pipeline was walked in order to recognise unrecorded features visible on the ground, although at the time of the walkover access to the route had not been granted, and this was conducted from public rights of way.