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**Cowling Road
Cowling and Burrill
Nr Bedaie
North Yorkshire
(SE 2375 8750)**

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Cowling and Burrill
Nr. Bedale
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SE 2375 8750**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Non-technical Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was conducted by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd at Cowling Road, Burrill and Cowling, North Yorkshire, during July and August 2004. The work involved monitoring the excavation of an 800m long electricity cable trench.

Despite passing through the medieval village of Burrill, the excavation of the cable trench did not reveal any significant archaeological features or deposits. It is likely that the excavation took place on former open land or green at the centre of the village that had only been encroached upon within the last 150 years.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An Archaeological Watching Brief was conducted by MAP Archaeological Consultancy limited at Cowling Road, Cowling and Burrill, near Bedale, North Yorkshire, during July and August 2004. The work was undertaken on behalf of NEDL and involved monitoring the groundworks associated with the installation of an underground electricity cable.
- 1.2 All work was funded by NEDL.
- 1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 50453A.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The villages of Cowling and Burrill lie approximately 2.5km to the south-west of Bedale at SE 2375 8750 (centre) and are situated just off the minor road running from Bedale to Thornton Watlass. Both settlements consist of houses and farmsteads that are ranged along the single street running from the Bedale road to the village of Great Crakehall.
- 2.2 The site lies on soils of the East Keswick I Association and the closely-related Nercwys subgroup. These soils are deep well-drained loamy soils over a geology of Palaeozoic and Mesozoic sandstone and shale (Mackney 1984 p. 185).

3. Historical Background

- 3.1 Both Burrill and Cowling are mentioned in the Domesday Book (Morris 1986). The place-name *Burrill* derives from Old English and means either "*hill*" or "*hill of the fort*" (Ekwall 1974 p.76).
- 3.2 Cowling is recorded in Domesday as *Torneton*, from the Old English meaning "*place of thorns*" (Ekwall 1974 p.467). The village was recorded in 1202 as *Thornton Colling*, where *Colling* is a personal name probably used to denote ownership and to distinguish the settlement from the nearby village of Thornton Watlass. Over the years the first element of the name fell into disuse (ibid.).
- 3.3 The present Burrill Manor House dates to 1669, but probably occupies the site of an earlier house. In the case of Cowling Hall, the existing 18th century house is known to have been built on the site of an earlier courtyard house that had its own walled garden (VCH, p.293).
- 3.4 The 1851 Ordnance Survey map demonstrates that there has been relatively little development within the villages over the last 150 years. However, one point of

particular interest is the apparent green or open area shown within the heart of Burrill. On the northern side of the road, the open area extends all the way to the front of the properties. On the southern side, the limit of the open area appears to be defined by the line of the frontage of the Manor House and the orchard to the west. Given that the Manor house was built in 1669 it is clear that this open space dates from at least the 17th century. Indeed, the likelihood is that the green was of medieval origin and that its boundaries were respected by the builders of the Manor House.

3.5 The 1851 map also appears to show the beginnings of encroachment upon the open space of the green by properties to the south-west of the road and by the 18th century chapel on the northern side.

3.6 The 1897 map shows further encroachments on the northern side of the road in the form of front gardens to the properties to the east of the church. On the southern side of the road, further building has occurred in the south-western corner of the area.

4. Methodology

4.1 The monitored groundworks consisted of a single 0.4m wide cable trench, which was excavated to a mean depth of 0.80m. The trench began in a field to the south of Cowling, ran eastwards to join Cowling Road and then followed the line of the road as far as the junction with the Bedale to Thornton Watlass road. The total length of the trench was approximately 800m.

4.2 All excavations were undertaken with a mechanical back-acting excavator, operating under archaeological supervision.

5. Results

- 5.1 Excavations in the field to the south of Cowling revealed a 0.10m deep deposit of turf and topsoil (context 1000). This sealed a deposit of mid grey-brown silty natural subsoil that extended to the base of the trench (context 1001). Deposit 1000 contained one sherd of Nottingham type stoneware and one sherd of marbled slipware, both dating to the 18th century. No archaeological features or deposits were identified.
- 5.2 The trench was carried across Cowling Road and was then excavated along the eastern edge of the carriageway as far as Burrill. This section of the trench revealed a 0.10m tarmac and modern hardcore road surface (context 1002) overlying a second 0.20m deposit of hardcore (context 1003). Below the road make-up was a natural silty subsoil (Deposit 1001).
- 5.3 Within the village of Burrill itself, the road widened out and had large grass verges on either side. The cable trench was excavated through the northern verge as far as the junction with the Bedale road. Excavations revealed a 0.10m deep deposit of turf and topsoil (context 1004), which sealed a 0.30m deep deposit of dark grey-brown humic subsoil (context 1005). Deposit 1005 in turn sealed the underlying natural subsoil (Deposit 1001).
- 5.4 Deposit 1005 was only observed within the main built-up focus of the village, and contained sherds of blue and white transfer ware, marbled slipware, Nottingham type stoneware and black wares, that ranged in date from the mid 18th century to circa 1900. The deposit clearly represented occupation detritus and other material that had built up in the village centre over the past two or three centuries.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 With the exception of the occupation deposit noted in the centre of Burrill (Deposit 1005), the Watching Brief did not identify any archaeological features or

deposits. As the Ordnance Survey First Edition map shows, the central part of the current excavation took place on what was until relatively recently open space formed by the village green at the heart of the village. Consequently, no structural remains were encountered. If the buried remains of earlier village buildings survive, they are more likely to be located closer to the existing buildings at the limits of the former village green.

7. Bibliography

- | | |
|------------------|--|
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| Mackney, D. 1984 | Soils And Their Uses In Northern England |
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| VCH 1968 | The Victoria County History Of Yorkshire:
The North Riding Volume 1 |



Figure 1. Site Location

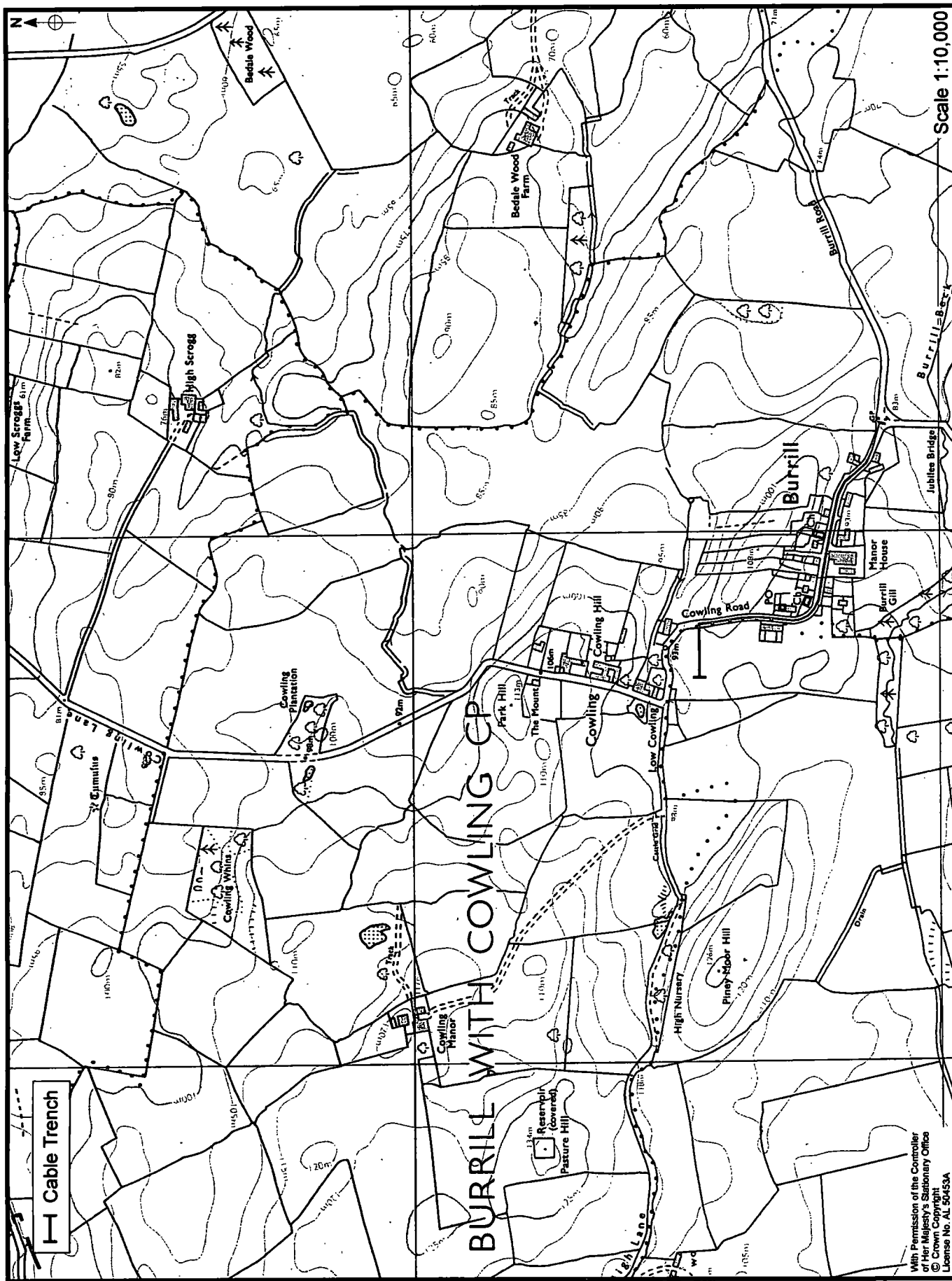


Figure 2. Watching Brief Area

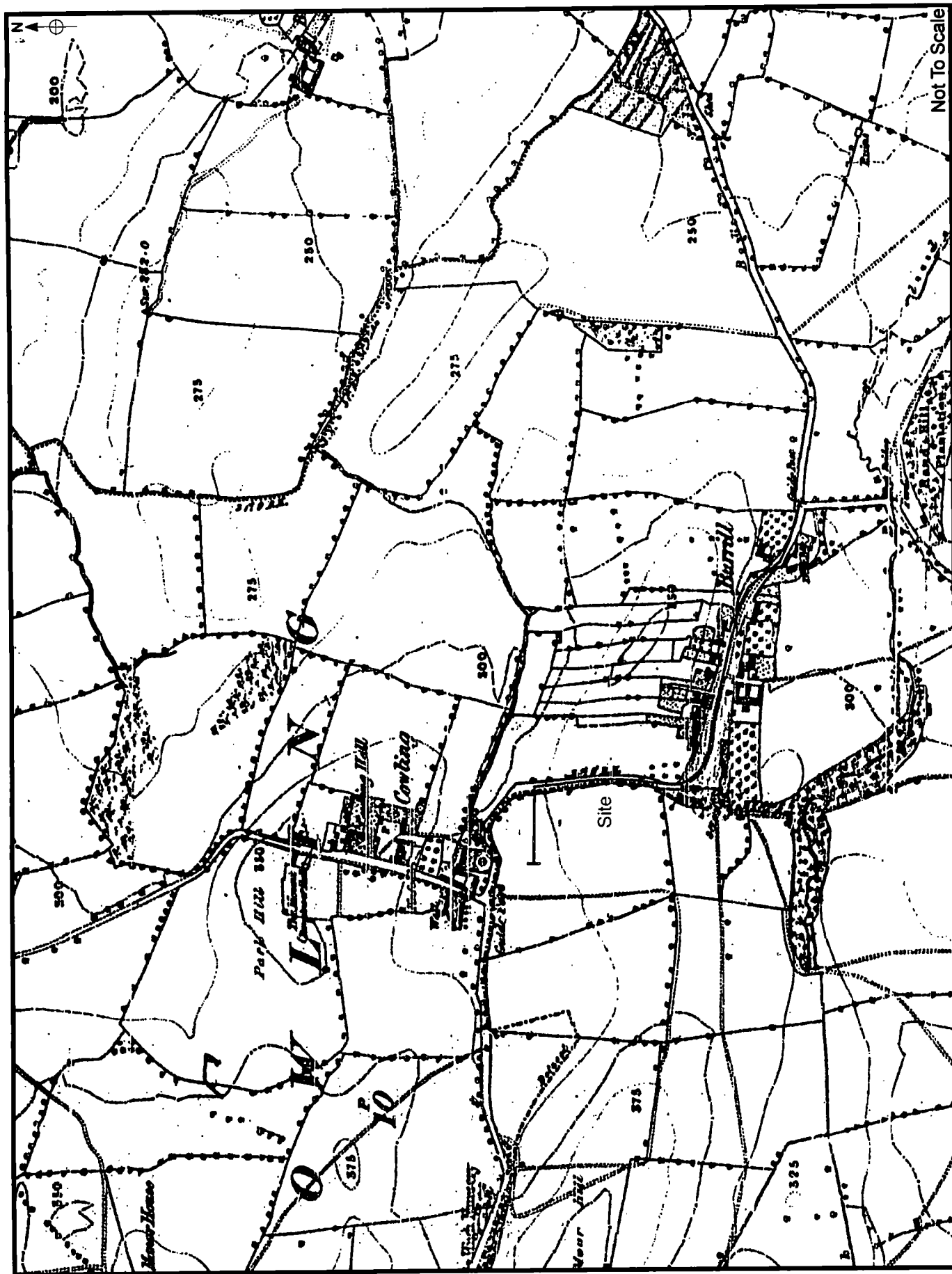


Figure 3. Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1857



Plate 1. General view of Cowling Road and trench field, facing South East



Plate 2. View of Cowling to Burrill stretch of road, facing South



Plate 3. Burrill village, showing area of former green, facing East



Plate 4. Burrill village excavation through roadside verge, facing East



Plate 5. Burrill village excavation through roadside verge, facing East



Plate 6. Burrill village excavation through roadside verge, facing East



Plate 7. Burrill cable trench to east of village centre, facing East



Plate 8. View of cable trench close to junction of Cowling and Bedale roads

Appendix 1

Context Listing

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>
1000	Deposit; grey/brown; silty loam; turf/topsoil
1001	Deposit; mid grey/brown; sandy silty; natural subsoil
1002	Deposit; modern tarmac and hardcore roadway
1003	Deposit; modern hardcore foundation deposit for 1002
1004	Deposit; grey/brown; silty loam; turf/topsoil
1005	Deposit; dark grey/brown; sandy silt; occupation deposit

APPENDIX 2

Cowling Road, Cowling and Burrill: Project Team Details

Fieldwork

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Nigel Cavanagh

Post-excavation

REPORT Nigel Cavanagh *report text*
Dave Knight *CAD and illustrations*