



ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING  
REPORT

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NEW ROAD, WHIXLEY  
NORTH YORKSHIRE

prepared for

Morrison Utility Services Ltd.

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District                      Harrogate  
Grid Ref                     SE 4466 5760 to SE 4528 5783

**NEW ROAD, WHIXLEY, NORTH YORKSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT**

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NEW ROAD, WHIXLEY, NORTH YORKSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

*Summary*

*This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological monitoring during installation of a new water pipeline in Whixley, North Yorkshire (SE 4466 5760 to SE 4528 5783). Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd (NAA) was commissioned by Morrison Utility Services Ltd on behalf of Yorkshire Water Ltd to undertake the monitoring works which were carried out in November and December 2020.*

*The new pipeline route followed the line of New Road and crossed a section of the B6265; the new pipeline was mainly installed by directional drilling. A 50m-long section of the pipeline was installed in an open-cut trench, which was excavated under archaeological supervision.*

*The pipeline route crossed two known Roman Roads: Rudgate and Dere Street. The route of Rudgate through Whixley is believed to follow that of the modern Station Road, which runs from south to north through the village and is adjacent to the north-west end of the pipeline route. However, Rudgate's precise course through in the village has not been identified previously. The east end of the pipeline route, along the B6265, followed the line of Dere Street; however, this part of the pipeline was installed by directional drilling and had no impact upon the Roman road.*

*A section of a cobbled surface set in a sandy deposit was recorded towards the south-western end of the pipe trench. The exact form and function of the feature is unknown due to the limited area of excavation and the lack of dateable evidence associated with the feature. However, due to its location, it is possible that the stone surface represented the remains of Roman Rudgate.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological monitoring during installation of a new water pipeline between Whixley and Tancred Lodge, North Yorkshire (SE 4466 5760 to SE 4528 5783; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Most of the pipeline was installed by directional drilling between small launch and reception pits which did not require archaeological supervision. One 50m section of the pipeline was installed in an open-cut trench, and the works were subject to archaeological monitoring in November and December 2020.
- 1.3 The monitoring was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (NAA 2020) and relevant published standards, guidance and best practice.
- 1.4 This report has been produced by Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd for Morrison Utility Services Ltd on behalf of Yorkshire Water Ltd to accord with Yorkshire Water's duty of care in relation to archaeology under the terms of the Water Industry Act 1991 (ch.56).

## **2.0 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

- 2.1 Whixley is located in the Vale of York, 16km north-west of York and 3km east of the A1. The new pipeline runs from near the south-eastern edge of the village at the junction between Station Road/Rudgate, High Street and New Road. It follows New Road to the south-east for c.45m and then east for c.650m to its junction with the B6265. It then follows the B6265 northwards for c.485m to its junction with Brotes Lane, adjacent to Tancred Lodge (Fig. 2).
- 2.2 The pipeline was installed at a height of c.45m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in Whixley village, gradually descending to c.27m aOD where it crossed Whixley Cut stream and then ascending to c.30m aOD at its north-eastern end.
- 2.3 The solid geology in the Whixley area is mapped as being composed of sandstone of the Sherwood Sandstone Group, overlain by clay, sand and gravel of the Quaternary Vale of York Formation (BGS 2020).

## **3.0 SUMMARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The pipeline route crossed two known Roman Roads: Rudgate (at its western end) and Dere Street (at its eastern end). Rudgate Roman Road (RR 280) branched from the

Doncaster–York Roman Ridge road (RR 28b) to the west of Tadcaster, and ran northwards via the river crossing and fort at Newton Kyme to connect just to the north of Whixley village with Dere Street (RR 8a), which ran from York to Aldborough and on to Corbridge (Margary 1973; Haken 2018). The route of Rudgate through Whixley is believed to follow that of the modern Station Road, which runs from south to north through the village, adjacent to the north-west end of the pipeline route. However, its precise course in the village has not been identified previously. The east end of the pipeline route, along the B6265, follows the line of Dere Street, but this part of the pipeline was installed by directional drilling and had no impact upon the Roman Road.

3.2 Previous investigations of Rudgate Roman Road have been limited to small excavations near Tadcaster (SE 459 422) in 1962 and 1966 (Ramm 1963; 1976). These showed that the road was 7.6m wide and survived as a surface c.0.3m thick, built of limestone chippings (reflecting the geology of the area). It was flanked by ditches 18m apart.

3.3 In contrast, Dere Street has received considerably more archaeological attention (e.g. Fell and Johnson forthcoming). Closest to the pipeline route, several stretches of the Roman Road have been revealed between Upper Poppleton and Green Hammerton, at Shirbutt Close, Carpvale Fisheries, Moor Monkton Moor, Skip Bridge Farm, Gowlands and Pool Lane (Arnott 2006; Ambrey and Cooper forthcoming). At Pool Lane, Dere Street was c.7m wide and flanked by ditches. It appeared to have been constructed on a raft of brushwood, which was overlain by a sequence of sand and gravel layers, with a surface of rounded cobbles that had probably been dressed with fine gravel. Similar construction was seen at the other locations, but Fell and Johnson (forthcoming) note that ‘there was no adherence to a standard model or method for road construction’ and that ‘road structure and form was seemingly influenced by various factors including the local ground conditions, its proposed function and the perceived future traffic burden’. Roman engineers employed materials that were available locally, which in the Vales of York and Mowbray meant rounded cobbles, pebbles, gravel, sand and clay. This approach presumably also applied to construction of the northern part of Rudgate.

#### **4.0 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

4.1 The aim of the archaeological monitoring was:

- to mitigate the impacts of construction by investigating and recording of any archaeological features identified during the works.

4.2 The objectives were to:

- identify, sample and record any archaeological deposits or features revealed by excavation of the trench, and to recover any artefacts;
- undertake a programme of investigation that meets with national and regional standards (ClfA 2014a; English Heritage 2008; Historic England 2015a; NPPF 2018; South Yorkshire Archaeology Service 2018); and
- prepare an illustrated report on the results of the archaeological monitoring to be deposited with North Yorkshire County Council Historic Environment Record.

## 5.0 METHODOLOGY

### Excavation

5.1 After the cutting and removal of overlying tarmac, the c.50m length of open-cut trench was excavated by a machine equipped with a toothless bucket, which operated at all times under the supervision of an archaeologist.

5.2 Where archaeological features or deposits were identified, machine excavation ceased; this allowed the archaeologist to assess, excavate and record the remains.

5.3 No archaeological artefacts or deposits requiring palaeoenvironmental sampling were encountered during the monitoring works.

### Recording

5.4 The location of the excavations and any archaeological features were accurately tied into the National Grid and subsequently located on an Ordnance Survey map base and incorporated within this report (Fig. 3). A drawn record of archaeological features was made at an appropriate scale.

5.5 Written descriptions of archaeological features/deposits were recorded on NAA pro-forma context sheets, which employ standard archaeological recording conventions. Adequate resources were provided during fieldwork to ensure that site records are checked and internally consistent.

5.6 A digital photographic record of the site and the archaeological monitoring was taken. Photographs included a clearly visible, graduated metric scale.

## 6.0 RESULTS

- 6.1 The 50m-long pipe trench was excavated from north-west to south-east, commencing at the junction between Station Road/Rudgate and New Road. It was c.0.5m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.9m.
- 6.2 The area around the junction was characterised by disturbance caused by services, but most of the length of the pipe trench was free from modern interventions. The trench section showed a deposit of red-brown clayey sand (Fig. 3; 1) directly underlying a thin layer of Type 1 gravel and the modern tarmac surface.



Plate 1: New Road pipeline trench, photo taken looking north-west.

- 6.3 An area of cobbles directly underlying the modern road surface was encountered approximately 4m from the south-east end of the trench (Fig. 3). The stone surface (3) was made of natural rounded cobbles, each measuring up to 0.2m across. It was 2.5m wide in section, and a maximum of 0.2m deep, with two layers of cobbles at the east



end. The stone surface was overlying a thin (0.1m) layer of red-brown sand (2) which appeared to have been deliberately deposited. This deposit had been added over the layer of clayey sand (1) seen throughout the trench. The western part of surface 3 and deposit 2 had been truncated by the cut for a modern storm drain.



Plate 2: stone surface 3.

6.4 Apart from the occasional modern brick, no archaeological artefacts were encountered during the excavation of the pipe trench.

6.5 Additional archaeological monitoring was undertaken during minor mechanical excavation into the verge at the junction of Road B6265 and New Road prior to the excavation of the launch pit for drilling under Road B6265. Only modern made ground and fills of service trenches were observed during the monitoring.

## 7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 The monitoring works at New Road, Whixley achieved the aim and objectives stated in Section 4.

7.2 The exact route of Roman Rudgate through Whixley is not known, and no evidence of a Roman Road has been previously identified along the line of Station Road/Rudgate.

There is a slight westwards kink in the alignment of modern Station Road/Rudgate, at the junction with High Street and New Road, however. If this represents a modern realignment, it is possible that Roman Rudgate ran straight through the area where the stone surface was recorded.

- 7.3 The exact form and function of the small segment of stone surface recorded within the pipe trench is unknown due to the limited area of excavation and the lack of dateable evidence associated with the feature. The presumption, however, is that this represents a small surviving section of the Roman Road, though this must remain speculative.

## **8.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

- 8.1 The full archive from this phase of archaeological investigations, including paperwork, drawings, photographs and digital data, will be internally archived.

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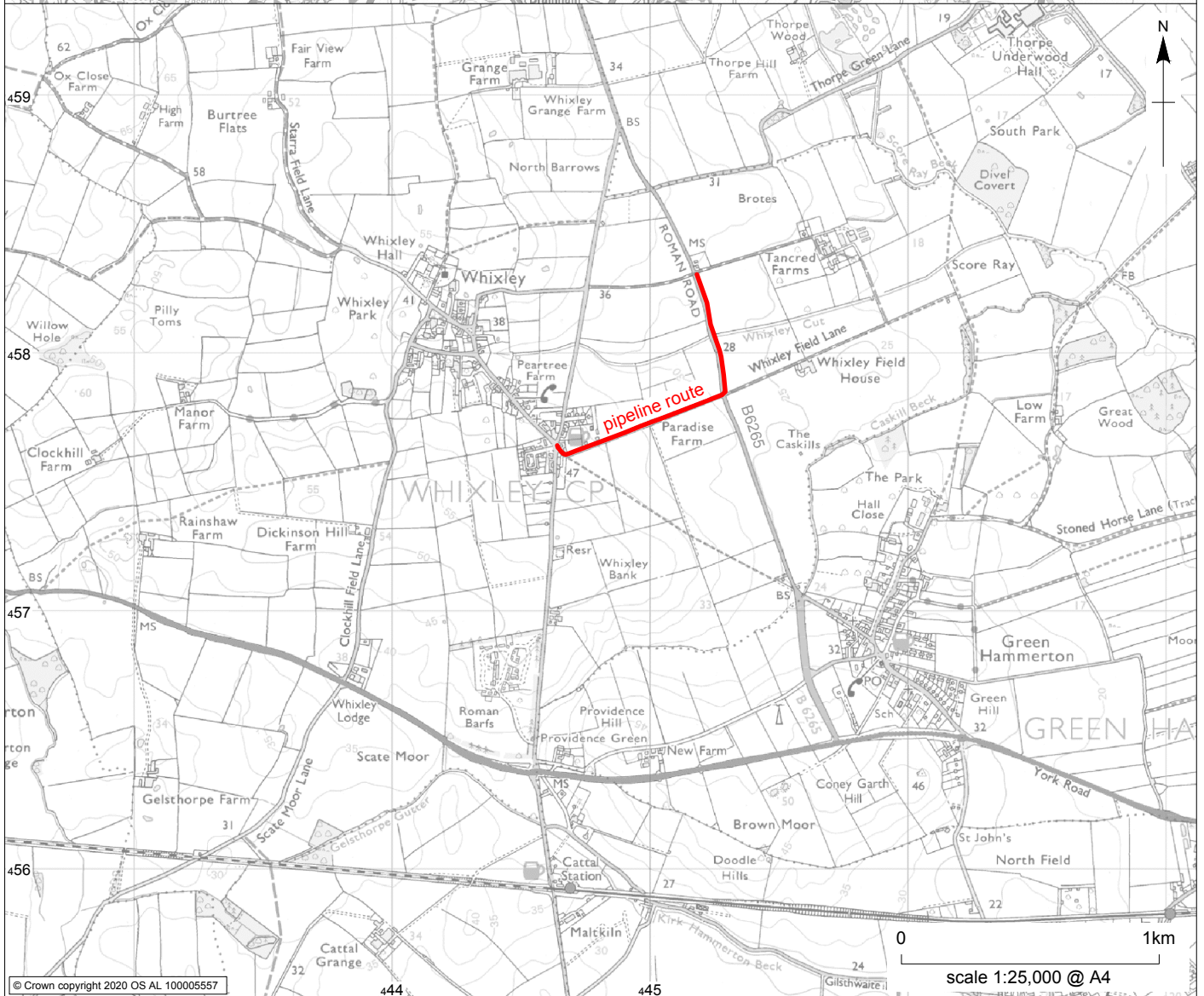
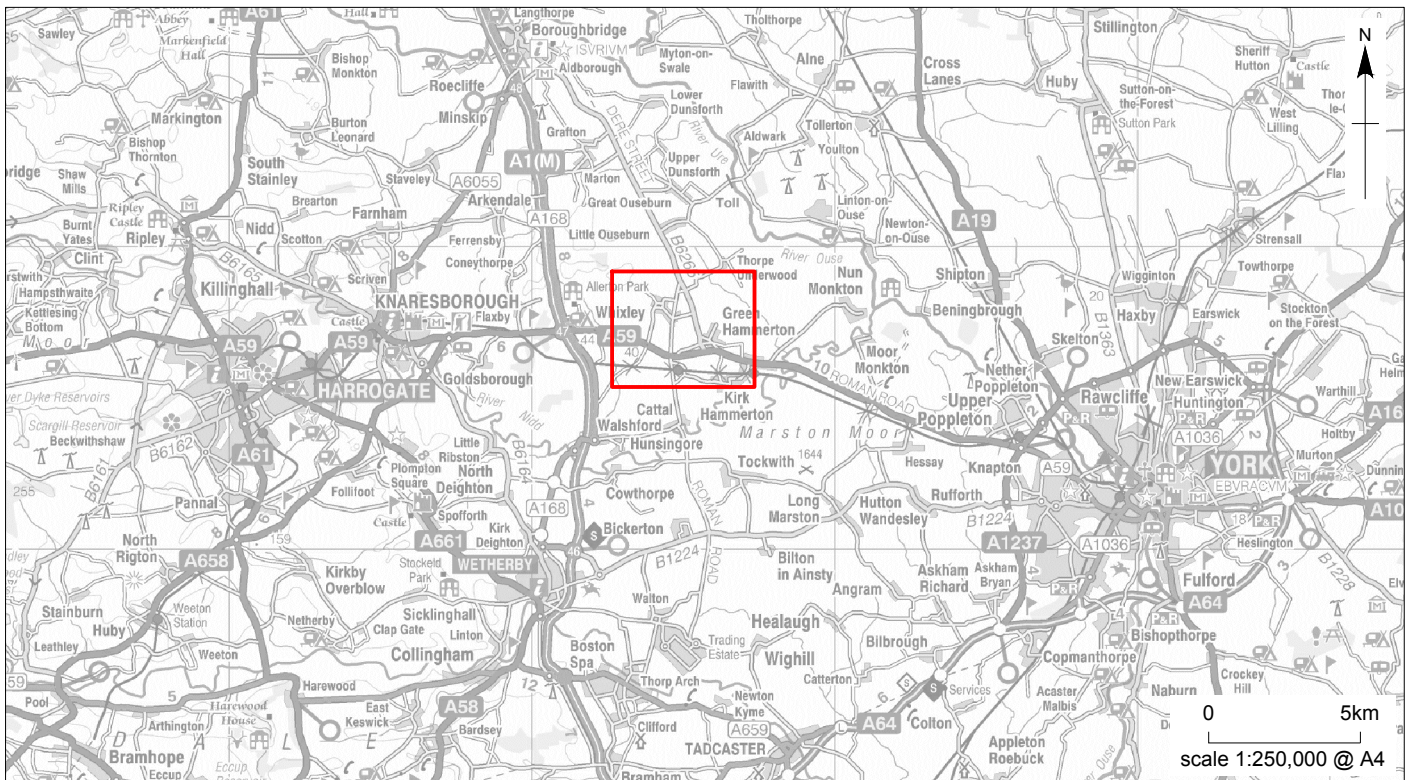
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**APPENDIX A**  
**CONTEXTS CATALOGUE**

Context	Phase	Interpretative description	Relationships to other contexts
1	–	Natural deposit	Under 2
2	?Roman	Possible agger deposit	Over 1, under 3
3	?Roman	Stone surface	Over 2, under 4
4	Modern	Type 1 gravel	Over 3

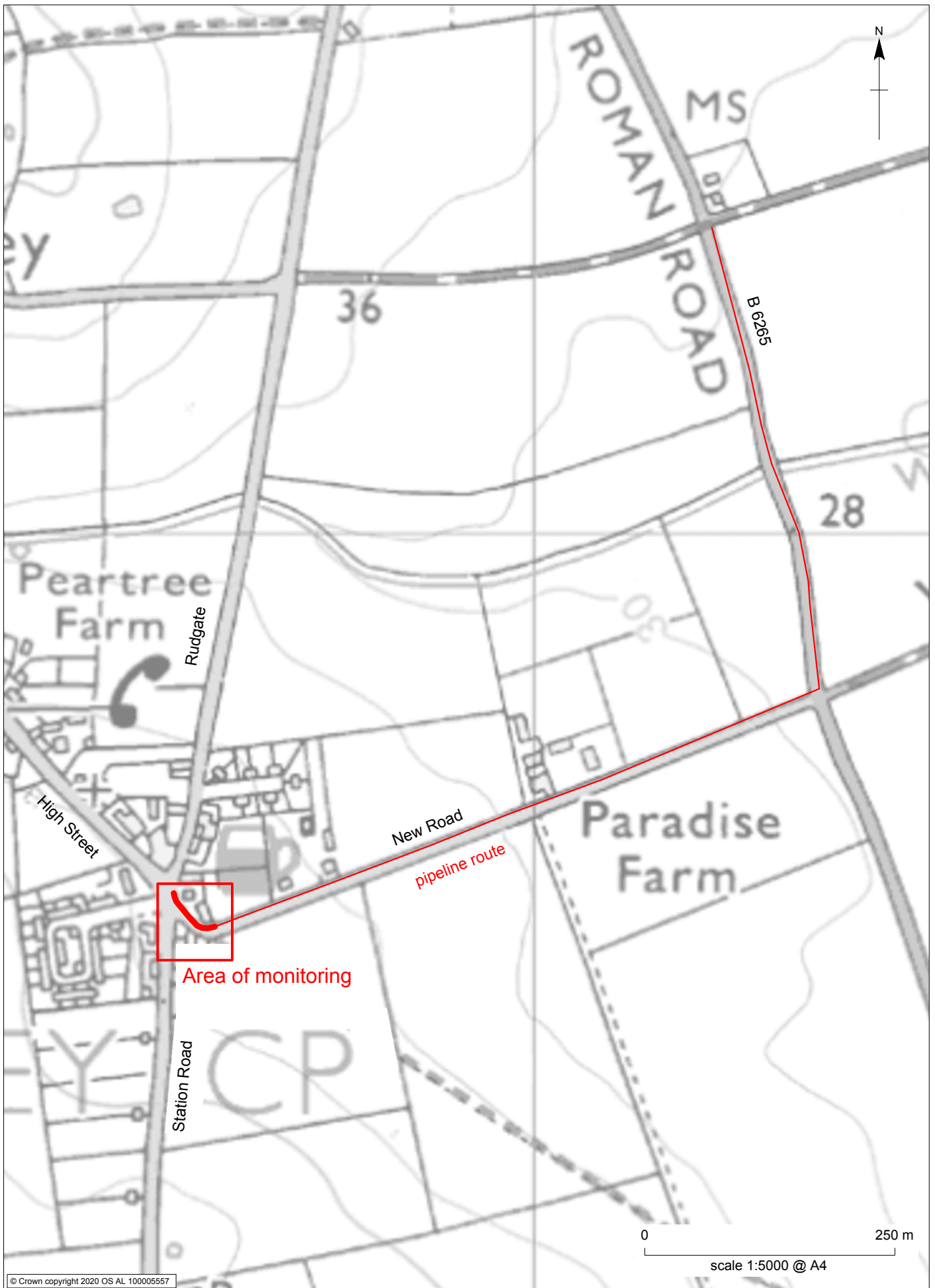




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New Road, Whitley, North Yorkshire: site location

Figure 1



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New Road, Whitley, North Yorkshire: Area of monitoring

Figure 2

