

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Linear earthwork at High Harker Hill

PARISH: GRINTON

DISTRICT: RICHMONDSHIRE

COUNTY: NORTH YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 24560

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SE02449710 - SE02359676
SE02829752 - SE02709730

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

This substantial curvilinear earthwork extends across the slopes of High Harker Hill. The monument falls into two sections separated by a natural steep scree. The southern section runs across the east facing valley head for a length of 400m. The southern end terminates at the lip of a steep stream gully, its northern end by the start of a steep scree slope. It includes a substantial earth and stone rampart 2.6m high, a maximum of 13m wide, ditched on the east side. The ditch has a maximum width of 3.3m and a maximum depth of 5m. At the south end, the earthwork is mainly visible as a substantial scarp with a slight counterscarp bank 1m high. It is now broken by numerous small streams.

The northern section of earthworks extends for a distance of 260m from the northern end of the steep scree slope to the top of a steep north facing slope. The rampart is of similar composition and dimensions to that further south, and is ditched on the east side. There are traces of a wall surmounting this section of the rampart, however it is uncertain whether this is original. The break in the earthworks at the centre of this section maybe original, a footpath now crosses at this point. The two sections separated by a natural steep scree slope form an effective barrier against movement from the east. The earthworks are part of a broader group of probable territorial boundaries known as the Grinton-Fremington Dyke system. This includes valley bottom earthworks as well as those in upland locations.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Linear boundaries are substantial earthwork features comprising single or multiple ditches and banks which may extend over distances varying between less than 1km to over 10km. They survive as earthworks or as linear features visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs or as a combination of both. The evidence of excavation and study of associated monuments demonstrate that their construction spans the millennium from the Middle Bronze Age, although they may have been re-used later.

The scale of many linear boundaries has been taken to indicate that they were constructed by large social groups and were used to mark important boundaries in the landscape; their impressive scale displaying the corporate prestige of their builders. They would have been powerful symbols, often with religious associations, used to define and order the territorial holdings of those

groups who constructed them. Linear earthworks are of considerable importance for the analysis of settlement and land use in the Bronze Age; all well preserved examples will normally merit statutory protection.

This is an extremely well preserved and substantial monument, which is likely also to include extensive, environmentally important deposits within its ditch.

MONUMENT INCLUDED IN THE SCHEDULE ON 30th June 1995