

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Section of Scots Dike linear boundary north of Kirklands Farm

PARISH: GILLING WITH HARTFORTH AND SEDBURY
MELSONBY

DISTRICT: RICHMONDSHIRE

COUNTY: NORTH YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 26946

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): NZ19480683 - NZ19360612

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument is a section of the linear boundary known as Scots Dike lying on Gatherley Moor and the hillside to the south. The monument includes a bank and flanking ditch, a section where the dyke has been reduced by agricultural activity but is preserved as a buried feature visible on aerial photographs and a section of Roman road (the line of which is followed by the present A66) passing through the line of the dyke. The earthwork extends for 250m north of Kirklands Farm and includes an earthen bank 1.5m high and 10m wide with the ditch lying to the east being 7m wide and 1m deep. To the east of the ditch lies a low counterscarp bank up to 5m wide.

There is a gap in the earthwork, 28m wide, 100m north of the southern end, where the bank has been levelled and the ditch infilled. This gap is believed to be of some antiquity. To the north of the earthwork section the Roman road passes through the line of the dyke. At this point the dyke dog legs dramatically before continuing northwards across Gatherley Moor. Although now partly disturbed by the modern A66, significant information about the Roman road and its relationship with Scots Dike will be preserved beneath the modern road surface. To the north of the road, the dyke has been reduced by agricultural activity and no longer stands as an earthwork. However buried remains of the ditch can be clearly seen on aerial photographs extending north east for 50m then turning north west to cross Gatherley Moor for 300m, curving gently to the north for a further 150m to end at a quarry, now infilled. The dyke continues again as a buried feature beyond the quarry, where it is the subject of a separate scheduling. At the south end the dyke has been truncated by Kirklands Farm and its outbuildings, although it continues south 70m beyond the farm where it is the subject of a separate scheduling.

All modern fences, gates and walls and the surface of the road are excluded from the scheduling although the ground beneath is included.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Scots Dike is a linear earthwork extending for 14km from the River Swale to the River Tees in North Yorkshire. Significant sections remain visible as upstanding earthworks and indicate that the dyke system had an earthen rampart flanked on the eastern side by a ditch. Where not preserved as an upstanding

monument, the dyke is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs and elsewhere often survives as a low bank beneath present field boundaries. It was constructed in the post Roman period and encloses an area in the eastern foothills of the Pennines between the two rivers. This area contained wealthy arable and pastoral land as well as some of the mineral resources of the northern Pennines. Linear earthworks were used to divide territory for military, social, economic and political purposes, often using natural features such as rivers and watersheds to define an area. Scots Dike was built to consolidate territorial and economic units in response to changing political circumstances during the sixth and seventh centuries AD. These were brought about, at least in part, by the arrival of the Anglians in northern England. Fewer than 50 examples of linear earthworks of post Roman date have been identified in England. As a rare monument type of considerable importance to the study of early medieval territorial patterns, all surviving examples are identified as being of national importance.

This section of Scots Dike will retain significant archaeological remains and offers important information about the development of the landscape in the post Roman period. The section of Roman road passing through the monument offers scope for the study of both the road itself and the relationship between the dyke and the road and preserves important information about the date and nature of Scots Dike.

SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument included in the Schedule on 19th July 1972 as part of:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Yorkshire 1100

NAME: Scots Dike: Section 700 yards long at Kirklands

Scheduling amended on 1st April 1974 to:

COUNTY/NUMBER: North Yorkshire 1100

NAME: Scots Dike: Section 700 yards long at Kirklands

The reference of this monument is now:

NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 26946

NAME: Section of Scots Dike linear boundary north of Kirklands Farm

SCHEDULING REVISED ON 26th July 1996