

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Section of Scots Dyke linear boundary running south from Olliver East for 550m

PARISH: ASKE
SKEEBY

DISTRICT: RICHMONDSHIRE

COUNTY: NORTH YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 26959

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): NZ18630254 - NZ18720309

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes a section of linear earthwork known as Scots Dyke extending southwards across undulating land. The monument includes a discontinuous bank and flanking ditch extending for 550m. The bank is 12m wide and up to 2.5m high, reducing in size to the southern terminus, where it is only 0.8m above the adjacent land. The ditch, lying to the east of the bank is 7m at the northern end but reduces to 3m wide to the south. To the east of the ditch is a small counterscarp bank 2m wide at the northern end which narrows and is no longer visible as an earthwork by the southern terminus. The dyke continued further to the south, where its course can be identified in field boundaries and drainage ditches but has been much altered by agricultural activity and is not therefore proposed for scheduling. At the northern end the dyke is truncated by the cottages and outbuildings known as Olliver East although it continues 140m to the north of here where it is the subject of a separate scheduling.

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

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Scots Dyke 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. Elsewhere the dyke often survives as a low bank beneath present field boundaries. Where not preserved as an upstanding monument, the dyke is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs. It was constructed in the post Roman period and encloses an area in the eastern foothills of the Pennines between the Swale and Tees. 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 Dyke was built during the sixth and seventh centuries AD, in response to political changes 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 monument includes a well preserved section of bank and ditch and significant archaeological remains will be preserved which offer important evidence for study of the form and function of the dyke and its relationship with the wider landscape.

SCHEDULING HISTORY

Monument included in the Schedule on 19th June 1972 as:

COUNTY/NUMBER: Yorkshire 1099

NAME: Scots Dike: Section 600 yards long South East of Olliver

Monument amended on 1st April 1974 to:

COUNTY/NUMBER: North Yorkshire 1099

NAME: Scots Dike Section 600 yards long South East of Olliver

The reference of this monument is now:

NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 26959

NAME: Section of Scots Dyke linear boundary running south from Olliver East for 550m

SCHEDULING AFFIRMED ON 03rd January 1996