

## EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Scamridge Dikes: prehistoric linear boundaries and associated features

PARISH: EBBERSTON AND YEDINGHAM  
SNAINTON

DISTRICT: RYEDALE  
SCARBOROUGH

COUNTY: NORTH YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 35444

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SE90468580  
SE89578543

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes two adjoining prehistoric linear boundaries which are situated on the southern slopes of the Tabular Hills. Also included are a round barrow, a segment of a linear boundary considered to be of medieval origin, a segment of medieval hollow way, a segment of a post-medieval linear boundary and a post-medieval limekiln, all of which are adjacent to or superimposed upon, the prehistoric boundaries. The monument is divided into two separate areas of protection which are separated by the public road.

The boundary known as the Scamridge Dikes runs approximately north east to south west, following a slightly sinuous course between the top of the steep slope into Troutdale and the edge of Kirk Dale. It has two sections, which are joined in the centre of the boundary at the bottom of Scamridge Slack. To the north east of Scamridge Slack the boundary has five steep-sided V-shaped ditches which run between six approximately parallel banks, and it has an overall width of between 45m and 70m. At its northern end, the Scamridge Dikes terminate at the top of the steep scarp slope into Troutdale. To the south west of Scamridge Slack, the boundary has four steep-sided V-shaped ditches which run between five approximately parallel banks; the southern outer ditch and bank end about 450m south west of the edge of the Slack, reducing the boundary to three ditches and four banks. In this section the boundary has an overall width of between 42m and 58m. At its southern end, the Scamridge Dikes gradually becomes shallower up to the terminal, close to the edge of the steep slope into Kirk Dale. Within Scamridge Slack most of the earthworks have been levelled by ploughing. Only the western outer bank running down the east side of the Slack survives as an earthwork, incorporated into a modern field boundary, and this is continuous with the bank on the southern side of the northern outer ditch to the west of the Slack.

Over the years, the outer edges of the Scamridge Dikes have been encroached upon by ploughing in the adjacent fields, which has resulted, in places, in the infilling of the outer ditches and the levelling or reduction in width of the adjacent banks. At the southern end of the boundary both the western outer ditch and the central ditch have been infilled as a result of ploughing. However, these ditches survive as

subsoil features which are visible as soil marks on aerial photographs. To the north east of Scamridge Slack the three central ditches are up to 2m deep and, where they survive, the outer ditches are up to 1.5m deep, measured from the tops of the adjacent banks. To the south west of the Slack, the southern ditch has largely been filled in; the other three ditches are up to 1.7m deep, measured from the top of the adjacent banks, although the central one of the three gradually becomes shallower towards the south. The banks have a rounded profile and are constructed from earth and stone; the banks at the outer edges of the surviving earthworks stand between 0.5m and 1.2m above the level of the adjacent fields.

The medieval hollow way runs east to west across the Scamridge Dikes towards the northern end, cutting through all the banks. It is 5m wide and up to 1.2m deep. It is thought to have been established initially as a route between the monastic settlements at Lavington and Hackness. Towards the southern end of the north eastern section of the Scamridge Dikes, there is a large breach through which a segment of the boundary marking the division between the modern parishes of Eberston and Yedingham and Snainton passes. This boundary consists of a shallow ditch which runs between two low banks and it is thought to have been established in the early post-medieval period.

The Scamridge Dikes have several other post-medieval or modern breaches: in the north eastern section three forestry tracks and four field access tracks cross the boundary, and in the south western section five field access tracks and the public road cross the boundary. On either side of the parish boundary, the Scamridge Dikes have been disturbed by post-medieval limestone quarries. Further quarries have disturbed the Scamridge Dikes to the immediate west of the public road.

The round barrow is situated 10m from the outer western bank of the Scamridge Dike, close to its northern end. It has an earth and stone mound which stands up to 0.6m high and has a diameter of 8m.

On the east side of the Scamridge Dikes, the second segment of medieval linear boundary merges with the hollow way. This medieval boundary segment continues to run in a south east direction away from the Scamridge Dikes as far as the public road. It has a ditch running between two low banks, which has an overall maximum width of 10m. The ditch is up to 1.2m deep, measured from the tops of the banks. The western part of the boundary segment has largely been levelled by ploughing in the past, in the field to the south, although the ditch survives up to 0.5m deep. Close to its junction with the Scamridge Dikes, the southern bank has been buried beneath a substantial lynchet at the northern limit of ploughing.

The lime kiln is situated within the eastern part of the Scamridge Dikes, adjacent to the quarries towards the southern end of the north eastern section. It was constructed in the 18th or 19th century and is of a type known as a clamp kiln. The lime kiln is visible as a steep-sided oval shaped hollow oriented north west to south east, which is centred within the eastern ditch of the prehistoric boundary and has been excavated into the two banks on either side of it. The hollow opens to the north west into the quarries, along the line of another of the prehistoric ditches, and is surrounded elsewhere by a horseshoe-shaped bank which is 5m wide and stands up to 1m high. The hollow is about 2.2m deep, measured from the top of the bank. The site of a second lime kiln is identified on the 1848 edition of the Ordnance Survey map, situated within the quarries to the west of the public road, but there are no longer any visible traces of this.

The second prehistoric boundary runs north to south along the top of the eastern edge of Scamridge Slack, which becomes Netherby Dale at its southern end. At the northern end, the boundary terminates on the line of the southern outer ditch of the Scamridge Dikes. At its southern end it gradually peters out as the steepness of the slope into Netherby Dale increases. For most of its length, the boundary has two ditches which run

between three approximately parallel banks, and it has an overall width of 25m. At its northern end, however, there are three ditches and four banks, although the western ditch and outer bank have largely been levelled by ploughing, and these have an overall width of 32m. The ditches have a rounded profile and are between 0.8m and 2.7m deep, measured from the tops of the adjacent banks; the additional eastern ditch at the northern end is up to 1m deep. The banks are also rounded and are constructed from earth and stone. The western bank stands up to 1.5m high and the two eastern banks each stand up to 0.3m high.

To the south of the additional eastern ditch, a straight linear boundary running east to west cuts across the eastern side of the prehistoric boundary. This east to west boundary originally had a ditch running between two shallow banks, and it is thought to have had a medieval origin. The ditch cuts through the eastern and central banks of the prehistoric boundary, but to the east of the prehistoric boundary only the northern bank survives, forming part of a modern field boundary. To the south of the east to west boundary, the prehistoric boundary has been disturbed by limestone quarries. In addition to these areas of disturbance, the prehistoric boundary has been breached in four places to allow field and farm access.

The monument forms part of a network of prehistoric linear boundaries which is surrounded by many other prehistoric monuments, particularly burials.

A number of features are excluded from the scheduling. These are: the surfaces of two forestry tracks, one field access track and one farm access track crossing the Scamridge Dikes, the surface of the farm access track crossing the second prehistoric boundary, all fence posts along modern field boundaries crossing and running along the monument and around the pheasant rearing enclosure at the northern end of the Scamridge Dikes and all field boundary walls crossing and running alongside the monument; however, the ground beneath all these features is included in the scheduling. The covered reservoir on the eastern side of the Scamridge Dikes is not included in the scheduling.

## 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.

Round barrows are funerary monuments dating from the Late Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age, with most examples belonging to the period 2400-1500 BC. They were constructed as earthen or rubble mounds, sometimes ditched, which covered single or multiple burials. They occur either in isolation or grouped as cemeteries and often acted as a focus for burials in later periods. Often superficially similar, although differing widely in size, they exhibit regional variations in form and a diversity of burial practices. There are over 10,000 surviving examples

recorded nationally (many more have already been destroyed), occurring across most of Britain, including the Wessex area where it is often possible to classify them more closely, for example as bowl or bell barrows. Often occupying prominent locations, they are a major historic element in the modern landscape and their considerable variation of form and longevity as a monument type provide important information on the diversity of beliefs and social organisation amongst early prehistoric communities.

The eastern Tabular Hills is an area which has many networks of prehistoric land boundaries. These are thought to represent systems of territorial land division which were constructed to augment natural divisions of the landscape by river valleys and watersheds. The Dalby Forest and Scamridge areas have a particular concentration which is thought to have originated in the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, earlier than most other prehistoric boundary systems on the Tabular Hills. The networks within this concentration, and many of their component boundaries, are notably complex and are of considerable importance for understanding the development of later prehistoric society in eastern Yorkshire.

Despite limited disturbance, Scamridge Dikes and associated features have survived well; the surviving earthworks in the northern part of the Scamridge Dikes are in an excellent state of preservation. Significant information will be preserved about the date, original form and the nature and duration of use of the linear boundaries and their associated features. Stratigraphic relationships between the different components of the boundaries will survive and provide evidence for their sequence of construction and development. Evidence for the contemporary environment and economy will be preserved within the lower fills of the various ditches and within the buried ditches of the ploughed-out parts. Evidence for earlier land use will be preserved in the old ground surface beneath the different banks. The bottom of Scamridge Slack will contain waterlogged deposits which will also preserve important environmental evidence.

Unlike many burial monuments in this area, the round barrow does not appear to have been excavated in the past and it will therefore have undisturbed archaeological deposits in the centre relating to the primary burial, which are less likely to survive in partially excavated examples. Lime kilns are structures which were built in order to produce lime by burning chalk or limestone with a fuel, such as wood, peat or coal. The earliest lime kilns are Roman in date, but most surviving examples which have been identified are 18th or 19th century and date from a time when agricultural intensification generated the need for large quantities of lime for spreading on cultivated fields. Clamp kilns are generally found in rural locations where they were constructed for single or intermittent use and had no permanent superstructure. The kiln was formed of an excavated bowl or pit, within which was placed a base of kindling and a mound of alternating layers of limestone and fuel. The sides may have been built up slightly with earth and/or rough stone walling, and the load was covered with sods of earth. A flue was incorporated into the base of the mound and when ready, the whole mass was set alight and left to burn itself out over a period of days. The kiln was then dismantled and the lime removed.

The lime kiln on the east side of the Scamridge Dikes is important because it has been constructed within a prehistoric linear boundary, and this demonstrates the diversity of form which it is thought rural clamp kilns had.

## SCHEDULING HISTORY

Records show that the monument was included in the Schedule on 10th August

1923 as part of:  
COUNTY/NUMBER: Yorkshire 40  
NAME: Scamridge Dykes

Scheduling amended on 1st April 1974 to:  
COUNTY/NUMBER: North Yorkshire 40  
NAME: Scamridge Dykes

Monument's inclusion in the Schedule was confirmed on 9th October 1981.  
Monument included as part of:  
COUNTY/NUMBER: North Yorkshire 40  
NAME: Scamridge Dykes

The reference of this monument is now:  
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SCHEDULING REVISED ON 20th May 2003