



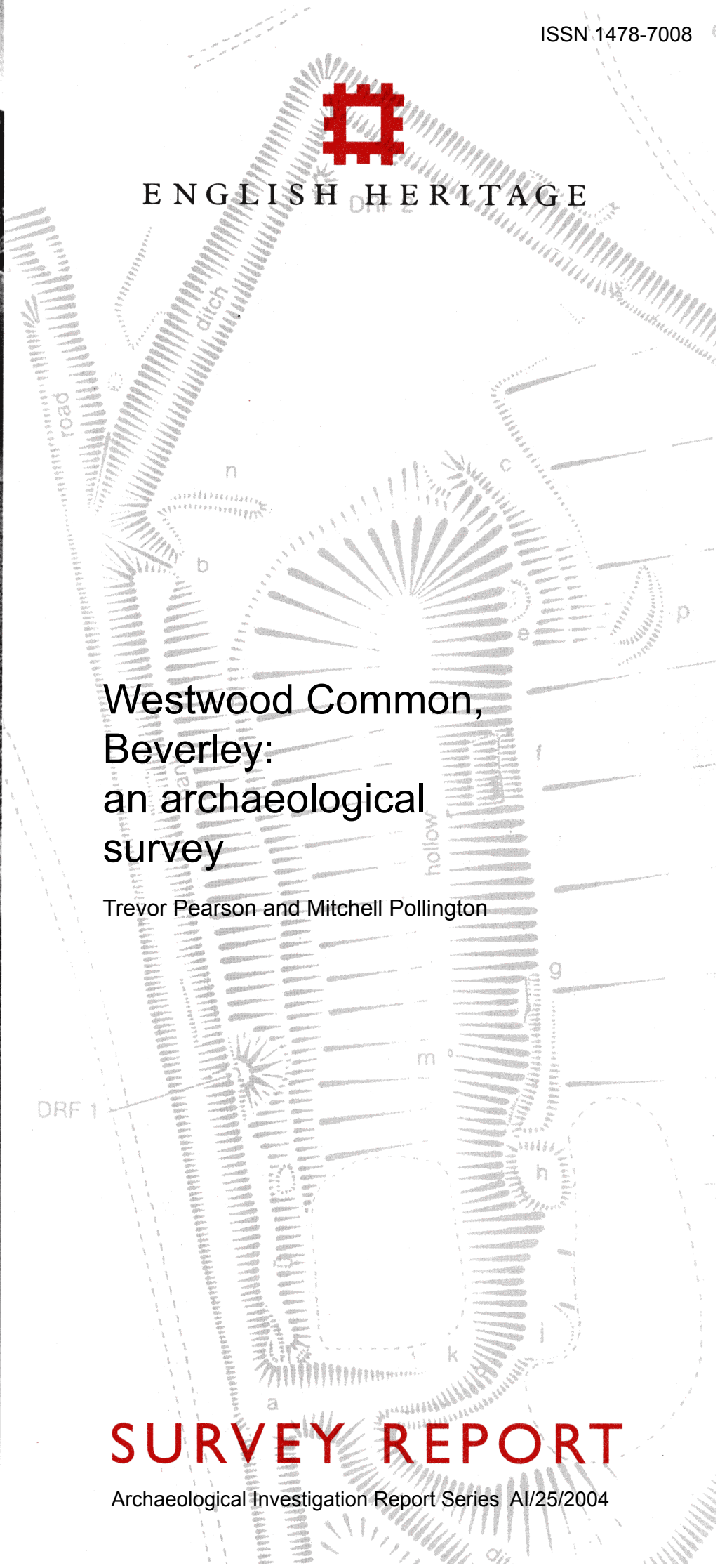
ENGLISH HERITAGE

Westwood Common,  
Beverley:  
an archaeological  
survey

Trevor Pearson and Mitchell Pollington

**SURVEY REPORT**

Archaeological Investigation Report Series AI/25/2004





ENGLISH HERITAGE

**WESTWOOD COMMON, BEVERLEY**  
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

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**District:** Beverley  
**Parish:** Beverley  
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*The Westwood looking towards the Black Mill*

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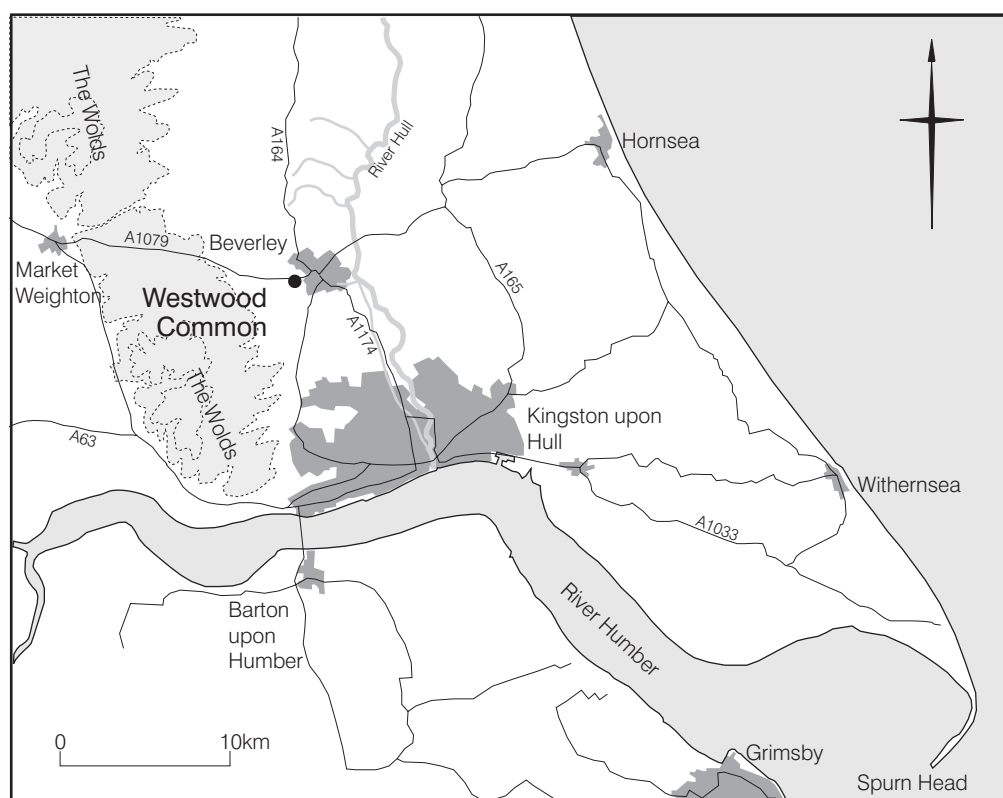
# 1. INTRODUCTION

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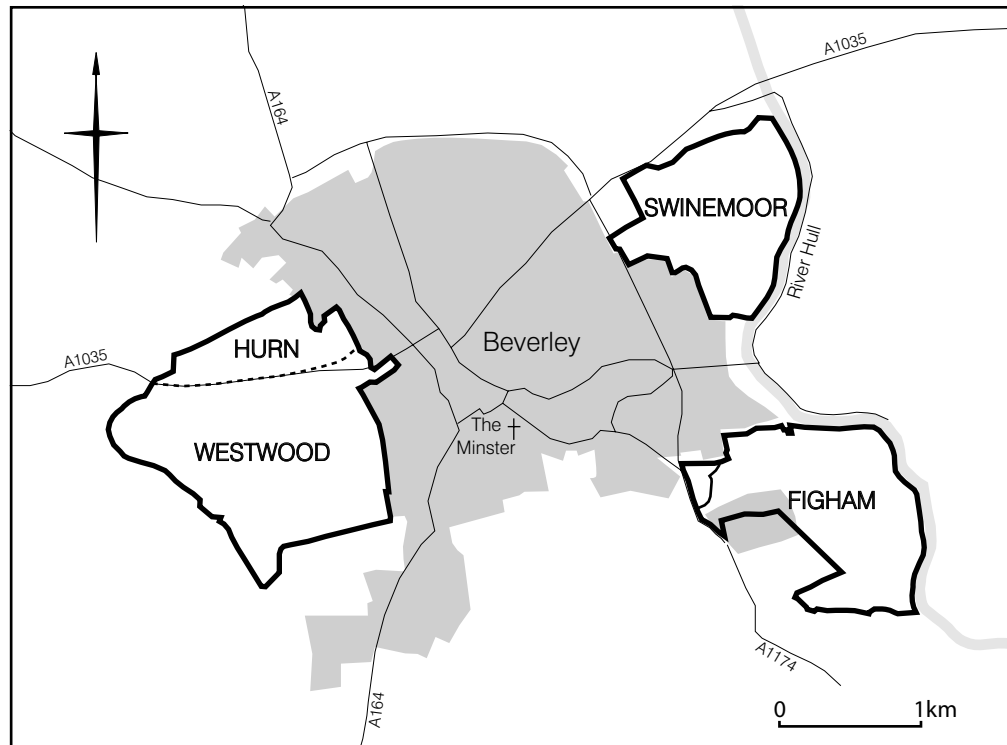
In June 2004 English Heritage undertook an analytical earthwork survey of the common called Westwood on the west side of the medieval market town of Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire centered at National Grid Reference TA 020 390 (Figure 1). The survey is part of a national project by English Heritage to record the archaeology of selected historic urban commons with a view to investigating the past use of the land, the extent to which they preserve earlier remains, and to inform management plans. Beverley's two other surviving commons at Figham and Swinemoor on the east side of the town (Figure 2) were investigated as part of the same project (Pollington and Pearson 2004).

The Westwood covers an area of about 600 acres (242ha) and is mostly open grassland. It is first referred to by name in the 13th century but may be several centuries older than this. It is sometimes referred to as Westwood with Hurn, Hurn being the north part of Westwood. Hurn is first mentioned in 1547 and is approximately equivalent to the area now occupied by Beverley racecourse (Allison 1989, 214).

The English Heritage survey recorded a number of features which pre-date the common including Bronze Age and Iron Age burial mounds, the fragmentary remains of possible Iron Age or Romano-British fields and an oval-shaped enclosure of Romano-British or early medieval date. Features which post-date the creation of the common include lengths of trackways, groups of pits for clay and chalk extraction, and areas of medieval and Second World War cultivation.



**Figure 1**  
Location of  
Beverley



**Figure 2**  
Location of  
Westwood in relation  
to Beverley

The common was surveyed at a scale of 1:2500 to Level 3 standard (RCHME 1999) while the oval-shaped enclosure on the west of the common was surveyed at 1:1000 scale. A 1:500 scale survey was undertaken of the area of the Iron Age burial mounds. Aerial photography was consulted to assist with the identification of features on the ground whilst the historical research for this report concentrated upon the main published sources.

## 2. GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND-USE

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Westwood is on the eastern edge of the chalk uplands of the Yorkshire Wolds. The ground continues to rise to the west beyond the common to the central watershed of the Wolds whilst eastwards it drops into the lowlands of the Holderness plain (Figures 3 and 4). The plain is founded on glacial material deposited during the last ice age and was an area of marshland until drained in the 18th and 19th centuries. The town of Beverley grew up around the Minster and is located at the foot of the Wolds slope on the edge of the Holderness plain and grew up around the Minster. The existing church dates to between the late 13th and 14th centuries but probably occupies the same site as the monastery founded by Archbishop John of York in the early 8th century (Evans 2000).

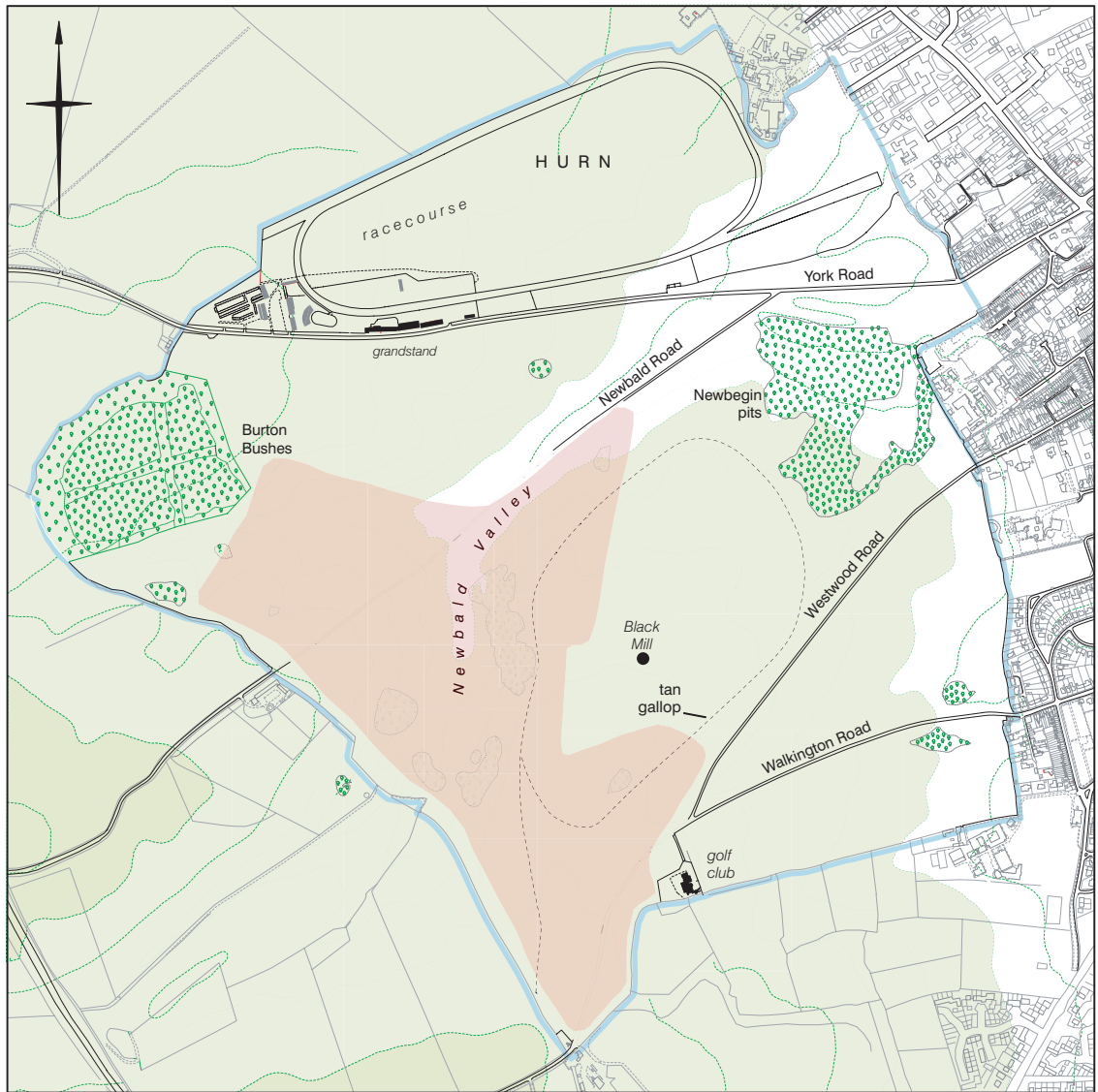
The Newbald Valley crosses the common from south-west to north-east (Figure 4). It is quite deep and steep-sided where it enters the common on the south-west but after about 500m, a second, lesser valley joins it from the north-west creating a much wider and more shallow-sided depression heading eastwards to the east side of the common. The high ground to the north of the Newbald Valley includes the part of the common called Hurn and a block of woodland called Burton Bushes, while the high ground to the south of the valley is dominated by the tower of a former windmill called Black Mill. There are open views from this part of the Westwood to the east across Beverley and the Holderness plain.

The porous nature of the chalk means there are no permanent streams in either the Newbald Valley or its northern tributary but the chalk is capped by deposits of glacial clay and this helps to trap surface water. There are several artificial ponds in the valley bottoms and one on the high ground within the boundaries of the racecourse (see Section 5.4). Both chalk and clay have been quarried on the Westwood leaving several areas heavily pitted with

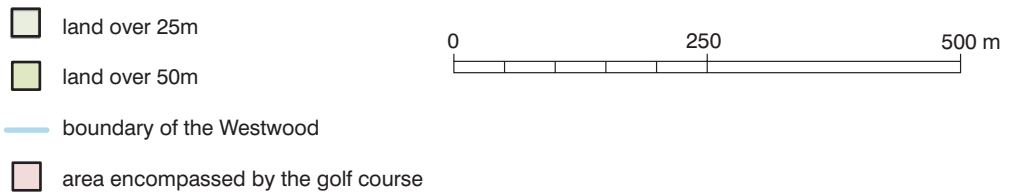


**Figure 3**  
*Aerial view of  
Westwood looking  
east (NMR 1998)*





**Figure 4**  
The main topographical features of the common



scoops and hollows as well as much deeper and more extensive quarries. The largest of these is the Newbegin Pits on the east side of the Westwood.

Most of the Westwood is open grassland and is freely grazed by cattle apart from the greens of The Beverley and East Riding Golf Club which are protected by post and wire fences. This eighteen-hole golf course extends from Burton Bushes at the north to the former Union Mill on the south side of the common. The mill tower is now part of the club house. No features belonging to the golf course were surveyed apart from where they fell within an area of visible archaeological remains, such as the Iron Age barrow cemetery. The track of the racecourse on Hurn is fenced off but the interior is grazed by cattle and sheep. There are no significant clumps of trees or bushes on Hurn while Burton Bushes at the

northwest corner of the Westwood is thought to be the last surviving remnant of the ancient woodland which gave the common its name in the medieval period. In recent years, the south and east sides of Burton Bushes have been fenced to keep livestock out and it is now protected as a site of special scientific interest. There is some encroachment of trees and bushes elsewhere on the Westwood, mostly on the former quarry sites.

Several tree-lined roads heading into Beverley cross the common including York Road which is the busiest and runs by the side of the racecourse. The more minor roads are from Newbald and Walkington (Newbald Road and Walkington Road respectively), the latter with a road splitting off to the north called Westwood Road. There is freedom of movement across nearly all of the common resulting in a network of minor paths and tracks of which only a selection were included in this survey. In addition to these paths, there is the circuit of a disused sunken track called the 'tan gallop' where racehorses used to be exercised between the Westwood and the Newbald roads. The Black Mill and the golf club are the only two standing structures on the main part of the Westwod. Hurn is dominated by the racecourse grandstand which borders the York Road.

### 3. HISTORY OF RESEARCH

---

The only recorded excavation on the Westwood is that by Canon William Greenwell in 1875 (Greenwell 1906, 278). Well known as an enthusiastic excavator of prehistoric burial mounds, particularly in east and north Yorkshire, Greenwell reportedly opened two of the group of Iron Age barrows on the Westwood, though a contemporary newspaper account mentions that four mounds were investigated (Beverley Guardian 17 April, 1875). Greenwell's perfunctory description of the excavation notes the discovery of two iron wheels and an iron bit in one of the mounds indicating this was a chariot burial, although the grave lacked any bones 'either of man or beast'. Although they are rare, several better-preserved examples of chariot burials have since been excavated in eastern Yorkshire and are part of a regional Iron Age tradition called the Arras Culture dating from the early 4th to the 1st century BC (Stead 1979). The Arras Culture tradition did not spread far beyond the Yorkshire Wolds and may equate to the tribal area of the Parisii, mentioned by the Roman geographer Ptolemy in the 2nd century AD (Ramm 1978, 21).

The area was first mapped in detail by the Ordnance Survey in 1852. The published survey shows a number of buildings which no longer survive such as the windmills called Low Mill and Fishwicks Mill (Ordnance Survey 1855). The only earthwork features depicted are a length of hollow way heading from the east side of Burton Bushes which is labelled as 'Old Road' and earthworks forming part of an enclosure on the western edge of the Westwood, straddling the Newbald Valley. It is most surprising that the group of prehistoric burial mounds on the Westwood are not shown on the map as the surveyors were diligent about recording such field monuments at this period. One can only surmise that for some reason the surveyors did not appreciate the antiquity of these mounds. The first two editions of the 1:2 500 scale Ordnance Survey map published in 1893 and 1910 also omit them, despite the fact that their identity as prehistoric burial mounds was established by the 1875 excavation (Ordnance Survey 1893 and 1910).

Beverley and District Civic Society published a schematic map of the two commons to accompany a booklet on the history, landscape and geology of the area (Beverley and District Civic Society 1966). The map shows the main archaeological remains though at a scale which makes it difficult to precisely locate the sites on the ground from this source alone. Most of the features depicted were recorded by the English Heritage survey in 2004. An exception is that the map shows six Bronze Age burial mounds aligned across the central part of the common although the accompanying text mentions only three and only three were recorded by the English Heritage survey. The map also shows a Neolithic burial mound close to the east side of the Limekiln Pits but somewhat surprisingly the accompanying text makes no mention of it. The English Heritage survey found no evidence of this feature, although there are several natural mounds in this area.

In 1982, brief descriptions of some earthwork features on the Westwood were included in a volume on the archaeology and architecture of Beverley (Miller *et al.* 1982, 35). These

include the observation that a meandering ditch across the middle of the common noted as Iron Age in the 1966 Civic Society booklet was a medieval or later boundary or possibly a hollow way: this conclusion is supported by the results of the English Heritage survey of 2004. The account goes on to note that medieval or later hollow ways form a prominent feature of the Westwood, and that there are the remains of clay and chalk extraction pits and several ponds. A block of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing is also noted towards the north-east corner of the common, along with the enclosure in Burton Bushes and that adjacent to the west boundary of the common straddling the Newbald Valley. The account suggests these two enclosures may be Iron Age or Roman. No detailed description is given of the prehistoric burial mounds apart from a brief note stating that Iron Age barrows occur in 'some numbers' on the Westwood and noting the existence of seven near the Black Mill (Miller *et al* 1982, 1).

In 1989, the most comprehensive historical account of the Westwood appeared in print as part of a general history of Beverley and district (Allison 1989). This account concentrates on the history of the common from the 13th century onwards but makes almost no reference to the survival of archaeological remains.

Much more recently in 2004, Rod Mackey and members of the East Riding Archaeological Society undertook a geophysical survey of a 5ha area of the common. Organised in support of the English Heritage fieldwork, the geophysical survey recorded the group of Iron Age barrows as areas of low resistance and detected several minor east-west trackways to the north. The trackways are undated and have left no surface remains.

The most detailed written analysis and description of the archaeological remains on the Westwood at the time of the English Heritage survey was compiled in the 1990s for those sites which have been included in the schedule of ancient monuments. There are individual descriptions of thirteen Bronze and Iron Age burial mounds, the enclosure and field system on the west side of the common and the earthwork enclosure in Burton Bushes. The enclosures and field system are stated to be Romano-British. However, the assessment of these sites was not supported by the detailed fieldwork and analysis undertaken by English Heritage in 2004. This has highlighted the need to revise some of the descriptions and interpretations contained in the scheduling documentation (as will be made clear in Section 5 of this report).

The English Heritage fieldwork of 2004 represents the most comprehensive survey and analysis of the Westwood undertaken to date. The features recorded range from the prehistoric burial mounds mentioned above (including several not previously recorded) to remains connected with the use of the common in the Second World War. A significant number of the earthwork features cannot be precisely dated and therefore the following description (Section 5) is presented typologically rather than chronologically.

## 4. HISTORY OF WESTWOOD AND HURN COMMONS

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By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086 there was already a well-established settlement at Beverley focussed on the Minster. This is traditionally believed to be the site of the monastery called *Inderauuda* believed to mean 'in the wood of Deira' referred to by the 8th century historian Bede, who states that it was founded by John, Archbishop of York (Palliser 2000, 23). Bede does not give a precise date but modern scholarship suggests it was probably around 720.

That the common was wooded during the Middle Ages is established by references to the 'wood called Westwood' in the 13th century (Allison 1989 217; Smith 1937, 199) and is also possibly part of the pasturable woodland measuring 3 leagues in length by 1½ leagues in breadth mentioned in the entry for Beverley in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Allison 1989, 217). It is not recorded when or how the common was established, only that pasture and pannage rights in the Westwood were given by the Archbishop of York to the townsmen of Beverley in the middle of the 13th century (Allison 1989, 15). In return, the townsmen allowed the Archbishop to extend his rights over a tract of land to the south of the Minster called Beverley Parks in order to create a hunting reserve. The implication of this is that the block of land which became Westwood common was already defined on the ground and in the ownership of the Archbishop of York before the middle of the 13th century. How this tract of land came into the hands of the Archbishop of York is not recorded but it could well have been in their tenure from before the Norman Conquest. The strength of the pre-conquest connection between the Archbishop of York and Beverley is demonstrated by a royal charter of 1061-65 confirming Archbishop Ealdred as the town's sole lord (Allison 1989, 3). The town did not get full ownership of the common until the middle of the 14th century (Allison 1989, 16).

The field evidence for the boundary of the common will be described and discussed below; it is sufficient here to note that there is documentary evidence that the boundary has not remained entirely static. For example in 1656, a close called Low Green was added to the common requiring an adjustment to be made to the north-east boundary (Allison 1989, 214). In 1861 the reverse happened when an enclosure on the east side of the Westwood called Butt Close was destroyed by angry townfolk in order to return it to the common (Allison 1989, 214).

References to the Westwood in the Middle Ages mainly concern disputes over pasture rights, particularly with the Archbishop of York after ownership had transferred to the town. One particular long-running dispute involved the Archbishop's continuing rights for himself and his tenants at Bishop Burton, a village a mile to the west of the common, to keep pigs on the Westwood (Allison 1989, 214). The surviving woodland at the north-west side of the Westwood called Burton Bushes was eventually set aside for the Bishop Burton tenants to use for their pigs which may in turn explain why this one area was left after the rest of the common was cleared of trees.

It is thought that large-scale felling of trees on the Westwood did not begin until the 16th century. Trees were sold off in their hundreds during the 17th century and the final sale of all the trees that were not 'improvable' occurred in 1765 (Allison 1989, 217). As areas were cleared of trees, the roots were dug out to improve the quality of the land, explaining the concentrations of small, shallow pits on parts of the common. Improvement of the area also involved levelling mounds, presumably those left by clay and chalk extraction, though the possibility that these included earlier earthworks, such as prehistoric burial mounds, should also be borne in mind.

The chalk was burnt for lime and the earliest reference to a lime kiln on the common occurs as early as 1379-80, whilst the last active kiln on the Westwood was not demolished until 1818 (Allison 1989, 217). Clay was quarried to manufacture bricks and there is a specific reference in 1716 to Sir Charles Hotham acquiring bricks from the Westwood for the construction of a town house in Beverley in Eastgate (Miller *et al* 1982, 30).

The gradual clearance of the woodland extended the range of economic, recreational and military uses to which the common could be put. The clay and chalk pits and the various windmills are examples of where the common has been used for economic benefit. Five windmills are shown on the common on the first edition Ordnance Survey map although two have now been completely demolished and the other three are not in working order and are not complete (Ordnance Survey 1855). A mill belonging to the town corporation on the Westwood is mentioned as far back as 1577-8 and was presumably a windmill and not a horse mill or water mill (Allison 1989, 218). This was one of the five surveyed by the Ordnance Survey in 1852 and was quite probably the Low Mill first mentioned by name in 1646-7. There is also a reference soon after in 1654-5 to what is now the Black Mill on the same ridge of ground some 270m to the north-east (Allison 1989, 218). The windmills will be described in more detail later in the report.

The use of the common for recreation has made the biggest impact on the landscape in recent centuries with the establishment of the golf course in 1889 and the racecourse which dates back to 1690 (Allison 1989, 206 and 218). A pavilion next to the Black Mill served as the first club house for the golf course but in 1906 the club moved to its present location in the former Union Mill (Allison 1989, 218). Facilities including a shop and members' lounge have been added to the west of the mill building which now houses the main office. The layout of the greens has changed over time leaving a number of redundant bunkers and tees within the area of the golf course.

The racecourse moved to its present site on Hurn in 1765 whilst the first course is believed to have roughly coincided with the line of the now redundant circuit for horse training called the tan gallop which encircles the Black Mill. The Westwood, more so than Beverley's other commons, has long been enjoyed as an area for walking and general relaxation and attempts have been made in the past to 'improve' the character of the scenery. The entrances onto the common from Beverley were made more formal by the construction of tall stone gate posts which still survive and by the erection of a gatehouse on the south side of the Newbald

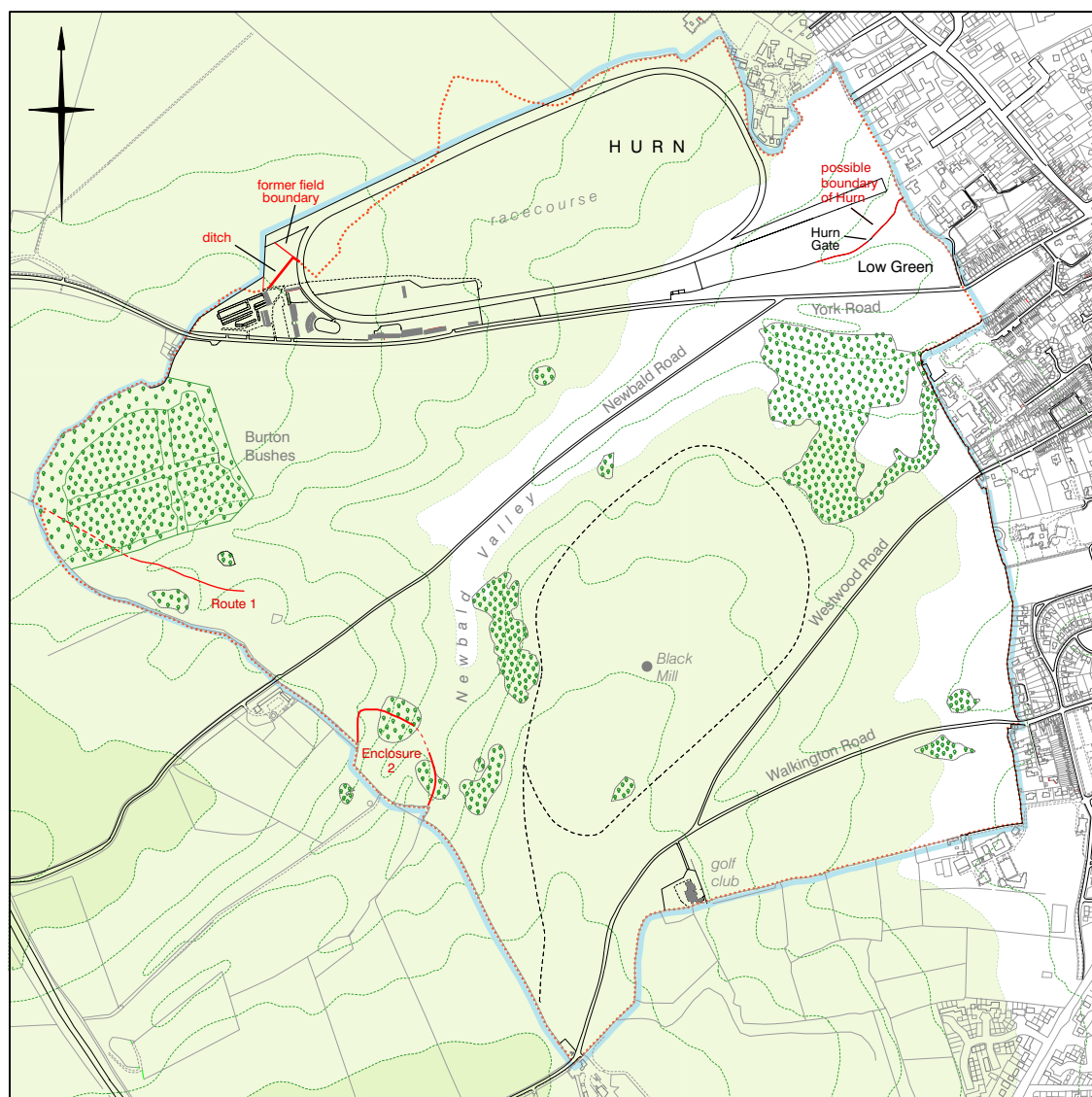
Road shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855). At the end of the 19th century avenues of trees were planted along the roads crossing the common, whilst the first edition Ordnance Survey map shows what look like a series of avenues or rides cutting through Burton Bushes (Ordnance Survey 1855). These have long since reverted to woodland but are presumably the walks referred to in 1814 in this area (Allison 1989, 215). Bull baiting was stopped on the Westwood in 1824, (Allison 1989, 125) and one of the sites (including the ring for tethering the bull) is traceable on the ground in the former quarry called Newbegin Pits on the east side of the common. In the more recent past there have been football and hockey pitches.

The open landscape of the common made it ideal for military manoeuvres and encampments with one of the earliest recorded gatherings occurring in October 1536 when rebel forces involved in the Pilgrimage of Grace assembled there on four successive days (Allison 1989, 71). The musters recorded on the Westwood in the late 16th century were the forerunner of the militia and volunteer encampments of more recent centuries. In an entirely new military use of the common, the racecourse was employed as an airfield during the First World War, and buildings were erected towards the west end of the course. The racecourse returned to military use in the Second World War whilst aerial photographs from the period show areas set aside for cultivation (see Section 5.9).

## 5. DESCRIPTION

### 1. Boundary of Westwood common

The boundary of the common was first mapped accurately by the Ordnance Survey in 1852 (Ordnance Survey 1855). The boundary has remained largely unchanged since the date of the map apart from on the north where it has been re-aligned and straightened to accommodate the racecourse (Figure 5). Changes to the boundary in this area occurred in 1920 resulting in the loss from the common of a triangular-shaped block on the north of about 1.6ha (3.9 acres) which now forms part of a cultivated field. As recompence, immediately to the west, 2.2 ha (5.4 acres) of former agricultural land was added to the common to form the north-west corner of the racecourse (Allison 1989, 206).



**Figure 5**  
The boundaries of  
Westwood and  
Hurn commons

- ..... historic boundary of the Westwood
- present boundary of the Westwood

0 250 500 m



The southern boundary of the common is laid out in long straight lengths and although heavily overgrown, it consists of a broad, shallow ditch around 4m wide and up to 1m deep. Aerial photography shows several blocks of medieval plough ridges immediately to the south of the common aligned either at right angles or parallel to the south boundary of the common (RAF 1945a). This respect for the boundary of the common suggests the boundary almost certainly pre-dates the medieval ploughing.

On the west side of the common, the boundary from the Newbald valley southwards is reasonably straight but in the opposite direction it turns abruptly where it crosses the Newbald Valley to accommodate the west side of Enclosure 2. The enclosure was probably for livestock, and earthwork evidence suggests it pre-dates the establishment of the common. It is described in more detail in Section 5.3. Northwards, beyond the Newbald Valley, the west boundary follows a more sinuous path, curving westwards around Burton Bushes. It changes alignment abruptly for a short distance at the apex of the curve, possibly to follow the edge of a track. The track survives as a hollow way some 200m to the south-east but has left no visible traces where its projected alignment meets the common boundary (see Section 5.5, Route 1).

As mentioned above, on the north side of the common the boundary has been straightened in order to accommodate the expansion of the racecourse. Prior to this the boundary followed a far more sinuous course than on any of the other sides, although it was similarly defined by a ditch. Where the modern boundary has been re-aligned at the west end of the racecourse, a length of the historic boundary survives as a slight ditch in a field within the racecourse used by touring caravans. The ditch is 3m wide, quite shallow and looks to have been partially levelled. The greater part of the ditch is aligned from south-west to north-east but at the north-east end it turns through 90 degrees to run for 20m to the south-east, fading out as an earthwork in the middle of the race track. This exactly matches the alignment of the common boundary recorded on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855). A second ditch of similar dimensions heads north-west from this change in angle. This feature preserves the line of a field boundary shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map and confirms that part of the racecourse extends across former agricultural land.

On the east side of the common there is no consistency to the form of the boundary since, for the most part, the edge of the common is defined by the gardens of private houses. The boundary is laid out in long straight stretches and 60m to the south of York Road, the boundary turns through 90 degrees to head west for a distance of 150m. This change in direction could indicate either (a) the loss of strip of common to the south due to encroachment from the east or (b) the acquisition of a strip of land to the north due to the expansion of the common eastwards. In support of the second possibility is the map evidence that this strip includes an area called Low Green which was added to the common in 1656 (Ordnance Survey 1855; Allison 1989, 214). There is evidence Low Green was ploughed in the Middle Ages before it became part of the common as it contains an area of ridge and furrow formed by medieval ploughing with oxen (see Section 5.6). However, the ridge and furrow extends

southwards beyond the likely limits of Low Green and the strip of land designated (b) above. This may indicate that the ploughing was allowed to encroach partly on to the common.

The only evidence surviving for the boundary of Hurn is towards the south-east of the racecourse. Here a gently curving length of hedge beginning on the east side of the common incorporates a gate labelled as Hurn Gate on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855). This suggests that the hedge follows the south boundary of Hurn although after 200m it straightens and may have been realigned following the establishment of the racecourse in the 18th century. The medieval date of the curving section of boundary is indicated by the observation that a series of medieval plough ridges all end along the south side of the hedge (see Section 5.6). There is a drainage ditch along the line of the hedge and this, together with the curve of the boundary could indicate that this part of the south boundary of Hurn originally followed the line of a natural watercourse.

## **2. Prehistoric burial mounds**

As was mentioned earlier, the existence of Bronze Age and Iron Age burial mounds on the common has long been known about (NMR no. TA 03 NW 28). However, the English Heritage survey is the first to undertake detailed mapping and analysis of the surface remains. No additional Bronze Age round barrows were recorded, but the survey has added several possible Iron Age barrows to the record. Several other features previously recorded as prehistoric burial mounds have been discounted. These are discussed at the end of this section.

The three Bronze Age barrows (Figure 6: Barrows 1-3) are distinguishable from the Iron Age barrows on the Westwood by their greater size and much more circular plan. Two are on the high ground above the south side of the Newbald Valley (Barrows 1 and 2), the third is on a break of slope on the opposite side of the valley (Barrow 3). The first two are within an area cultivated during the Second World War and bear some traces of damage resulting from this.

Of the eleven Iron Age barrows recorded by the survey, one stands in isolation 120m to the south-east of the Black Mill (Barrow 4) and seven are in a tight-knit group on a false crest overlooking the south side of the Newbald Valley (Barrows 5-12). Another group of three lie 100m to the north-east (Barrows 13-15). The English Heritage survey found surface evidence that at least five of the mounds had been dug in to (Barrows 6-9 and 11). There are two roughly square earthwork golf tees on the east side of the main barrow group which at a casual glance might be mistaken for two flat-topped barrows. They are depicted on Figure 7 and it is possible that one or both may have been formed out of barrows but there is no surface evidence to confirm this.

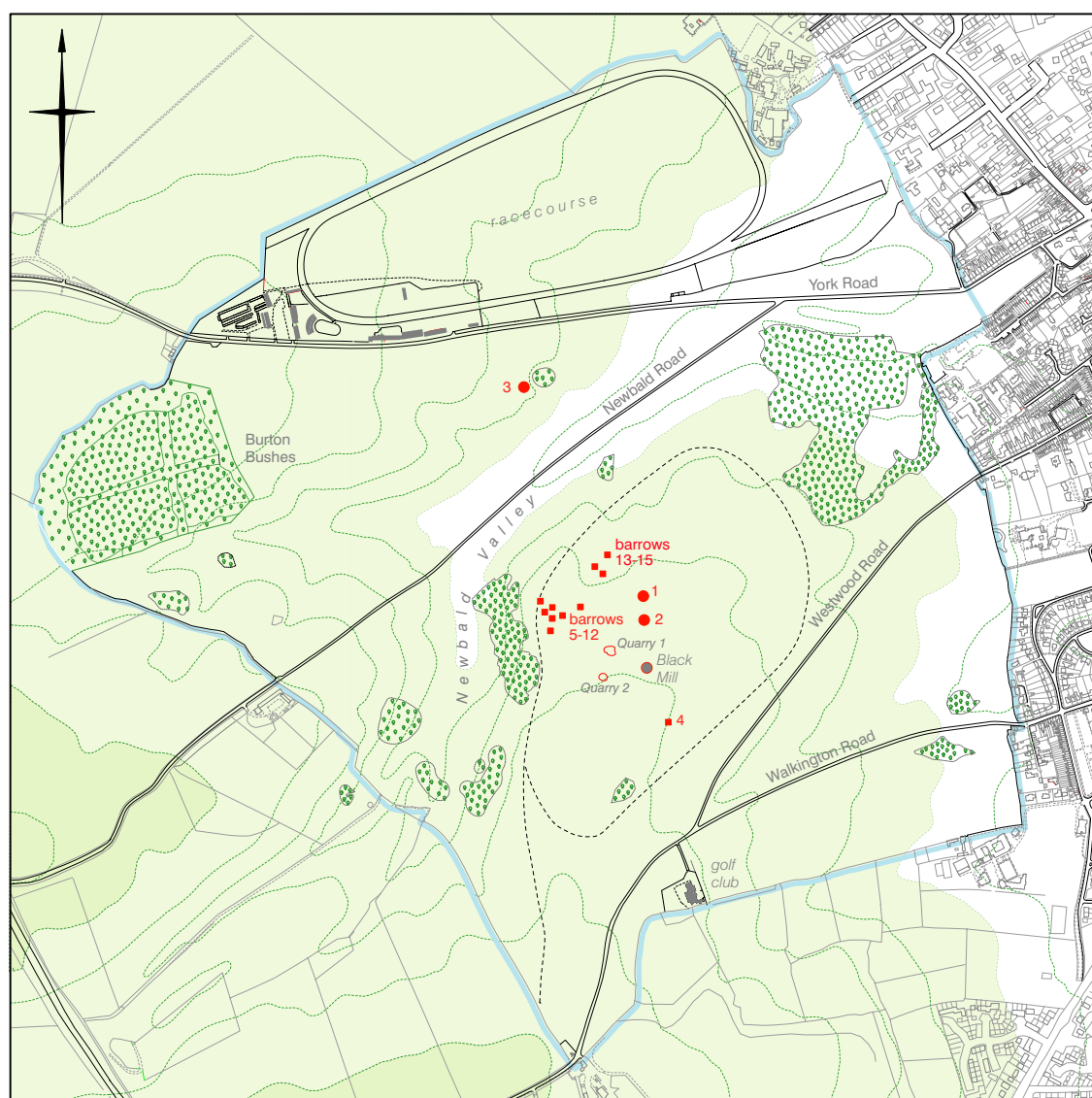
## Bronze Age

### Barrow 1

This barrow is up to 15m across and roughly circular in plan. The south-east side has been damaged by one of the series of banks partitioning up this part of the common for cultivation in the Second World War. The barrow is 0.4m high and there are no obvious traces of an encircling ditch. As the existing record correctly notes, there is no surface evidence that the barrow has been excavated (RSM 26559).

### Barrow 2

The barrow consists of an oval mound 15m in length from north to south and up to 10m across. It lies within the area of Second World War cultivation and has undoubtedly been degraded by this although unlike Barrow 1, it has not been damaged by the banks subdividing the cultivated area. The barrow survives to a height of 0.4m and there are no surface traces of a surrounding ditch or any indication that it has been excavated (RSM 26560).



**Figure 6**  
Location of  
Bronze Age and  
Iron Age barrows

- Bronze Age barrows
- Iron Age barrows

0 250 500 m

### *Barrow 3*

As was mentioned above, this barrow is situated in a slight natural hollow just below the crest of the slope on the north side of the Newbald Valley. The barrow is approximately circular and measures 14m across and up to 0.7m high and there are sections of a slight outer ditch visible on the west and south-east sides, up to 3m across. On the north-east side the mound appears to have spread over the probable line of the outer ditch, perhaps because of weathering or when the area was cultivated in the Second World War (see below). There is no surface indication that the barrow has been dug into (RSM 26558).

### *Black Mill*

Black Mill is on the same ridge-top alignment as Barrows 1 and 2 and it is therefore possible that the building occupies the site of a further burial mound. There is no earthwork evidence of a mound below the present mill tower but it is conceivable that the site was chosen because a Bronze Age barrow was in the right location to provide the windmill with an elevated base.

## Iron Age

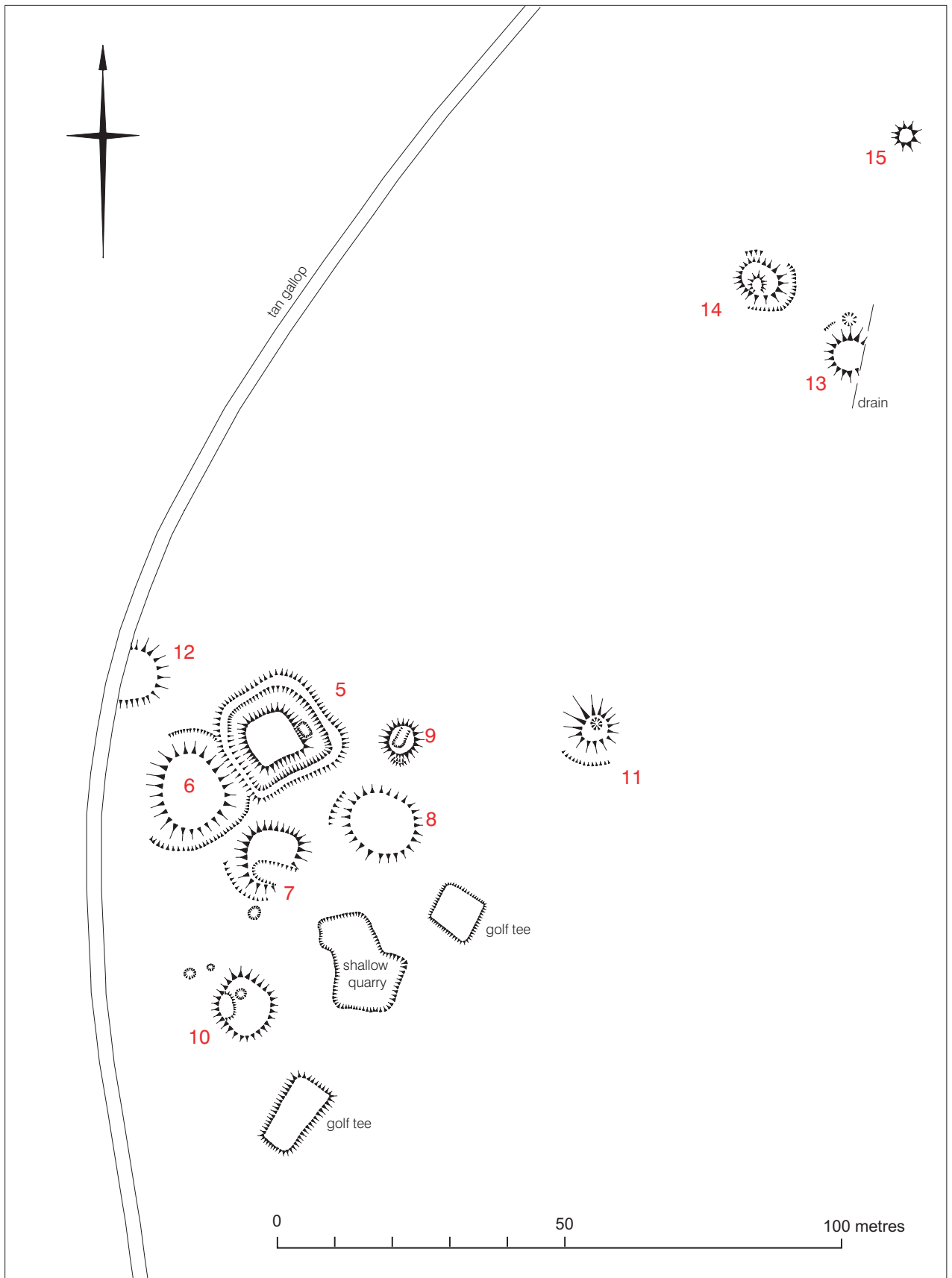
### *Barrow 4*

The barrow comprises an oval-shaped mound measuring a maximum of 10m from south-west to north-east by 8.5m across and stands up to 0.4m high. It is surrounded by a shallow ditch mostly between 2-3m wide. A slight depression barely 2m across at the centre of the mound indicates a fairly cursory attempt at digging into the mound. It has been recorded as an Iron Age square barrow (RSM 26563) though the possibility that it is a Bronze Age round barrow should not be discounted, as it is reasonably close to Barrows 1 and 2 to the north and isolated from the cluster of Iron Age barrows 300m to the north-west.

### *Barrow 5 (see Figure 7)*

This is by far the best preserved of the main group of Iron Age square barrows and almost certainly one of the best earthwork examples in eastern Yorkshire. The barrow consists of a central square mound 9m across and 0.5m high above a quite shallow perimeter ditch. Immediately on the outside of the ditch is a low, flat-topped bank up to 2m wide and around 0.3m high on the south and east but slightly less on the north and west. Both the ditch and bank follow the square outline of the mound with the bank clearly overlying the outer ditch of Barrow 6 on the west side. This indicates that there is at least two phases of barrow construction within this group.

A very small and shallow rectilinear depression on the north-east side of the mound may be an old excavation trench or equally possibly a tree-hole or a slit trench from military training. There is nothing to indicate that the mound itself has been dug in to which is surprising given that the mound immediately attracts the eye and is more easily recognisable as an Iron Age square barrow than the two adjacent mounds (Barrows 6 and 7). These have definite traces of having been excavated, presumably by Canon Greenwell in his 1875 digging campaign. Indeed the mound is so well-preserved compared to the others in the group there is at least a suspicion that it might have been reconstructed after excavation,



**Figure 7** English Heritage survey plan of Iron Age barrows 5-15, reduced from 1:500 scale original

accounting for the overlapping relationship between its outer bank and Barrow 6. The mound is just as clear on an aerial photograph from 1917 (ERYAS 1917) as it is today, suggesting any reconstruction must have occurred before the photograph was taken. It would be reasonable therefore to attribute the suggested reconstruction to Canon Greenwell.

This square barrow and the following five barrows are recorded in the schedule of ancient monuments with the collective number of RSM 26562.

#### *Barrow 6*

Barrow 6 is square on two sides but the north-east and north-west sides form more of a continuous curve. This is probably due to later damage, possibly through an excavation, and there is no reason to question the identification of the feature as a square barrow. The mound is about 0.3m high and 10m across and is surrounded by a shallow ditch although this virtually disappears on the west, adding weight to the possibility that the barrow has received damage. As noted above, the ditch around Barrow 6 is partly overlain by the outer bank of Barrow 5.

#### *Barrow 7*

The barrow is square-shaped with rounded corners and is about 9m across and 0.3m high. There are shallow traces of an outer ditch on the south-west side. A rectilinear cut on the south has removed about a third of the mound and almost certainly this is an old excavation trench. This could indicate that the mound is one of the barrows excavated by Canon Greenwell.

#### *Barrow 8*

The barrow has a low, almost-circular mound up to 15m in diameter and about 0.4m in height. There is a slight outer ditch surviving on the north-west side. According to the entry in the schedule of ancient monuments, this is reputedly the barrow from which Canon Greenwell recovered the remains of a chariot burial in 1875 (RSM 26562), though how much confidence can be attached to this when he failed to leave any detailed records is debateable. As has previously been observed, if this is the barrow with the chariot burial then presumably the present shape of the mound is largely a post-excavation reconstruction. This would be consistent with its low, spread character.

#### *Barrow 9*

Barrow 9 is circular in shape, about 0.3m high and 7m in diameter and has the slight remains of an external bank on the south side. The mound is cut on the north by a shallow trench which penetrates to the centre, presumably indicating it has been excavated by Canon Greenwell.

#### *Barrow 10*

Barrow 10 is square in plan with rounded corners and stands up to 0.4m high and measures 12m across. There is no sign of any external ditch whilst a very small depression on the top, barely 1.5m across, could be a hollow caused by the removal of a tree of which there are several other examples in the immediate vicinity. Alternatively, it might be an excavation

trench and there is a slight mound to the south of the depression that could be formed by upcast from digging. The barrow is close to the mound of a disused golf tee and could be easily mistaken for one itself were it not for its much more degraded appearance.

#### *Barrow 11*

This barrow is nearly circular and measures 11m across and 0.3m high and has slight traces of an external ditch on the south side. The circular shape of the barrow has been explained as evidence that it was altered during its excavation by Canon Greenwell, implying the earthwork is a post-excavation reconstruction (RSM 26561). However, a shallow trench nearly 2m wide on the top of the mound looks like an attempt at excavation, which rather suggests the main body of the mound is original.

#### *Barrow 12*

This barrow lies just to the north of Barrows 5 and 6 but is not easily seen and has not been recorded before. The west half has been destroyed by the tan gallop. The surviving remains indicate that the barrow was probably originally circular, with a diameter of approximately 12m and a maximum height of 0.3m. There is no trace of an external ditch. The barrow is comparable in size and shape to several of the other adjacent barrows and therefore despite its poor state of preservation, it is reasonable to conclude that this is part of the barrow cemetery.

#### *Barrow 13*

The barrow is circular, though a furrow or drain on the east side cuts into the outer edge of the feature, truncating it slightly. The earthwork is 9m in diameter and 0.3m high and has very shallow traces of an outer ditch on the north-west side. As has previously been noted, there is no visible evidence that it has been excavated (RSM 26565). A shallow depression on the north side of the mound is probably the hollow left by an up-rooted tree.

#### *Barrow 14*

This is an oval shaped-mound, 9m in diameter and 0.3m high with a second slight mound on top of the south side. There is a shallow ditch on the south and east sides of the main mound measuring up to 2m across and slight traces of one on the north suggesting it once formed a complete circuit. The mound has not been identified as a burial mound previously and shows no signs of having been excavated.

#### *Barrow 15*

The barrow is circular and measures a maximum of 6m across and is about 0.2m high. The generally poor state of the barrow has prompted speculation that it might have been excavated by Canon Greenwell (RSM 26566). However, there is no field evidence which conclusively establishes this. There is not trace of an external ditch.

#### Uncertain prehistoric barrows

In addition to these definite and probable prehistoric barrows, two other features have been recorded as barrows, despite strong evidence to the contrary. The first is 80m to the north-

west of the Black Mill and comprises an oval, quarry-like hollow up to 1m deep and measuring 22m from east to west by 18m across with a central mound 14m in length and 9m wide. The mound is joined to the outer edge of the hollow by narrow causeways on the north-east and south-west sides.

The proximity of two definite round barrows (Barrows 1 and 2) to this feature probably explains why it has been interpreted as a round barrow (RSM 26568). This interpretation can almost certainly be ruled out. Although the gap between the central mound and the outer edge of the quarry hollow gives the impression of an encircling ditch, the field evidence is that this is a disused quarry which has been partially filled in. This explains the flat-topped mound in the centre, whilst the two causeways are possible barrow runs. This site is labelled as Quarry 1 on Figure 13.

The second alleged barrow is 80m to the west of the Black Mill. It too appears more like a partially-filled quarry hollow, possibly contemporary with a much shallower quarry immediately to the south. An oval mound, measuring 11m east-west by 8m across and 0.4m high sits off centre in the hollow which means the outer ditch of the supposed square barrow is noticeably 3m wider on the south-east than on the opposite side of the mound. This asymmetry makes the identification of the feature as a prehistoric barrow doubtful, nonetheless the feature has entered the record as a square barrow (RSM 26564). It is labelled as Quarry 2 on Figures 6 and 13.

### **3. Enclosures and boundaries**

Two earthwork enclosures have been recorded on the common previously.

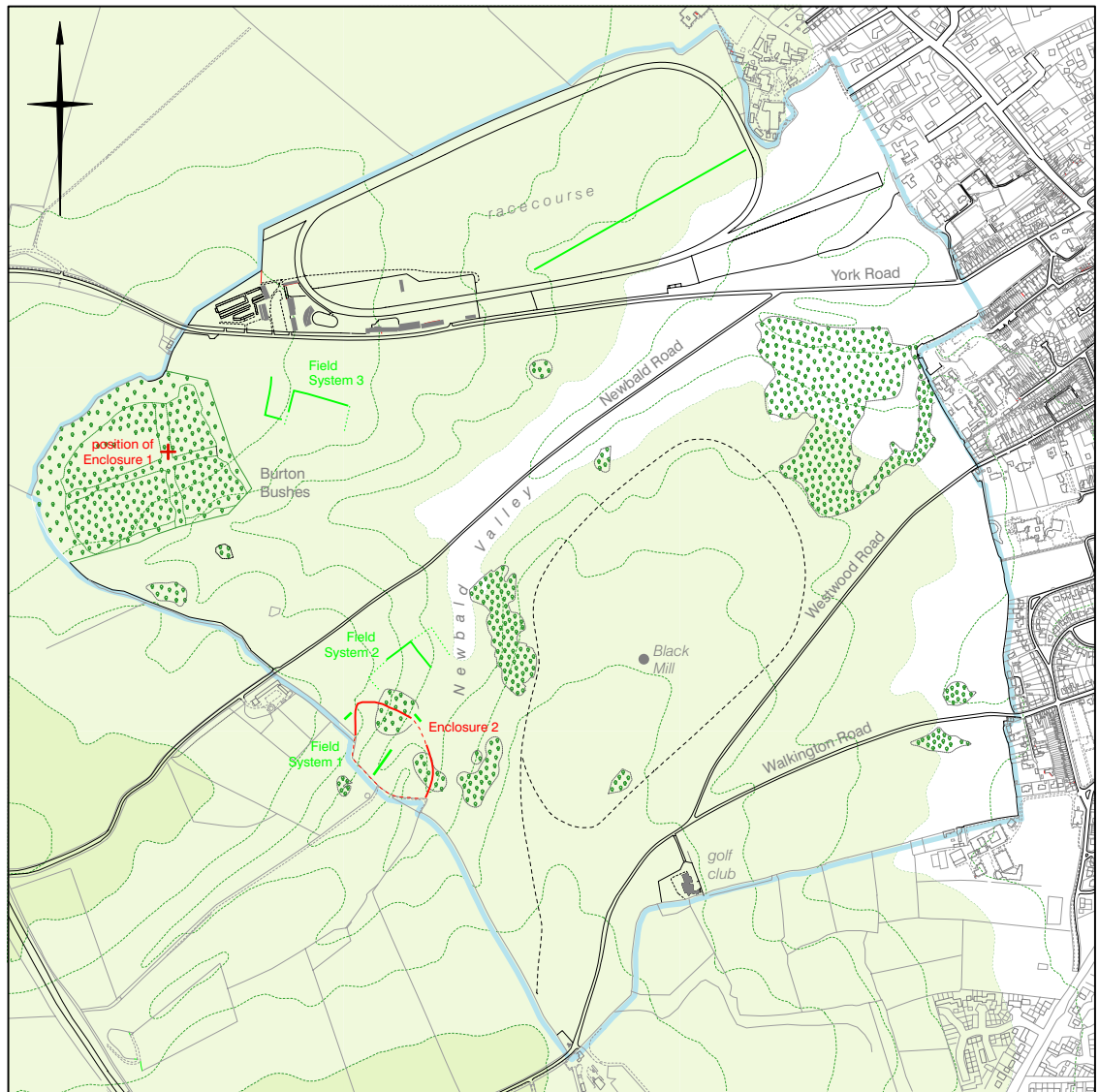
#### **Enclosure 1**

This enclosure lies towards the north-west corner of the common in the woodland of Burton Bushes (Figure 8). It is now heavily overgrown and as a result only very short lengths are accessible for analysis whilst most of the interior was impenetrable at the time of the survey because of the vegetation. Consequently, the decision was made not to survey this site as part of the English Heritage fieldwork in 2004. It has been described as a rectangular enclosure measuring 50m from north to south by 35m across defined by a slight ditch up to 3m wide and an external bank up to 0.5m high (NMR no. TA 03 NW 65; RSM 26569). The date and purpose of the site are open to question although it has entered the record as a Romano-British defended enclosure. It is not strongly sited and the presence of a ditch on the inside of the bank would also seem to argue against a mainly defensive purpose. There is also nothing from the existing description, or the visible remains, that conclusively establishes that it is Romano-British. It is possible, for example, that the enclosure has some connection with the use of Burton Bushes as pasture for swine in the medieval period.

#### **Enclosure 2**

On the west side of the common, an oval-shaped enclosure stretches from the crest of the Newbald Valley south-eastwards for 220m to the south side of a spur of high ground rising from the valley floor (Figure 9). It has a maximum width of 140m and covers an area of 2ha.





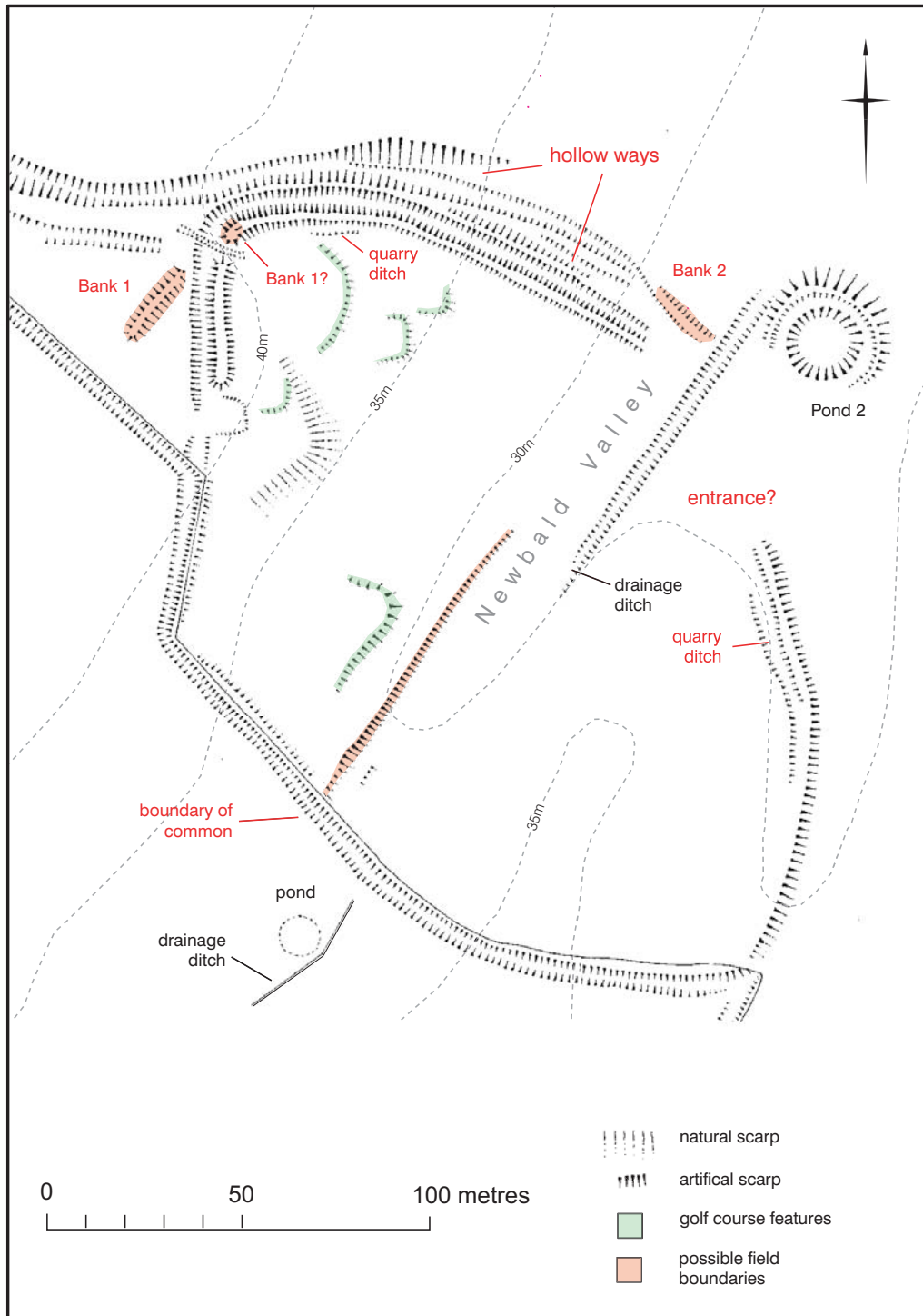
**Figure 8**  
Enclosures and  
field systems

..... approximate alignment  
of field boundaries plotted from  
aerial photography

0 250 500 m

It has entered the record as a possible Romano-British defended settlement (NMR no. TA 03 NW 64; RSM 26567). It may occupy a point in the valley where water naturally gathers since there are the remains of a large, circular pond on the valley floor immediately to the east of the enclosure (Pond 2) and a smaller one in the field to the west, just outside the boundary of the common.

The perimeter of the enclosure is not particularly obvious on the ground apart from on the north side of the valley where there is a prominent bank up to 1m high with an outer ditch (Figure 10). There is also a short length of a very shallow quarry ditch to the rear of the bank indicating where material for the bank was dug out of the ground. Two external ditch-like features on the north side of the enclosure have been interpreted in the past as part of the perimeter. However, they are later hollow ways following the outer edge of the enclosure, and will be discussed in Section 5.5.



**Figure 9**  
 English Heritage  
 survey plan of  
 Enclosure 2 reduced  
 from 1:1000 scale  
 original

There is a distinct break in the bank on the north-west side, at the apex of the enclosure, which might be an original entrance. However, it is more likely a later breach as a slight rise and fall within the gap indicates that the bank was originally continuous. Some 45m further south, a second break in the perimeter is caused by a modern footpath following the edge of the common. The ditch continues on the opposite side of the gap as a very shallow depression running up to the edge of the common. However, there is no surface evidence of the bank surviving alongside this section of ditch.

On the south-western side, the enclosure ditch now forms the boundary of the common and is consistently around 5m wide and up to 1.4m deep. A very low, spread bank on the inside



**Figure 10**  
*The north side of  
 Enclosure 2 looking  
 south*

starts on the north where the perimeter of the enclosure meets the edge of the common and ends on the south on the floor of the Newbald Valley. This length of bank may represent the original perimeter of the enclosure or it might be upcast from cleaning out of the ditch after it formed part of the boundary of the common.

The perimeter of the enclosure emerges again as an earthwork separate from the common boundary on the south-east side (Figure 11). Here the perimeter takes the form of a slight east-facing terrace close to the bottom of the spur. As the terrace turns to the north, a short



**Figure 11**  
*The south-east side  
 of Enclosure 2  
 looking east at the  
 point where the  
 perimeter diverges  
 from the common  
 boundary*

length of internal bank survives with a section of quarry ditch to its rear, cut into the slope of the spur. All traces of the perimeter fade out after it runs off the spur onto the floor of the valley. There is then a 20m wide break in the perimeter of the enclosure before it emerges as the prominent ditch and bank referred to above, ascending the slope on the north side of the Newbald Valley. Part of this gap may be where there was an entrance giving access along the level floor of the Newbald Valley. The rest of the gap could indicate where the perimeter has been levelled (possibly when the drainage ditch discussed below was dug) or has been buried underneath deposits eroding off the steep valley slope to the north.

There are no earthwork remains contemporary with the use of the enclosure in the interior but this cannot be taken as evidence that the enclosure was unoccupied. Level ground suitable for settlement on the north side above the Newbald Valley has been extensively landscaped to make greens and tees for the golf course. The other main area of level ground within the enclosure is along the valley bottom but any settlement remains here may have been levelled or obscured by hillwash deposits, as has the perimeter of the enclosure itself on the east side. On the valley floor there are two linear earthworks running from south-west to north-east. One earthwork is a shallow ditch which ends on the north-east adjacent to Pond 2. It was probably a surface drain supplying the pond as it is on the same alignment as a drainage channel in the field immediately to the west of the common. The second earthwork consists of a south-east facing scarp starting towards the west side of the enclosure and declining in height eastwards. This may be a field boundary pre-dating the enclosure as will be discussed below.

The enclosure was probably not for defence as has been assumed previously. It has little defensive strength as it is overlooked by higher ground on the north and north-east and most especially on the south by the steep south side of the Newbald Valley. The built strength of the enclosure has also been wrongly interpreted with the mis-identification of the hollow ways on the north-east side as an outer set of ditches. It is more likely that the enclosure was for keeping livestock since it appears to be sited at a point in the Newbald Valley with a natural water supply.

There are two pieces of earthwork evidence which shed light on the possible date of the enclosure. Firstly, the boundary of the common changes alignment abruptly where it meets both the north and south sides of the enclosure. This indicates that the enclosure was in existence when the common was established and that the common boundary was deliberately aligned so as to incorporate the south-west and south sides of the enclosure. The common is undated, but is first mentioned in the 13th century. Therefore at the very latest, the enclosure must be early-medieval. The second piece of earthwork evidence is that the enclosure overlies (and therefore is later than) a field of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date (Field System 1 discussed below). These two pieces of evidence indicate that the enclosure is likely to be late Romano-British or early medieval.

#### Field System 1

Two short lengths of bank immediately to the north-west and east of Enclosure 2 (Figure 8, Banks 1 and 2) and a longer scarp cut into the base of the slope within the enclosure may represent the north, east and south boundaries of a rectangular field respectively. Bank 1 is

a prominent earthwork running obliquely to the perimeter of the enclosure. On the north-east, Bank 1 ends parallel with the outer edge of the enclosure ditch suggesting the bank was truncated to allow for the cutting of the ditch. On the opposite side of the ditch, directly opposite the end of Bank 1, there is a noticeable rise and fall in the bank defining the perimeter of the enclosure. This possibly indicates that more of Bank 1 survives below the enclosure, thereby confirming that Bank 1 is earlier than the enclosure.

It is possible that Bank 2, further to the east, at the foot of the valley side, is a surviving part of the field boundary. This is a low earthwork which on the north is cut by a hollow way and on the south fades out on the floor of the valley. This bank might also be part of the west side of Field System 2 discussed below. The south side of the field is defined by a steep scarp at the bottom of the valley slope which is around 1.5m high on the south-west and declines in height to the north-east. This could have been formed by ploughs digging in to the foot of the slope although the scarp looks more like a deliberately cut feature. It could be the side of a drainage channel like the one nearby to the east (see above) but it is unlikely that a drainage ditch would have been dug so close to the foot of the slope. Consequently, it is possible that the feature is a boundary belonging to the suggested field. On the south-west, the feature merges into the natural slope and consequently there is no definite relationship visible between the scarp and the slight bank defining the perimeter of the enclosure or the ditch defining the boundary of the common. There is no evidence for the west side of the field but to the north-east, the suggested field may have joined with Field System 2 described below with Bank 2 part of the mutual boundary.

### Field System 2

A series of slight boundaries, perhaps the partial remains of two adjacent rectilinear fields, are evident on the slope overlooking the north side of the Newbald Valley. These features are associated in the record with the Enclosure 2, 50m to the south-west, although there is no physical connection between the two (NMR no. TA 03 NW 64; RSM 26567). The visible remains comprise a north to south aligned terrace with a slight bank at right angles defining the east and north sides respectively of a probable field. The west side is indicated by faint traces on aerial photography (RAF 1951) and further south, it is possible that Bank 2 belonging to Field System 1 marks the southern continuation to the foot of the valley side. There is no evidence on the ground or on air photography for any boundary defining the south side of this field. A break in the terrace forming the east side of this field may indicate a deliberately-created entrance but it is more likely to be due to secondary erosion by livestock. Aerial photography also shows two further boundaries immediately adjacent to the east (RAF 1951), possibly defining the north and east sides of a second field. No trace of these boundaries survives on the ground.

### Field System 3

Aerial photographic and earthwork evidence combine to reveal a pattern of rectilinear boundaries on the top of the ridge to the north of the Newbald Valley, around 100m to the east of Burton Bushes (Figures 8 and 12). It is likely that the pattern is incomplete and that the boundaries originally helped to define two adjacent fields. The east field is aligned from

east to west and has minimum dimensions of 100m by 50m. The north and west sides survive as a slight ditch up to 4m wide and 0.3m deep with the very faint traces of an internal bank. The north-east corner and the east side are only visible from the air as marks in the grass whilst there is no evidence surviving for the south side. The west field is aligned north to south with minimum dimensions of 80m by 40m. The field continues northwards beyond the north boundary of the east field. The south and west sides are defined by a broad shallow ditch which could be interpreted as a hollow way. However, the abruptness of the right angle turn at the south-west corner indicates that, despite its width, it is more likely to be a boundary feature than a trackway, although this is not conclusive as the middle section of a track recorded elsewhere on the common (Route 5) takes several equally sharp turns (see Section 5.5). On the east, the field shares a boundary with the east field, whilst there is no evidence surviving for a northern boundary.

Since Field Systems 1-3 have comparable rectilinear layouts, it is possible they are contemporary and represent an episode of small-scale enclosure either for cultivation or for keeping livestock. The regularity of the layout suggests the field systems were laid out in an open environment rather than a woodland setting. Tree cover would have constrained the laying out long lengths of straight boundary banks. This provides a clue to the date as it rules out the period from the Middle Ages up until the 18th century when it is documented that large parts of the common were wooded. They could be later than the 18th century but this seems unlikely given their degraded character. This points to a period before the Middle Ages when the area was devoid of woodland. Therefore an Iron Age or Romano-British date seems the most likely given the evident intensity of land-use across the Wolds in these periods (Stoertz 1997).

A very straight east-west bank shows up on aerial photographs taken in December 1945 extending between the south and east sides of the racecourse (RAF 1945b). It is visible as



**Figure 12**  
*Aerial photograph showing Field System 3 to the east of Burton Bushes (RAF 1945a)*

a very spread bank on the ground, indicating it may have been levelled since the photograph was taken. The bank appears to be wholly contained within the track of the racecourse suggesting it might not be any earlier than the course itself.

#### **4. Quarries, pits and ponds**

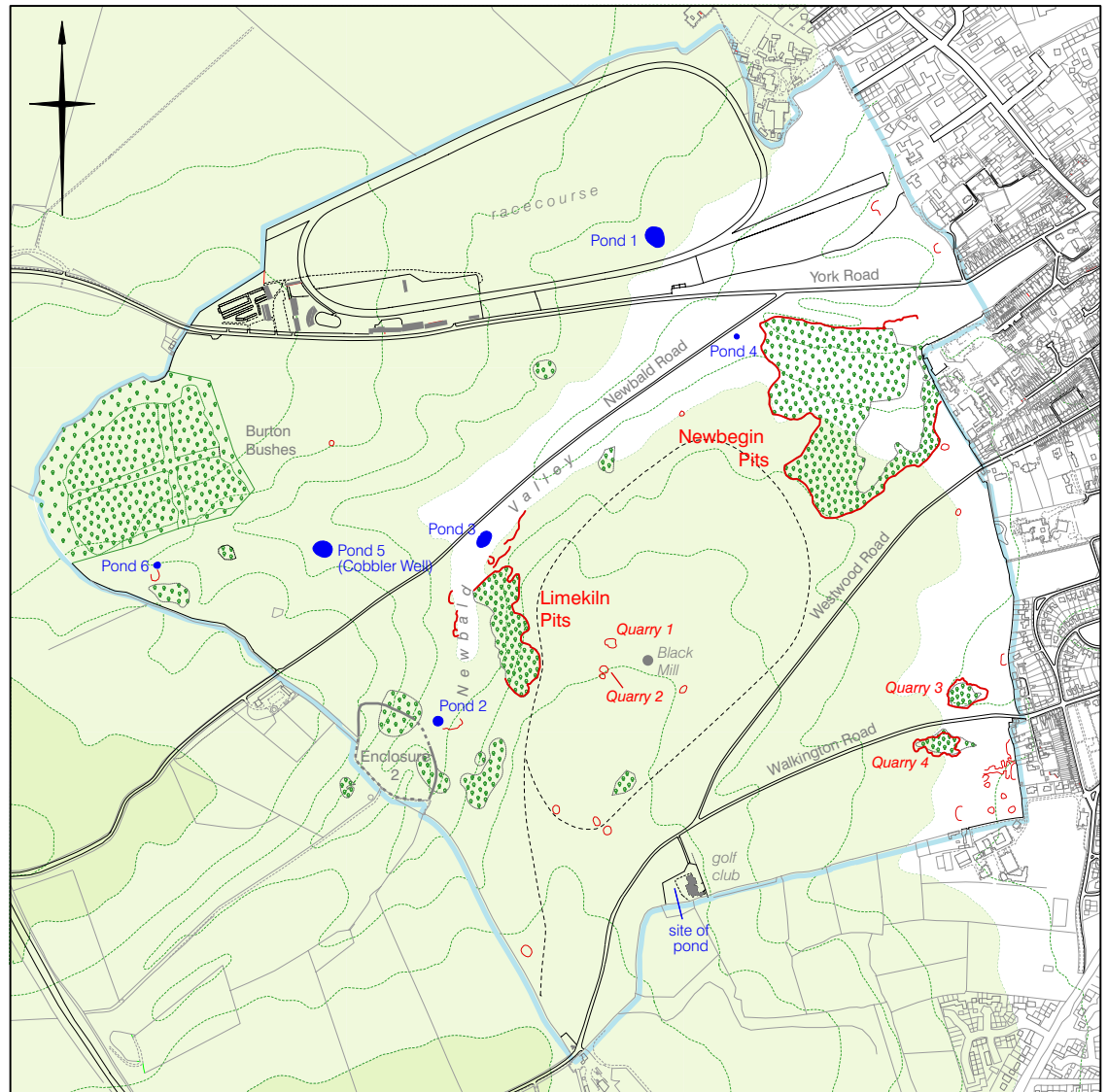
##### **Minor pits and hollows**

The grubbing-out of tree roots in the 18th and early 19th centuries and small-scale digging for chalk and clay has left parts of the common pitted with small hollows (Allison 1989, 217). Most of these hollows are 1.5m to 3m in diameter and as the majority do not have associated spoil mounds, they are more likely to indicate where trees roots have been dug out of the ground rather than surface digging for clay or chalk. They occur right across the Westwood but are mainly concentrated on the higher western third of the common which suggests this was the last area with trees. The hollows were not individually recorded during the survey.

There are a number of larger and deeper depressions on the common indicating slightly more organised and prolonged quarrying (Figure 13). They are present in greatest numbers close to the east edge of the common which suggests that they were mostly dug to get chalk and clay for use in the town. They average around 1-2m in depth and are generally quite irregular in shape. Two partially infilled examples have been mistaken in the past for prehistoric burial mounds and have already been described (Figure 13, Quarries 1 and 2). It is also possible that an irregularly-shaped pond depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map on the west side of the Union Mill was a water-filled quarry hollow (Ordnance Survey 1855). The site is now covered by the car park belonging to the golf club. Quarrying might also explain the origin of the pond called Cobbler Well to the north of Newbald Road (Pond 5).

Most of the pits were probably dug by townsfolk to obtain clay and chalk for building or other purposes and therefore could range in date from the medieval period onwards. Some of those on the edge of the golf course could be redundant bunkers or quarry pits for the construction of the golf course and therefore date to the 20th century. For example, there is a shallow, roughly rectangular hollow within the area of the main group of Iron Age square barrows. It lies in between two golf tees and very probably provided material to help with their construction (see Figure 7).

All these small quarry hollows are eclipsed in scale by the Newbegin Pits which cover nearly 10ha on the east side of the common, the Limekiln Pits towards the west, and by two unnamed quarries towards the south-east corner of the common (Figure 13, Quarries 3 and 4). Because of the broken nature of the ground and density of the tree cover and vegetation in these quarries, the English Heritage archaeological investigation was limited to defining the limits of the quarrying and a visual inspection of the floor and sides. It was concluded that there was little additional understanding to be gained from a detailed analytical survey of the array of pits and waste heaps that characterise the interiors of each of these quarries.



**Figure 13**  
Location of  
quarries, pits and  
ponds

### Newbegin Pits

The quarry was probably mainly used to extract clay, which is naturally thicker here than on the higher parts of the common to the west, although some chalk was probably also extracted. The first edition Ordnance Survey map labels an area on the north-east side of the quarry as an old chalk pit (Ordnance Survey 1855). The map evidence suggests large-scale quarrying had probably ceased by the middle of the 19th century as most of the area was covered with trees at the time of mapping. As was noted earlier, the Newbegin Pits were also used for bull baiting until the practice was banned in 1824. One of the arenas used still survives and is described below (see Section 5.10). It is harder to be certain when quarrying started, but it appears to lie within an area that was ploughed in the Middle Ages as there are medieval plough ridges to both the north and south (see Section 5.6). Therefore the Newbegin Pits are probably not any earlier than the late medieval period.



### The Limekiln Pits

The Limekiln Pits are on the south-east side of the Newbald Valley and cover an area of 1.8ha. This quarry could potentially have started in the medieval period, as there is a reference to the Archbishop's limekiln in 1379-80 and to a chalk quarry by the end of the same century (Allison 1989, 217). The quarry was evidently still being worked at the beginning of the 19th century as the last limekiln there continued to operate until 1812. This was demolished five years later (Allison 1989, 217). Several limekilns are shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map against the east face of the quarry (Ordnance Survey 1855). This is some 40 years after quarrying ceased and one can only suppose they would have been in ruins by then. No trace of them now survives but their approximate locations are indicated by several broad hollows near the east face of the quarry. On the west side, the quarry area is fringed by mounds of waste chalk rubble from the quarrying operations.

In a probably related episode of quarrying, chalk has been dug out of the south-east side of the Newbald Valley immediately to the north of the Limekiln Pits leaving a series of broadly crescent-shaped scoops into the hillside over a total length of 130m. The quarrying does not penetrate very far into the valley side and therefore was probably not all that intensive. Two separate banks of spoil extend north-westwards from this quarry for 300m forming an avenue down the valley floor to define one of the fairways of the golf course. It is possible these banks have been formed out of quarry waste. Minor quarrying has also taken place on the opposite side of the valley to the Limekiln Pits, indicated by a meandering cut along the foot of the slope.

Quarry 3 at the south-east of the common is depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map where it is labelled as an old chalk pit, suggesting it had fallen out of use by the date of the survey in 1852 (Ordnance Survey 1855). It consists of a single quarry floor without any of the complexity of spoil heaps and hollows evident at the two larger quarries described above. There is a much shallower area of quarrying on the opposite side of the road which was probably for clay as it does not seem to penetrate the underlying chalk (Quarry 4). It does not appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map which suggests that it is later (Ordnance Survey 1855). However, it is more likely that the feature was considered too insignificant to record and that judging from its overgrown and weathered appearance it is probably equally as old as the quarry to the north. From the relatively small size of these two quarries compared to the Newbegin and Limekiln Pits they are probably not as old and therefore probably did not start until well after the end of the medieval period.

### Ponds and drainage features

As the solid geology of the area is chalk, the Westwood, like the Yorkshire Wolds generally, is largely devoid of surface water. As the woods were cleared from the common and the ground turned over to pasture, the lack of water for the livestock was addressed by the construction of a number of beast ponds which are amongst the most noticeable earthwork features on the common (Figure 13). These all appear to be artificial and were probably clay lined in order to stop the water from seeping away. They are all dry now but were presumably fed by a combination of ground seepage off the higher slopes and by underground pipes and

surface drains. In their present form they are all probably 19th century in date but as established watering holes they could well date back into the medieval period and be associated with the clearance of the woodland to form livestock pasture. This longevity of use is evident from the deeply incised sections of hollow way which head towards several of the ponds.

Ponds 1-4 are depicted as containing water on the first edition Ordnance Survey map and were presumably then in use as beast ponds (Ordnance Survey 1855). Pond 5 is marked as Cobbler Well but the Ordnance Survey map depiction implies that it did not contain any water at the time of the survey in 1852, whilst the smallest (Pond 6) is not shown at all (Ordnance Survey 1855). The same map also shows a large pond immediately to the west of the Union Mill now covered by part of the golf club car park. The feature appears quite irregular in plan compared to the saucer-shaped depressions of the surviving ponds and could well have been a disused quarry that had filled with water.

The deepest of the ponds - and the only one with any water in it at the time of the English Heritage survey - is on Hurn, within the boundary of the racecourse (Pond 1). It is shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map with a track leading from it across the York Road and onto the Westwood suggesting it was regularly used by livestock from across the common (Ordnance Survey 1855). The pond is roughly circular and around 1.5m deep with steep sides and is embanked on the downhill, south-east side. There is an outlet at the south-east corner.

There are three ponds for livestock in the bottom of the Newbald Valley, all of which are now dry. The most westerly is around 1m deep and is surrounded by a prominent embankment on all sides except the south-west where the ground rises naturally (Pond 2) and is situated immediately to the east of Enclosure 2. The pond now falls within one of the fairways of the golf course and has been landscaped as a result. There is a short length of inlet pipe visible on the south side, whilst the first edition Ordnance Survey map marks what looks like an open drain feeding into the west side of the pond (Ordnance Survey 1855). As noted earlier, the line of a drain from this direction is visible as an earthwork crossing the interior of Enclosure 2.

The second pond in the bottom of the Newbald Valley (Pond 3) is some 360m to the north of Pond 2 in the centre of one of the fairways of the golf course (Pond 3). It is an oval, shallow-sided hollow around 1m deep and has also probably been landscaped to form part of the golf course. The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows an inlet entering the west side but no surface trace of this now survives (Ordnance Survey 1855).

The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows a large pond towards the east end of the Newbald Valley close to the west side of the Newbegin Pits (Ordnance Survey 1855). All that now survives is a low, crescent-shaped scarp (Pond 4). This presumably defines the south half of the former pond. The feature is being actively eroded by livestock using the water-trough immediately to the west.

A hollow, some 2-3m deep on a north-facing slope towards the west side of the common is called Cobbler Well (Pond 5). It is evident from the vegetation that ground water gathers in the bottom and there is now a concrete water-trough for animals but despite the name, there is no evidence of an actual well. The hollow has presumably been a livestock pond although it is quite deep and might have begun as a chalk quarry. A narrow shelf around most of the hollow about a third of the way from the top could result from quarrying though it could have been cut to make it easier for the livestock to get up and down the sides. The feature may be the Shoemakers Pit referred to in 1577, in which case it could be well over four hundred years old (Allison 1989, 215). Three narrow gullies head off in different directions from the top of the hollow, two to the north-west and south-west for about 40m but the third heads on a curving path eastwards for upwards of 140m. It is possible that the two shorter lengths conveyed surface drainage towards the hollow but the third is far too long for this and looks more like a worn down path. Perhaps all three have been created by the passage of livestock over a prolonged period.

West of Cobbler Well, almost at the western boundary of the common, a small circular hollow around 1m deep defines the site of a further livestock pond (Pond 6). It is located in the bottom of a shallow valley which joins with the Newbald Valley to the east. The feature is now dry and has been landscaped to form part of one of the fairways of the golf course.

## **5. Routeways**

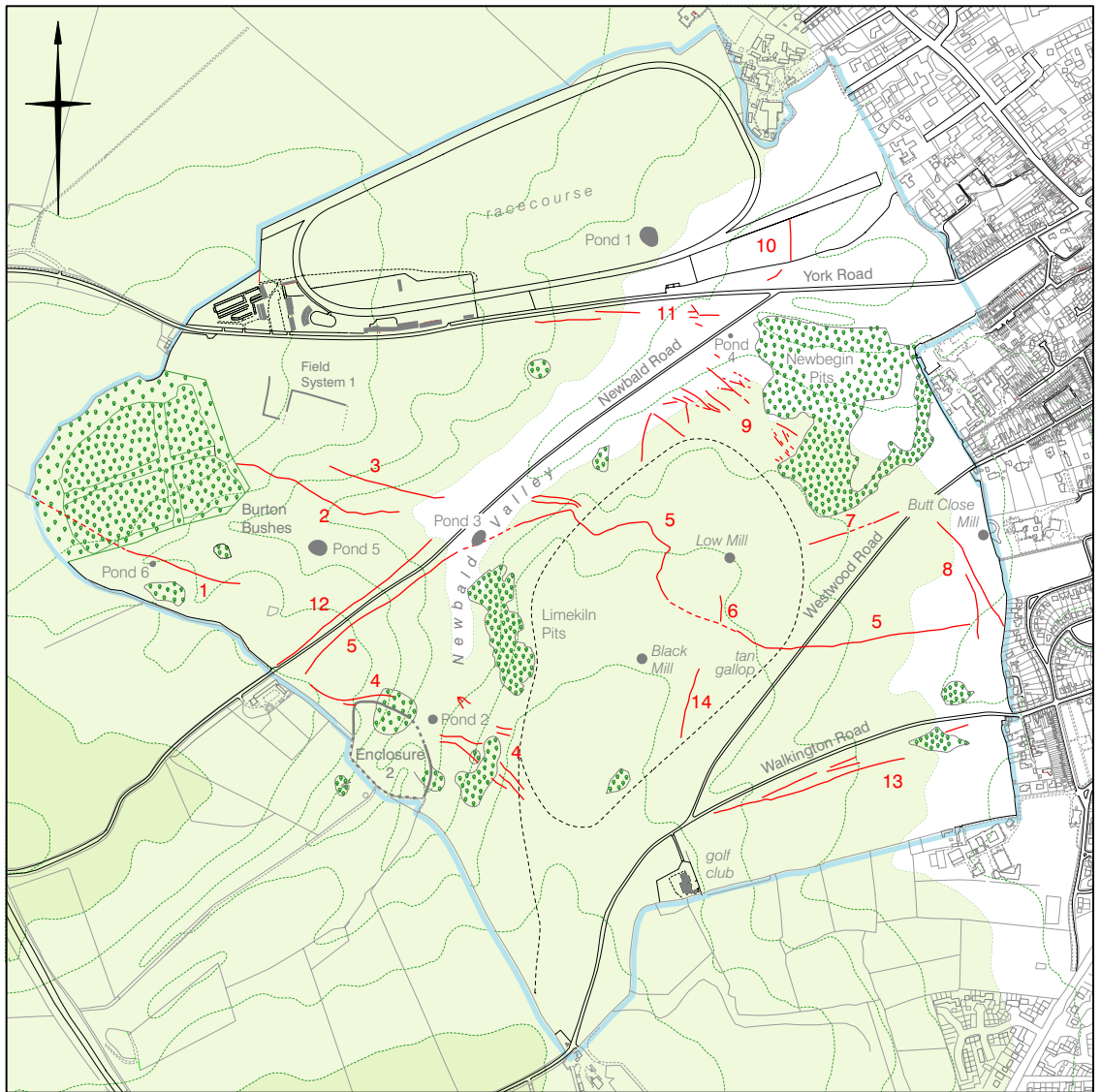
With very few exceptions, most of the modern paths crossing the common (and those shown on historic mapping as far back as the first edition Ordnance Survey map) have left no significant earthwork traces. Consequently, the pattern of well-trodden routes indicated by the various lengths of hollow way on the common are likely to be considerably earlier than the mid 19th century and several could be medieval or earlier in date (Figure 14).

The hollow ways are particularly obvious on the steeper slopes such as the sides of the Newbald Valley where they clearly focus on the ponds in the valley floor. This is strong evidence that some of these routes probably served as droveways for livestock and it is possible they were bordered by hedges or fences to help control the passage of animals. The creation of earthwork settings for timber posts or raised beds for hedgerows may explain the banks evident alongside some lengths of hollow way.

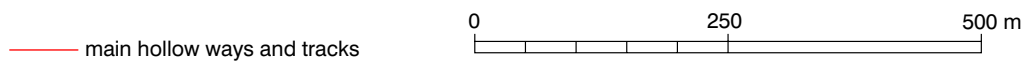
Several lengths run parallel to existing roads and presumably date to before the alignment of these routes became permanently fixed as metalled roads in the 18th and 19th centuries (Routes 11-13). There is also one long section which has been raised on an embankment or causeway (Route 14). This indicates a deliberately planned and constructed route, whereas it is likely that the majority of those indicated by the hollow ways developed gradually over time through habitual use.

### **Route 1**

This is traceable for a distance of 230m heading eastwards from the south side of Burton Bushes across a shallow side valley off the north side of the main Newbald Valley. It mostly survives as a slight hollow way, though for nearly 20m on the south slope of the valley, the



**Figure 14**  
Location of  
routeways



route is on a slight embankment indicating some engineering of the track has taken place. Presumably this was necessitated by the condition of the ground, though it is difficult to see why because the surface is now dry and firm. There is no evidence of the route continuing westwards within Burton Bushes, but this is not conclusive as the area is very overgrown. That it did continue is suggested by the fact that the west boundary of the common takes a slight kick westwards at the projected point where the route would have met it. If it is the track that is responsible for this change in alignment of the common boundary then it strongly suggests that the route is the earlier landscape feature and therefore pre-dates the formation of the common.

#### Route 2

This route starts as a 0.5m deep hollow way on the east side of Burton Bushes. There is no sign of the feature within the wooded area itself but it could be obscured by the undergrowth. Heading eastwards, the hollow way deepens considerably to become a very prominent

landscape feature as it descends obliquely off the north face of the side valley off the main Newbald Valley. It extends for a distance of 350m before fading out as an earthwork on the floor of the main Newbald Valley. It is labelled as an 'Old Road' on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1855) suggesting those responsible for compiling the map were clear about its origins, perhaps because it had been in regular use as a route not long previously.

### Route 3

Route 3 is on the hillslope above and to the north of Route 2 and is visible as a slight terrace descending towards the Newbald Valley. It has a total length of around 240m. It is co-axial with Field System 2 above the crest of the slope 120m to the north and therefore could conceivably be contemporary with it. However, an aerial photograph shows this part of the common under cultivation in the Second World War with the cultivated area ending almost exactly on the line of this feature on the west and south-west (RAF 1945b). Consequently, the track may be no older than the 1940s and related to the cultivation then taking place.

### Route 4

Route 4 is represented by a group of hollow ways towards the west edge of the common which collectively represent a route crossing the Newbald Valley from north-west to south-east. At the north-west, the route starts as a single hollow way close to the point where the present Newbald Road enters the west side of the common. It heads for Enclosure 2 (described in Section 5.3), passing around its north side. A second much shorter length of hollow way to the south heads towards a gap in the north side of the same enclosure. This break is not an original entrance but has been forced through the perimeter bank and indicates this particular length of hollow way is later than the enclosure. The main route passes around the north side of the enclosure and is therefore probably later. It then drops down the slope to the floor of the valley. There are in actual fact several lengths of hollow way on this slope which have been mistaken in the past as the outer defences of the enclosure. They all fade out towards the base of the slope but it is fairly certain that the route crossed the valley floor between the enclosure on the south-west and Pond 2 to the north-west. The proximity of the pond suggests the route was probably used to bring livestock down to this watering hole. The route emerges again on the south side of the valley with the survey recording nine separate lengths of hollow way on the slope. None could be traced for more than a few metres beyond the top of the south side of the valley and therefore it is impossible to trace the continuation of the route any further across the common. There is no firm evidence of date other than the route post-dates the enclosure which is probably Romano-British or early-medieval. The balance of probability is the route is medieval, though a Romano-British date is conceivable given that the enclosure might date to that period.

### Route 5

This is by far the longest single route on the common. Three separate lengths of hollow way define a single circuitous track running right across the common from west to east. As will be discussed in more detail below, it is possible that the middle of the three lengths of hollow way partly follow the line of an earlier boundary ditch, whilst there is evidence that the

route could pre-date the middle of the 12th century (see below). It has entered the record as a possible boundary or trackway of prehistoric or Roman origin (NMR no. TA 03 NW 81)

The western length of hollow way runs parallel to the south of the Newbald Road and like Routes 1 and 2 might reasonably be interpreted as an earlier alignment of that road. However, both the west and east ends of the hollow way bend away from the line of that road suggesting it is not simply an earlier alignment. On the east, the hollow way drops down to the floor of the Newbald Valley to end close to the west side of Pond 3 in the floor of the valley. This emphasises that one of its functions was probably to bring livestock down to this water source.

The middle section of the route begins as a hollow way on the slope on the opposite side of the Newbald Valley. Quarrying on the north side of the Limekiln Pits (described earlier) cuts across the point where the hollow way would have begun to rise out of the valley floor. Higher up it survives as a quite deeply-incised feature aligned obliquely up the slope and with a bank on the northern, down-slope side. Two other shorter lengths of hollow way on the slope to the north of this bank are probably connected with this route. Above the crest of the valley side, the main hollow way is flanked by slight banks and takes a number of abrupt turns, the only length of hollow way on the common to change alignment to this extent. Despite these twists and turns, the general direction is south-easterly but the surface traces become gradually weaker until they disappear all together 130m to the north-east of the Black Mill. The banks fade out well before this, some 70m after the route reaches the top of the valley side.

There is no certain reason to account for the abrupt changes in alignment of the hollow way. It is possible that this length was weaving in between fields or enclosures which have left no other visible remains. The associated banks could be evidence that the hollow way itself served as a land boundary although they might equally have been constructed to control the movement of livestock if the route was used as a droveway. Alternatively, the winding course of the route could be because it passed between clearings at a time when this part of the common was heavily wooded. These various all point to an early date for this route, suggesting it could be medieval or, as has been suggested in the past, perhaps even prehistoric.

A third section of hollow way probably marks the continuation of the route eastwards to the east side of the common. However, there is a 160m gap between it and the middle section of hollow way described above. Therefore it is not absolutely certain that the two are part of the same route. The east section of hollow way is slight and survives intermittently as an earthwork. For the first 70m, the route heads south-east before turning eastwards down the slope to disappear as a surface feature, 80m from the east boundary of the common.

Confirmation of the likely early date of the route is that this last section of hollow way heads straight in the direction of an existing street in Beverley called Minster Moorgate on the north side of Beverley Minster. The name Minster Moorgate, which is recorded before 1270, suggests this street could have originated as the start of a route heading westwards from

the Minster onto what is now the Westwood (Miller *et al.* 1982, 82). Minster Moorgate now goes no further in this direction than a north-south street called Lathgate (now Lairgate) in the Middle Ages, part of the medieval suburb on the west side of Beverley. The development of this street and the construction of the town defences in parallel to the east of Lathgate would have severed the link between Minster Moorgate and the section of hollow way on the common. Lathgate is mentioned as early as the mid 13th century (Allison 1989, 173) whilst the defences are also mentioned at this period but could be as early as the mid 12th century (Miller *et al.* 1982, 39). The implication of these dates is that the suggested route heading from the Minster to the area of the common is probably 12th century or earlier.

#### Route 6

A wide but short length of hollow way heads due northwards towards the site of Low Mill on exactly the same alignment as a track heading to the mill building shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855). On the south, the hollow way widens out and ends precisely at the point where the map shows a number of tracks converging. The route is therefore unlikely to be any earlier than the 1640s which is the date of the construction of the mill (see Section 5.7 below).

#### Route 7

Route 7 comprises two lengths of hollow way aligned east to west to the north of Westwood Road. The west section starts at the edge of the tan gallop and continues for 85m eastwards to end at the line of a transverse ditch or narrow track. At over 1m deep in places, the hollow way appears to have received prolonged and intensive use. Some 50m to the east, there is a very slight hollow way on the same alignment which probably marks the continuation of the route for a further 60m eastwards. Projecting the line of the route westwards for 150m, it meets the site of the Low Mill and therefore it is reasonable to suggest it originated as a route to that building.

#### Route 8

This is comprised of two broadly parallel hollow ways aligned from north to south suggesting movement of people and livestock along the same general route along the east edge of the common. The easternmost hollow way is quite broad and starts at the east edge of the common. It fades out after about 100m as a linear depression but the east side is traceable for a further 150m as a single scarp. There is also a low, intermittent bank on the west side suggesting this particular hollow way had a boundary function or was used as a driveway for livestock. Northwards, the hollow way might possibly have linked up with Route 9 described above. The second hollow way to the west is shorter and less clearly defined on the ground. Several small pits cut into the west side of the feature and it is also blocked at one point by a prominent mound. Its date is impossible to determine.

#### Route 9

The shoulder of high ground on the east side of the Newbald Valley immediately to the west of the Newbegin Pits is heavily scoured with short lengths of hollow way, some quite deeply incised. These hollow ways, of which the survey recorded ten main lengths, collectively

indicate the habitual route taken by livestock down to Pond 4 in the valley floor. None appear to have been eroded recently and in fact may predate the quarrying of the Newbegin Pits to the east. This is because there is a further group of shallow hollow ways a short distance to the east above the crest of the valley. They are on the same alignment as the group on the valley side and therefore could well be contemporary, but several are cut on the east by the quarried edge of the Newbegin Pits. This indicates they are earlier than the quarrying and therefore could well be several centuries old.

#### Route 10

A single, broad hollow way on the north side of the York Road traverses the hedge line that now defines the edge of the racecourse but earlier marked the southern boundary of Hurn. This probably represents an access route onto Hurn pre-dating the development of the racecourse in the 1760s and is very probably medieval or early post-medieval in date.

#### Route 11

This is formed by a number of separate hollow ways on the south side of the York Road. The two longest lengths on the west could define earlier alignments of the route before it was fixed as a metalled turnpike road in 1764 (Allison 1989, 168). The group of hollow ways to the east are mostly too narrow to have been the main route and could indicate where small diversions occurred when the main route was impassable. The features could therefore have formed over quite a long period of time but are very probably not older than the medieval period.

#### Route 12

This hollow way runs from the west edge of the common for just over 400m parallel with the Newbald Road, about 25m to its north. The north edge of the hollow way is defined by a bank up to 0.5m high shown as a hedge line on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. The track is almost certainly an earlier and slightly more northerly alignment of the Newbald Road and could date back to the medieval period.

#### Route 13

Several long lengths of hollow way run parallel with the Walkington Road on its south side. They collectively indicate earlier alignments of that route onto the common before the road alignment was made permanent. A section of the eastern hollow way in this group is depicted on the 1892 Ordnance Survey map indicated this, and probably the other lengths in this group are more than a century old at least, and could even date back to the medieval period (Ordnance Survey 1892).

#### Route 14

A quite broad, flat-topped embankment begins just over 160m to the south-east of the Black Mill and runs almost due north for a distance of 100m. The feature has been noted before and the possibility of it being a Roman road has been suggested (Beverley and District Civic Society 1966). The low and flat-topped profile of the earthwork does suggest it is more likely to represent an embanked road rather than a boundary but interpretation is hampered by the fact that so little of it survives. The feature ends on the north at the edge of the area



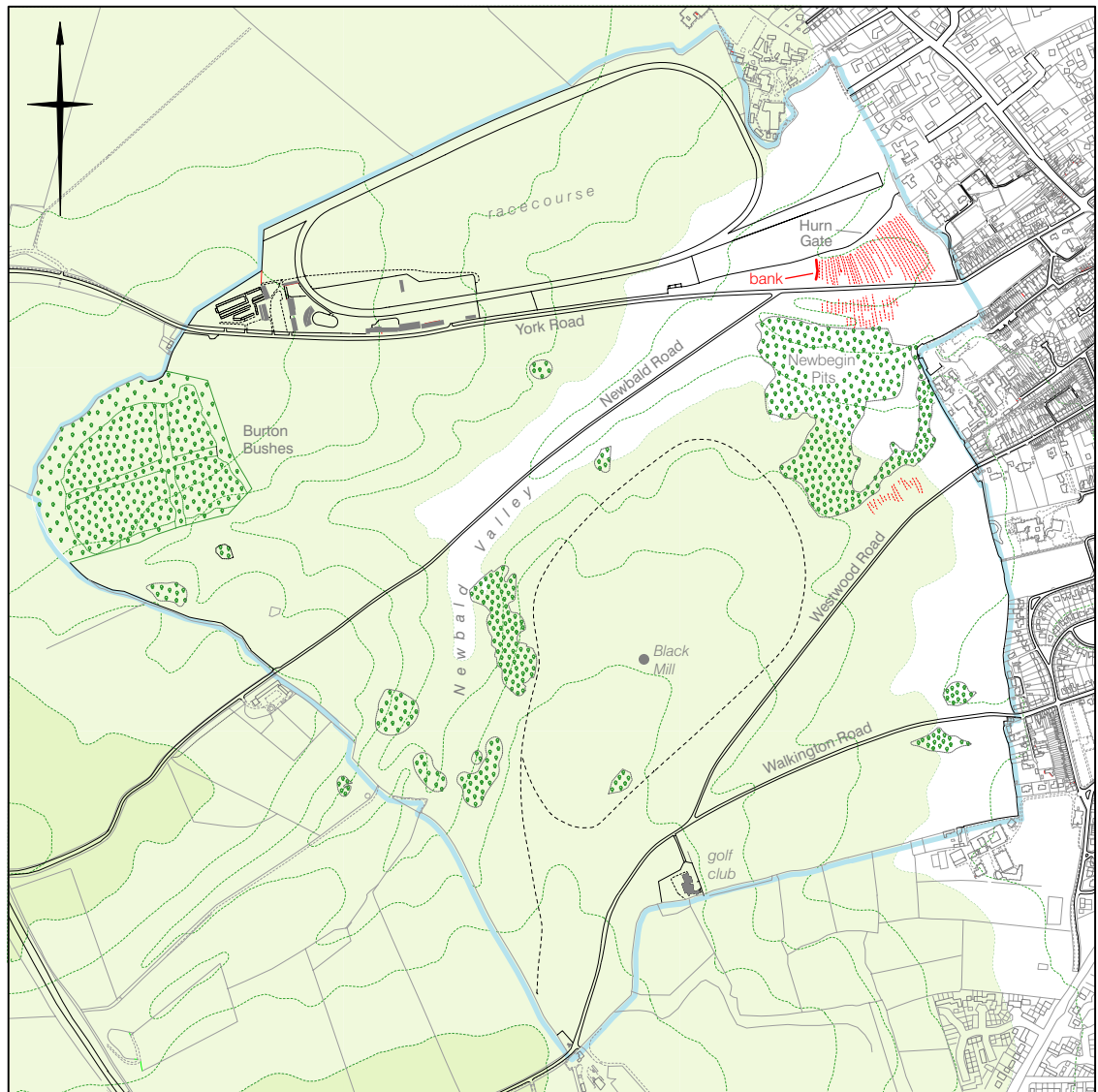
cultivated in the Second World War and presumably this has been responsible for the destruction of an unknown length northwards. A slight hollow on the same alignment 20m to the north may be a trace of the route continuing as may be a second hollow 50m further to the south.

Northwards, the route is aligned on the site of the Low Mill first mentioned in the 1640s but reportedly disused and in ruins by 1856 (Allison 1989, 218). It is possible that the route is associated with the mill and therefore could well date to between the mid-17th century and the mid-19th century. However, a hollow way noted on a slightly different alignment is more definitely the route leading northwards to the mill (Route 6). It is also not clear why a section of this route was raised on an embankment when the ground is dry and quite level. It has been suggested that it is the *agger* of a Roman road and this possibility should not be ruled out (Beverley and District Civic Society 1966).

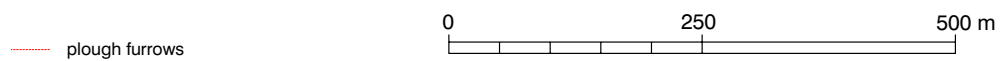
## **6. Medieval cultivation**

A block of ridge and furrow ploughing aligned roughly north to south survives on the north-east corner of the common where it is crossed by the York Road (Figure 15). It is disturbed by the avenues of trees flanking this road. Most of the ridges are about 5-7m across and are quite prominent on the north side of the road, but less so on the south where the ground surface seems generally more worn down by the passage of people and livestock. All the ridges curve gently to the east and in size and form they are typical of the remains left by ploughing with oxen and almost certainly date to the medieval period (Hall 1982). The ridge and furrow begins on the north just short of a hedge line that probably marks the historic boundary between Westwood common and Hurn. The gate in the hedge line is labelled 'Hurn Gate' on the first edition Ordnance Survey map and on the east extends close to the eastern boundary of the common (Ordnance Survey 1855). On the north side of the road, a bank defines the west edge of the plough ridges and is probably a contemporary field boundary although the feature does not survive on the south side of the road. On the south, the ploughing is truncated by the Newbegin Pits but there is a possibility that it originally extended for a further 300m southwards. This is because there is a second block of plough ridges with broadly the same alignment and dimensions on the south side of Newbegin Pits. These end on the west approximately in line with the plough ridges to the north of Newbegin Pits noted above. If projected across the gap created by the Newbegin Pits, the alignment of these plough ridges with those to the north of the pits would quite neatly make one series of reversed S plough ridges. This is the type of plan that usually characterises medieval ploughing with oxen.

The main block of plough ridges on the north side of Newbegin Pits is in an area called Low Green on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. This was a close which was not included in the common until 1656 (see Section 5.1) and it seems likely that this area of ploughing therefore took place before the land was included in the common. This is less certainly the case with all the ploughed area since it evidently extended well to the south of Newbegin Pits and therefore beyond the likely limits of the close called Low Green. It is possible some of this area on the south was common land when the ploughing occurred with the cultivated



**Figure 15**  
Medieval  
cultivation  
remains



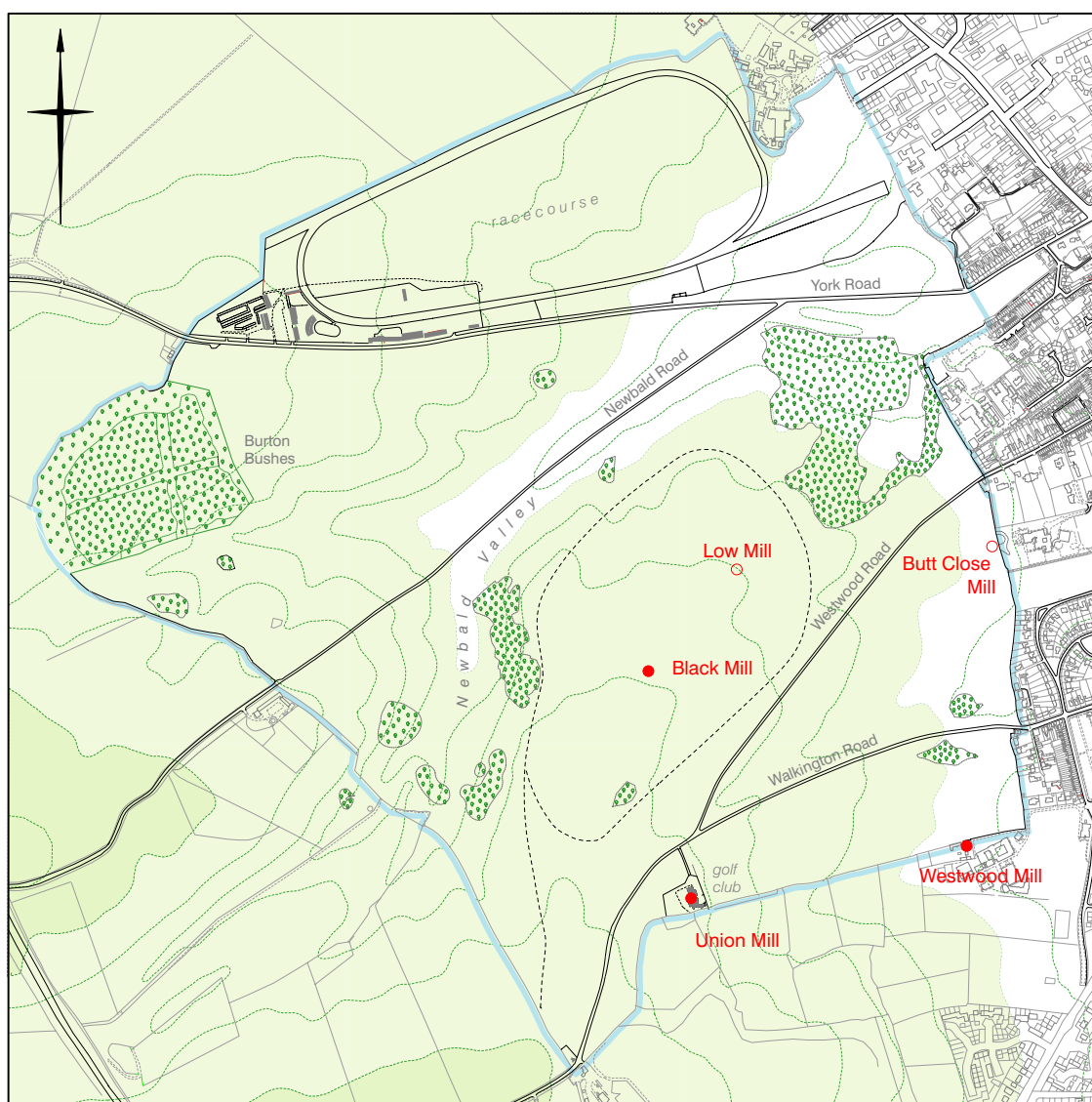
area therefore falling partly within and partly outside the common. The start of quarrying at the Newbegin Pits could give a *terminus ante quem* for the ploughing as it cuts across the ploughed area. However, the historical research in support of the survey has not established when quarrying commenced (see section 5.4).

Blocks of ridge and furrow ploughing have been recorded immediately outside the east and south boundaries of the Westwood but there is no field evidence that this ploughing ever encroached onto the common (Allison 1989, 212). The plough ridges to the south are probably part of the 155 acres of arable recorded as belonging to the Archbishop's demesne in Beverley Parks in 1340 (Allison 1989, 275).

## 7. Mills

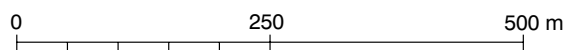
Five different mills are known to have stood at one time or another on the Westwood (Figure 16). Three have left partial standing remains (Black Mill, Westwood Mill and the Union Mill) and the sites of the other two are defined by very low and partial earthworks (Low Mill and Butt Close Mill).

Black Mill (see frontispiece) stands close to the centre of the common on a prominent ridge and is the common's most distinctive landmark, although the top was removed after the mill ceased operation in 1868 (NMR no.TA 03 NW41; Allison 1989, 218). The suggestion was made above that the original mill might have been constructed on a prehistoric burial mound given that the mill is on the same alignment as the two Bronze Age round barrows 100m and 150m to the north-west. The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows several ancillary buildings next to the mill tower and a surrounding enclosure wall (Ordnance Survey 1855). These have left only fragmentary earthwork remains as there has been extensive erosion of the ground surface around the base of the tower by livestock. There is a slight outward



**Figure 16**  
Location of mills

- mill building extant
- mill building demolished



facing scarp which curves around the south, west and north sides of the tower at a distance of 2-3m. This defines part of an enclosure shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. On the east side of the tower, a rectilinear platform partially cut into the ground marks the site of one of the ancillary buildings.

The Union Mill is on the south-west side of the common. It was built in 1800 and ceased operation in the 1890s after which the top of the tower was removed and is now the club house for the golf course (Allison 1989, 218).

The Westwood mill stands just outside the boundary of the common close to its south-east corner. It was constructed in 1802 and ceased operation in the 1890s since when the tower has been partially dismantled and is now in private ownership (Allison 1989, 218).

The Low Mill is referred to in the 1640s and is therefore the earliest recorded windmill on the common (Allison 1989, 218). It was rebuilt several times but was in ruins by 1856 and was dismantled shortly afterwards. The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows the mill within an enclosure (Ordnance Survey 1855). There are no significant remains surviving apart from a small circular depression marking the site of the well. The ground seems to have been thoroughly levelled, the site falling within one of the areas of the common to be cultivated during the Second World War. The mill enclosure is visible from the air as a crop mark with the footings of the actual mill building visible as a circle of much greener grass within this area (NMR2001)

Butt Close Mill stood hard against the east side of the common and was built in 1761 (Allison 1989, 218). It lasted a century until the lease on the close expired, after which the mill was demolished and the close eradicated in order to return the area to common land. A riot is reported to have hastened the demolition process. All that can be traced on the ground are slight curving banks marking the south-west and north-west corners of the close as marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855).

## **8. Activity in the First and Second World Wars**

### **The First World War airfield**

The racecourse was turned over to the military in the First World War for use as an airfield to counter the growing threat from German Zeppelins (Ramsden and Hayes 2002, 4). The paucity of earthwork remains within the racecourse compared to the rest of the common could indicate the ground was levelled at this time so as not to impede the take-off and landing of aeroplanes. A 1917 aerial photograph indicates the racecourse track was removed during this period (ERYAS 1917). The same photograph also shows a group of what look like single-storey buildings of various lengths at the south-west corner of the site, away from the main grandstand. Though it is possible some were for the racecourse, it is likely that most were constructed by the military for use as hangars and workshops. A low level aerial photograph taken on 20 July 1941 shows only one of these buildings left standing (RAF 1941). From its appearance it looks like it might have been an accommodation block with three chimneys and a large water tower at one end (Figure 17). The building still stands (Figure 18) and was recorded by A. Williamson for the 1995-2001 Defence of Britain project

(Non anti-invasion record no. 5147). The site was in military use again when the 1941 photograph was taken and in addition to the suggested accommodation block it shows two long sheds not far to the north-west with military vehicles parked outside. The sheds were not there in 1917 and therefore were either built for the racecourse in the inter-war period or by the military during the early years of the Second World War. The English Heritage survey noted two small building platforms survive as earthworks in a grassy area immediately to the west of the curving west end of the race track in an area used by touring caravans. They are impossible to date but could mark the sites of buildings belonging to the racecourse or from the periods of military use.

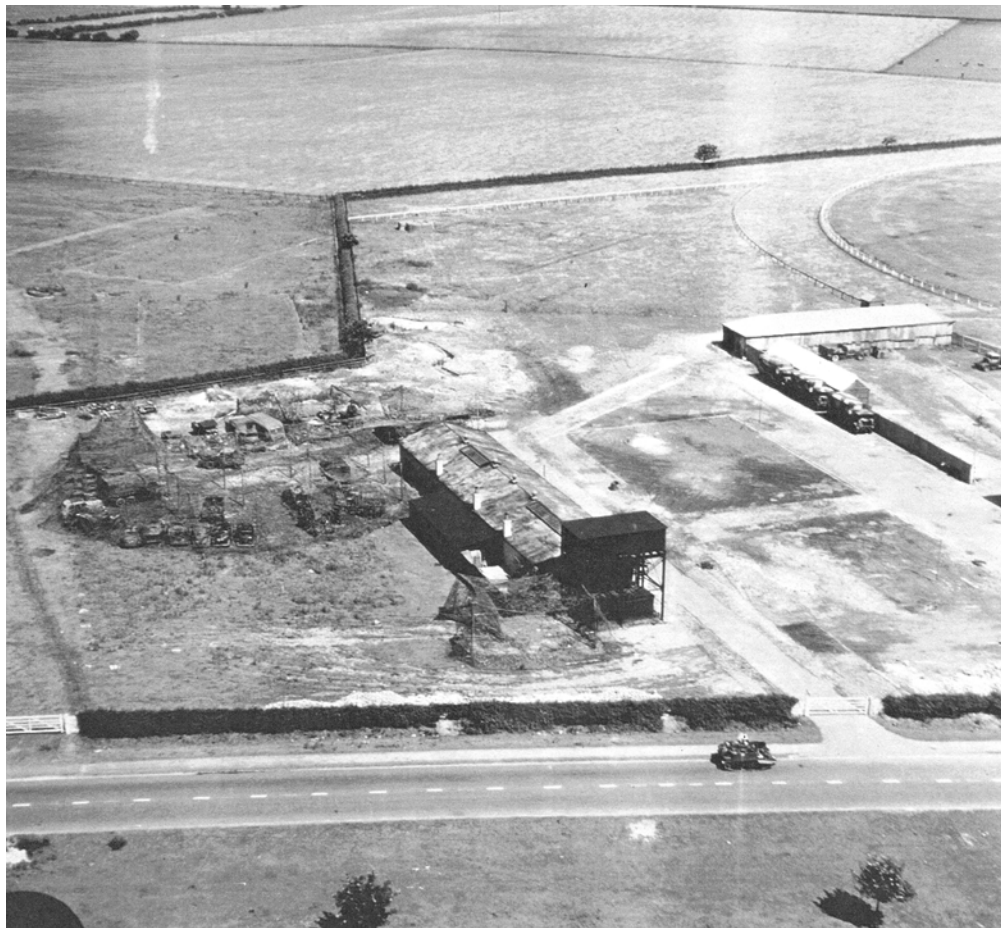
#### Cultivation of the common

##### *First World War*

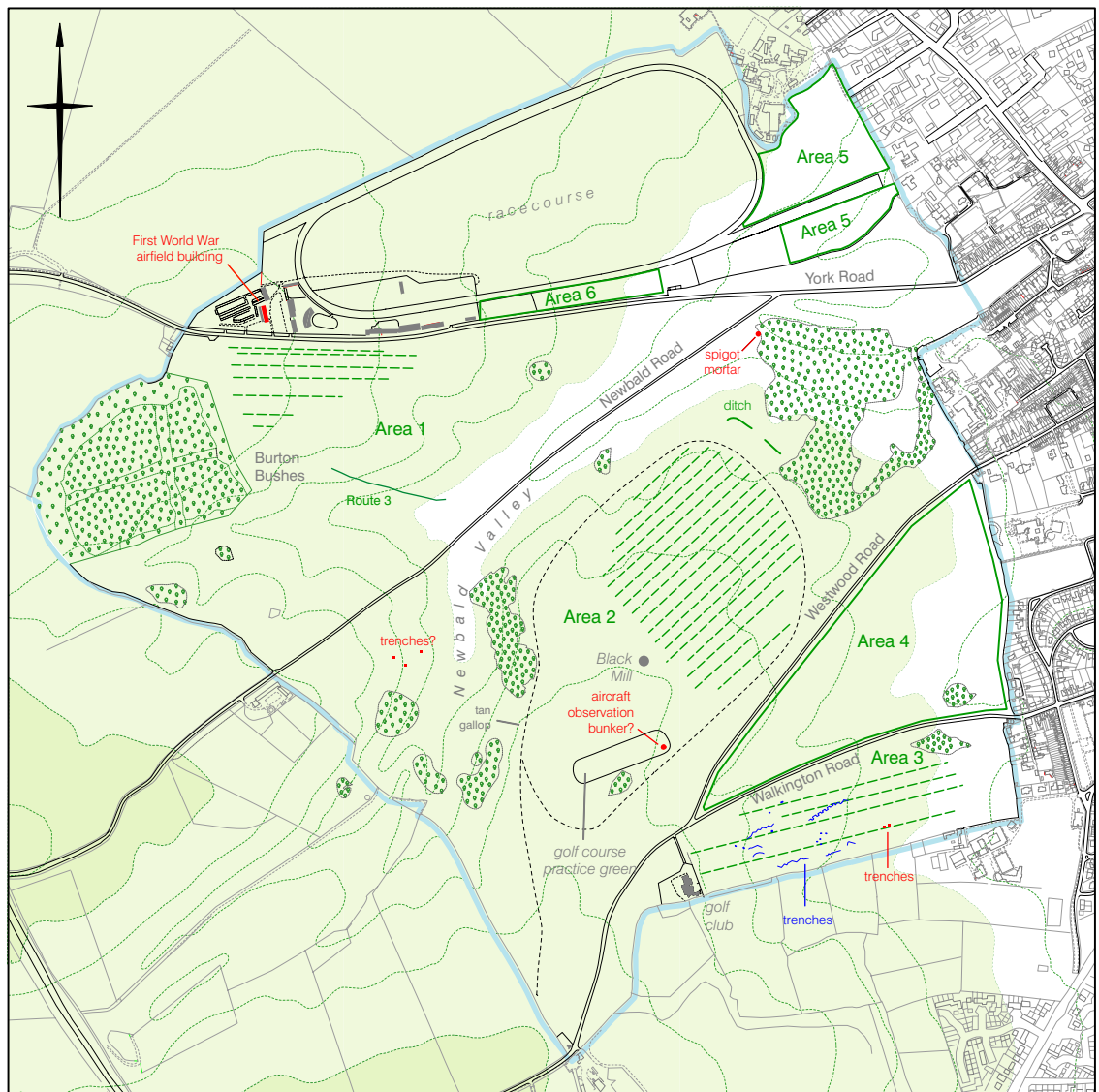
There is aerial photographic evidence from 1917 for the cultivation of a wide strip of land along the south boundary of the common (ERYAS 1917). The cultivation remains include several blocks of what appear to be straight broad ridges which might result from steam ploughing but nothing of this is visible today.

##### *Second World War*

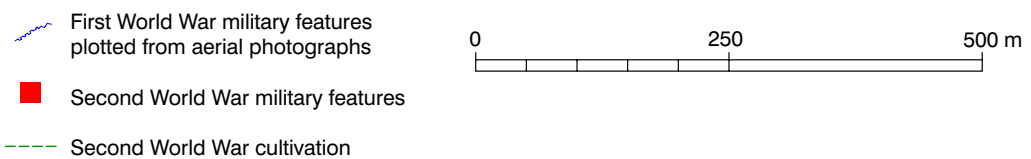
During the Second World War four areas of the common were brought into cultivation to support the 'dig for victory' campaign, although only three have left earthwork traces as sequences of long straight parallel banks no more than 0.5m high (Figure 18, Areas 1-4). The most northerly of these blocks (Area 1) is on the south of the York Road opposite the



**Figure 17**  
Aerial view of the  
racecourse taken in  
July 1941 (RAF 1941)



**Figure 18**  
Location of First  
and Second World  
War features



racecourse grandstand and consists of a series of parallel east-west banks extending for a distance of 180m from the road. An aerial photograph from April 1945 shows that by then this system had been abandoned and replaced by a much larger single field covering virtually the whole block of ground between the York and Newbald roads (RAF 1945a). This wider area of cultivation has left no recognisable earthwork remains, other than Route 3 probably defines its western edge.

Area 2 is by far the largest area and is represented by 17 parallel banks up to 400m in length aligned from north-east to south-west contained within the line of the tan gallop. At the south-west they all end virtually level with the Black Mill. Aerial photographic evidence indicates that this system of cultivation was under way in April 1945 (Figure 19, RAF 1945a) but had been turned into a single field by December of that same year (RAF 1945b). To the

east, beyond the tan gallop, are the very faint traces of two lengths of a ditch which is aligned at right angles to these banks. This relationship and the observation that the ditch ends on the north almost exactly opposite the most northerly of the banks suggests the feature may have been associated with this phase of cultivation.

Area 3 extends from the south edge of the common as far as the Walkington Road and includes an area with First World War practice trenches (discussed below). The earthwork survival is not as clear as for the other two areas but the remains of five parallel banks were recorded aligned east-west and stretching for a distance of up to 500m. The area was apparently not cultivated during the war because there are no banks visible on the aerial photographs from December 1945, explaining also why the practice trenches appear so clearly on these same photographs (RAF 1945b). However, the pattern of parallel divisions does appear on an aerial photograph from November 1946 whilst the practice trenches are not at all clear and may have been partially levelled (RAF 1946). This suggests the area was cultivated for the first time during the first half of 1946.



**Figure 19**  
*Aerial view of the  
cultivation of Area 2 in  
April 1945 (RAF  
1945a)*

Areas 4-6 were under cultivation in April 1945 (RAF 1945a). However, there is no indication of any parallel banks or other traces of cultivation in the Second World War surviving as earthworks in these areas today. Area 4 occupied almost the entire triangle of land between the Walkington and Westwood roads and the east side of the common. There are faint traces visible on aerial photography of parallel banks dividing this area (RAF 1946). Area 5 occupied almost all of the ground between the east end of the racecourse and the boundary of the common, whilst Area 6 covered a narrow strip of ground between the south side of the racecourse and the York Road. Both Areas 5 and 6 were out of cultivation by December 1945 (RAF 1945b).

#### Miscellaneous military features

##### *Aircraft observation bunker*

Aerial photography from 1945 and 1946 shows a small, square-shaped structure in a shallow, rectangular hollow 180m south of the Black Mill. From notes supplied by Rod Mackey in support of the English Heritage fieldwork, this could be the aircraft observation bunker that stood some distance to the north of the golf club building (the former Union Mill). Of these aerial photographs, that to show the building the most clearly dates from April 1945 (RAF 1945a). From this it is clear that the shallow sub-rectangular mound on the south-east corner of the golf course practice green marks the site of this bunker.

##### *Spigot mortar*

At the north-west corner of the Newbegin Pits, just above the edge of the quarry, are the remains of a concrete mounting for a Second World War spigot mortar (NMR no. TA 03 NW 96). It is where soldiers, possibly Local Defence Volunteers (later known as the Home Guard), would attach a spigot mortar in anticipation of an enemy attack. The spigot mortar was mounted on the still visible stainless steel pin which is set in the centre of the concrete

base (Figure 20). The concrete sides would have had indented areas sunk into the ground where the gun crew (usually three) would have crouched. There is a slight curving ditch on the north and east sides that could be a remnant of this infantry position.



**Figure 20**  
The mounting for the  
spigot mortar

##### *Trench features*

The 1917 aerial photograph shows what look like several rows of small pits, which might be military practice trenches on the south-east side of the common dating from the First World War (ERYAS 1917). Aerial photographs from December 1945 (RAF 1945b) show a variety of practice trenches in this same area including slit trenches and a long length of indented trench as





**Figure 21**  
*Aerial view showing  
 First and Second  
 World War practice  
 trenches on the south-  
 east side of the  
 common (RAF  
 1945b)*

used extensively on the western front in the First World War (Figure 21). This trench system might be of that period or alternatively could have been dug during the Second World War to introduce recruits to this form of trench warfare. It is not recognisable now on the ground because the same area was ploughed in 1946 (see above). Several two-man slit trenches survive on the ground and very probably date from the Second World War, although they could be later in date because they do not appear to have been damaged by the ploughing. Several other small rectangular trenches, possibly dug by the military, survive towards the west edge of the common, on the north side of the Newbald Valley.

### **9. Miscellaneous features**

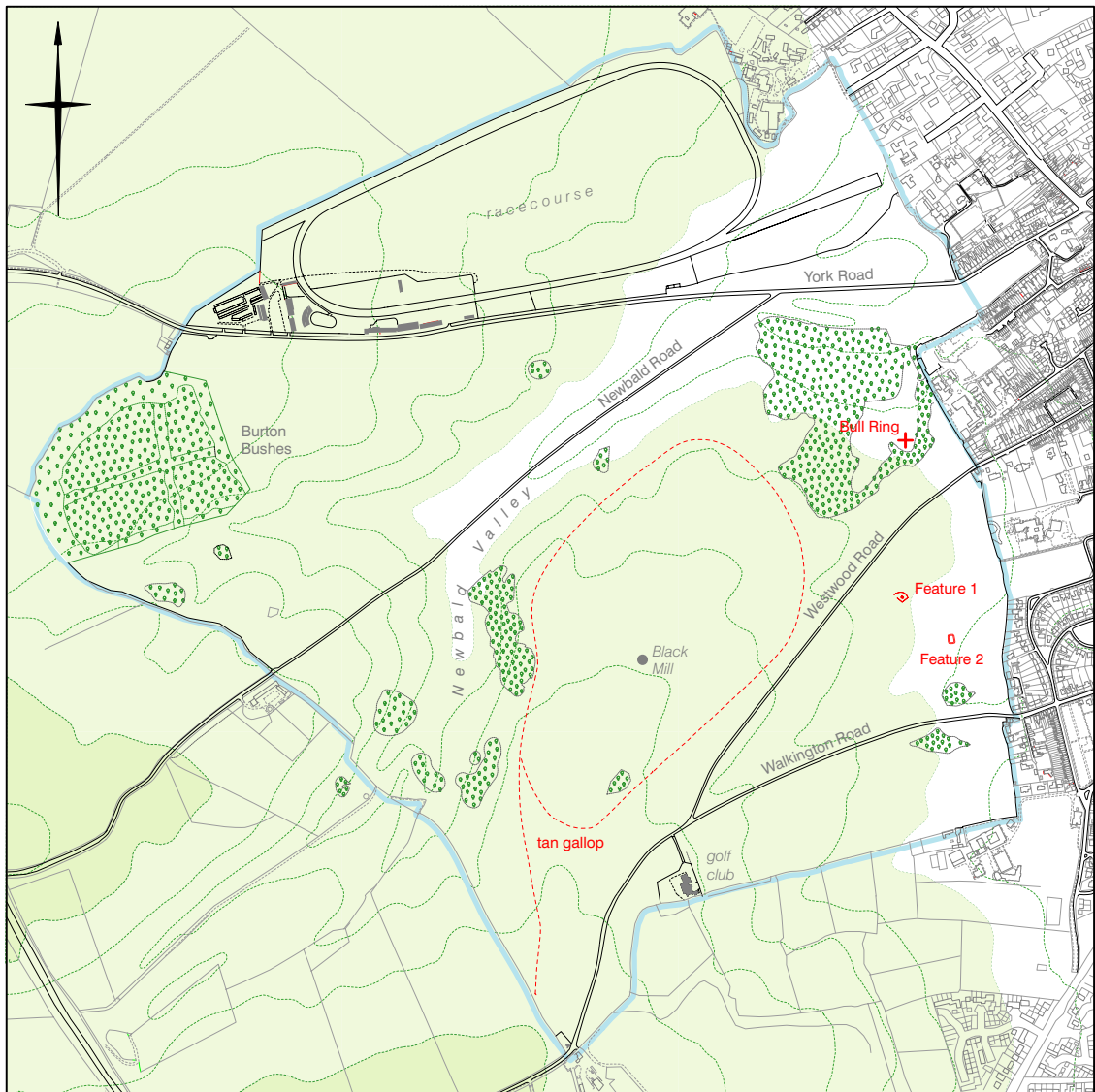
#### **The tan gallop**

In the middle of the Westwood is the tan gallop, a circuit formerly used for training racehorses. It dates from around 1870 and was still being used in 1988 but has since fallen into disuse (Allison 1989, 206). It is still very clear on the ground as a straight sided, flat-bottomed ditch and is reputed to perpetuate the line of the first race course from the late 17th century (Figure 22). This racecourse has left no definite surface boundaries and presumably would have involved nothing more sophisticated than laying out a course with temporary markers. A slight levelling and flattening of the ground visible in places on either side of the gallop may indicate the presence of the racecourse. The clearest evidence of this is on the north-west

of the gallop where it crosses the middle section of the hollow way forming the middle section of Route 5. The hollow way has been filled in either side of the gallop for a distance of 3m, perhaps to prepare the ground for racing horses.

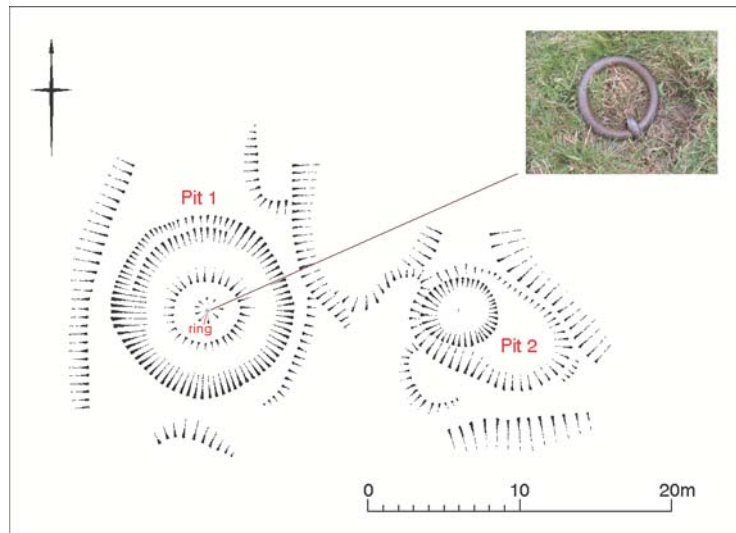
#### Bull Ring in Newbegin Pits

In the bottom of Newbegin Pits towards the south-east corner, a number of small quarry hollows seem to have been reshaped to form circular pits, perhaps for cock-fighting and bull baiting. The best preserved of these and the only one with a visible metal ring for tethering livestock was surveyed by English Heritage at 1:200 scale. It is situated immediately below the south-east face of the quarry (Figure 22) and is probably the site of the bull ring marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1855). It is a circular depression up to 0.5m deep and 12m in diameter (Figure 23; Pit 1) in a level area in between the edges of two quarry hollows. The metal ring is securely embedded in a slight circular depression at the centre of the pit and was presumably used for tethering the bull. Some 2m from the ring is the track eroded by the tethered animal circling around the bottom of the pit. The pit



**Figure 22**  
Location of  
miscellaneous  
features

0 250 500 m



**Figure 23**  
 (above) English Heritage plan of Pits 1 and 2 reduced from 1:200 scale original with inset photograph of the bull ring.  
 (below) View of Pit 2 looking south

is overlooked by the top of the main ready made arena for viewing the bull baiting but no evidence exists that the site had seating. A slight ledge on the north-west side of the pit could indicate where there were seats. Bull baiting was banned by the town corporation on the Westwood in 1824 (Allison 1989, 125) but it is possible that the disused bull ring continued in use for tethering livestock, explaining the eroded track around the ring. A second circular pit 15m to the east (Figure 23; Pit 2) may have been formed as a second bull ring, or, given its size, could conceivably have been for cock-fighting. Both pits have the advantage that they can be easily overlooked from the top of the quarry, allowing more people to watch the 'entertainment' than could gather around the edges of each of the pits.

#### Feature 1

An aerial photograph from December 1945 (RAF 1945b) shows the cropmark of a possible ditched feature about halfway between the Westwood Road and the end of the hollow way defining Route 5 (Figures 22 and 24). It is not visible on the ground and has not appeared on aerial photographs since this part of the common ceased to be cultivated. The feature has straight edges about 15m in length on the south-east and south-west but is more curving on



**Figure 24**  
*Aerial photograph  
showing  
Miscellaneous  
Features 1 and 2  
(RAF 1945b)*

the other two sides. It has a circular depression at the centre. It also appears on the 1917 aerial photograph where the ploughing described earlier appears to respect it (ERYAS 1917). The feature could conceivably be another Iron Age square barrow though the fact that the First World War ploughing respects it suggests it may be contemporary with this period of cultivation or that it was a significant upstanding feature at this date..

#### Feature 2

The aerial photograph from December 1945 shows a second rectilinear cropmark some 130m to the south-east (RAF 1945b) but it is not visible on the earlier photograph from 1917. The feature measures approximately 20m from north to south by 15m across and is therefore similar in size and shape to a number of the Iron Age burial mounds surviving as earthworks elsewhere on the common. However, it is perhaps more likely to be a platform marking the site of a small building. There was nothing visible on the ground at the time of the survey.

## 6. DISCUSSION

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### **Before the common**

The earliest earthwork remains surviving on the Westwood are the three circular burial mounds which from their form almost certainly date to the Bronze Age. They all overlook the Newbald Valley, which suggests the valley itself could have been important as a routeway heading up onto the higher ground to the west and may even have been settled at this period. The decision to site further burial mounds in close proximity to two of these mounds in the Iron Age may indicate continuity of ritual use of the block of high ground on the south-east side of the valley and also continue to emphasise the possible significance of the valley itself as a routeway and the site of settlement.

The survey has added two new examples to the recorded number of Iron Age barrows on the south-east side of the Newbald Valley, one in each of the two groups that survive as earthworks. As has already been mentioned, although Iron Age burials are quite widespread across the Yorkshire Wolds, the survival of mounds as recognisable earthworks is very rare, with the only other recorded examples from East Yorkshire being the cemeteries at Danes Graves to the west of Kilham and Scarborough, below the Wolds in Holderness (Stoertz 1997, 36). Individual square barrows survive as earthworks further north on the Tabular Hills (Spratt 1993, 151-2). With over a hundred mounds each, the two East Yorkshire cemeteries are far larger than the burial ground on the Westwood. However, the published plan of the Danes Graves cemetery shows the same range of barrows from large, square-shaped mounds like Barrow 5 on the Westwood, to much smaller, oval mounds like the majority of those on the common (Ramm 1978, 16).

A feature of the Iron Age cemetery on the Westwood is the overlap between the outer bank of Barrow 5 and the edge of Barrow 6. From the published plans of both the earthwork cemeteries and those which have been excavated, it appears that the perimeters of burial mounds very rarely impinge upon each other (Stead 1979; Stead 1991). Where this does occur in the larger cemeteries, it could be explained by lack of space, but on the Westwood, Barrow 5 is on the edge of the cluster of burials and could easily have been positioned so as to avoid the south-west side of Barrow 6. This suggests the overlap, though quite slight, was actually quite deliberate and was perhaps meant to emphasise a difference in social status between two individuals or family groups. However, the possibility remains that this relationship is purely a factor of the reconstruction of the excavation.

The three field systems recorded by the English Heritage survey bear a superficial resemblance to the patterns of small conjoined fields recorded by aerial photography across the Yorkshire Wolds and which are generally thought to date to the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. However, many of the recorded examples stretch for hundreds of metres and are therefore far more extensive than the examples on Westwood (Stoertz 1997, 67). It is possible that they were once more extensive and that parts have been destroyed without trace. However, such a loss is difficult to explain as the common has not suffered from prolonged ploughing or been heavily landscaped.

The presence of field systems on the common of probable Iron Age or Romano-British date implies an absence of tree cover at these earlier periods. The same observation might also be made from the position of the three Bronze Age burial mounds on the crests of slopes, suggesting they were intended to be seen from a distance and were not buried in dense woodland. These observations imply that the woodland documented in the area in medieval times had grown back after a period of prolonged de-forestation stretching from the Romano-British period back in time to at least the early Bronze Age. At these earlier periods, it is conceivable that the character of the landscape was as open as we see it today.

There is no firm evidence for the date of the two enclosures on the Westwood. In the case of the enclosure in Burton Bushes (Enclosure 1), the remains are now too fragmentary and overgrown to be certain of the actual form of the enclosure. The recorded description suggests the feature may be comparable to the square or rectilinear embanked settlement sites found throughout the region in the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods and an association with the field system to the east is therefore conceivable (Ramm 1978, 69-80; Stoertz 1997, 49-50). However, it is not usual to find the ditch inside the bank as appears to be the case with this particular enclosure and alternative interpretations should be considered. One possibility is that the enclosure is medieval or post-medieval and relates to the documented use of Burton Bushes as woodland pasture for swine.

Oval-shaped enclosures broadly comparable to Enclosure 2 have been recorded by aerial photography on the Wolds and are commonly interpreted as late-prehistoric defended settlements (Stoertz 1997, 47-9). However, such an interpretation is questionable in the case of Enclosure 2. As the English Heritage survey has emphasised, the enclosure is clearly not sited for defence because it straddles the north side and floor of the Newbald Valley and an opposing spur on the south. With water available in this part of the valley indicated by the nearby ponds, the enclosure was quite probably for corralling livestock in a sheltered location near to a water supply. It may have been inhabited though no surface traces of any house structures survive. The field evidence indicates the date of the enclosure probably lies within the Romano-British or early medieval periods. The deliberate inclusion of the enclosure within the common may be evidence that the site was in use at the time the common was established thus favouring an early medieval date. Given this date, it is unlikely that the siting of the enclosure within a pre-existing field of Iron Age or Romano-British date indicates continuity of land-use between the field and the enclosure.

The majority of the tracks and hollow ways on the common are difficult to date, but as was mentioned above, it is possible that several developed as droveways in the late prehistoric or Romano-British periods, that is during the period when the landscape was quite open. The woodland had grown back by the mid 11th century judging by the evidence of the Domesday Survey. Indeed it had probably regenerated by the early 8th century given the reference to John, Archbishop of York founding the church at Beverley 'in the wood of the men of Deira'. There are grounds though for suggesting that Route 5 might be contemporary with the early development of Beverley as an ecclesiastical centre between the 8th and 12th centuries. This is because the route appears to be a western continuation of the street

called Minster Moorgate on the north side of the church suggesting the existence of an early route heading westwards from the Minster. With the construction of the town defences across the line of this route in the 12th century, that portion to the east continued in use as one of the town streets, whilst the continuation to the west fell out of use to become the earthwork we see today. Another characteristic of Route 5 is that the section to the south of the Newbald Valley twists and turns far more than any other hollow way recorded on the common. This might indicate the presence of dense woodland on the central part of the common, which again suggests the route originated after woodland had started to regenerate.

### **The common**

The survey did not significantly advance understanding of when the common was first defined as a block of ground distinct from its surroundings. There is a slim amount of historical evidence discussed at the beginning of this report that it might have been part of the pre-conquest landholdings of the Archbishop of York in the Beverley area, but it is unlikely to be any earlier. It is slightly more certain that the area was still wooded when the boundary of the common was defined, given the various medieval references to woodland on the Westwood. This is also supported by cartographic evidence. The sinuous character of the boundary on the north side of the common recorded on the first edition Ordnance Survey map is reminiscent of the scalloped effect created by a number of small conjoined clearings along the edge of a block of woodland (Ordnance Survey 1855). This suggests that the woodland was being actively cleared from north to south when a boundary was thrown around the edge of the remaining woodland to form the common. The nearest village to the north of the common is Molescroft, and it was recorded in the 13th century that the open fields of Molescroft included parcels of cleared woodland called 'Riddings' (Allison 1989, 289). It is possible therefore, that the clearances were associated with this village.

It is less clear if the boundaries on the west and south sides of the common originated in the same way as the north boundary. It is difficult to argue that the boundary on the south-west of the common represents the edge of cleared woodland because there was still a large area of woodland surviving beyond the boundary in the 14th century known as West Hagg (Allison 1989, 212). The long straight boundary on the south side of the common may date to the middle of the 13th century when agreement was reached between the townsfolk of Beverley and the Archbishop of York over their respective rights to Westwood common and the land to the south called Beverley Parks (Allison 1989, 275).

The edge of the common is also fairly straight on the east side, although here the boundary has been subject to change over the centuries and is probably far different to that originally set out. On the one hand it is possible that the common originally went further eastwards, closer to the centre of Beverley and that the boundary has moved progressively westwards to accommodate the expansion of the town from the 12th century onwards. On the other hand, it is evident that in the more recent past, land has been added to the common on this side with the inclusion of the close called Low Green in 1656. The block of plough ridges on the east side of the common is evidence that Low Green was ploughed but that some of the ploughing probably encroached onto the common. There is comparable evidence that part

of Figham common to the east of Beverley was ploughed in the Middle Ages (Pollington and Pearson 2004).

The clearance of trees from the common in the medieval and early post-medieval periods is well-documented and has left traces in the form of tree hollows, particularly on the west half of the common. The clearance of the trees opened up the area to a wide variety of different uses: some economic, some recreational, of which only a proportion of the activities recorded in the documentary sources have left any physical traces. The windmills and clay and chalk quarries are the most obvious of the economic activities to have left remains. The ponds also point to the use of the common as livestock pasture stretching back into the medieval period. A number of the hollow ways probably also originated after the creation of the common, their presence indicating a period, perhaps in the Middle Ages, when the movement of livestock to and from the ponds was perhaps more controlled than it is today. The depth of erosion on some of the slopes certainly suggests persistent and prolonged use of the same route by animals. Recreational use of the common obviously includes the golf club and the race course with the English Heritage survey highlighting possible evidence for the first racecourse following the line of the 1870s tan gallop.

In more recent times, the English Heritage survey identified earthwork remains dating from the cultivation of the common in the Second World War and for a short while after. For a period, the cultivated areas were sub-divided into long parallel plots by earthwork banks of which traces still survive in three areas. It is noticeable that the cultivation did not extend onto the higher western part of the common but mostly took place on east, or south-east facing slopes looking towards Beverley. Whilst this may have been purely down to soil conditions, it made the cultivated areas all the more visible from the town, doubtless helping to boost morale as well as raising awareness of the 'home front' and the 'dig for victory' campaign. It also left the golf course untouched, although judging from the aerial photographic evidence from 1945, the greens do not appear to have been much in use. The course was nevertheless perhaps deliberately left uncultivated to preserve a symbol of more normal times and to offer the prospect that they would return once conflict had ended.



## 7. METHODOLOGY

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The survey was undertaken by Trevor Pearson and Mitchell Pollington, both archaeological field investigators with the York office of English Heritage, with the assistance of Stewart Ainsworth, Chris Dunn, Stella-Anne Jackson, Marcus Jecock and Al Oswald from the same office. The survey was undertaken using a Trimble dual frequency Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system, with two rover receivers (Trimble 4800 and 5800 models) working in real-time kinematic mode. As well as this certain features were recorded using a graphical survey methods with tape measures.

The report was written by Trevor Pearson. Illustrations were prepared by Trevor Pearson and Mitchell Pollington. The report was edited by Stewart Ainsworth, Senior Investigator, Archaeological Investigation Team.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The head pasture master for Beverley Commons, Geoff Hall, is thanked for help in setting up the project, whilst Mike Drew and his staff at Beverley golf club gave logistical support and facilitated access to the course. At Beverley racecourse, Sally Iggulden is thanked for permitting access to the course and for information on the site. The staff of Beverley Local Studies Library and the East Riding Archives helped with finding research material. Rod Mackey provided a great deal of useful information on the archaeology of the common and helped organise and participated in the geophysical survey conducted by members of the East Riding Archaeological Society. Mr Crookes of Westwood Mill also helped with background information.

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## APPENDIX 1

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Table of NMR numbers linked to the site

<b>Name</b>	<b>NMR No.</b>	<b>NGR</b>
Barrow cemetery	TA 03 NW 28	TA 0184 3954 - TA 0206 3914
Bull ring	TA 03 NW 32	TA 0262 3941
Black Mill	TA 03 NW 41	TA 0208 3898
Oval enclosure with two associated fields	TA 03 NW 64	TA 0158 3887
Rectangular enclosure	TA 03 NW 65	TA 0111 3937
Linear track	TA 03 NW 81	TA 0140 3896 - TA 0193 3928
Second World War spigot mortar	TA 03 NW 96	TA 0230 3960
First and Second World War practice trenches	TA 03 NW 105	TA 0246 3868
Area of Second World War cultivation	TA 03 NW 106	TA 0222 3917
Site of Low Mill	TA 03 NW 107	TA 0226 3917
Site of Butt Close Mill	TA 03 NW 108	TA 0277 3921
Union Mill	TA 03 NW 109	TA 0218 3852
Westwood Mill	TA 03 NW 110	TA 0271 3863



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