

# THE FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS

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## THE STORY OF A HISTORIC LIMESTONE LANDSCAPE COMMUNITY

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The Archaeological Practice Ltd,  
Limestone Landscapes Partnership  
and the Community of Ferryhill





# THE FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS

THE STORY OF A LIMESTONE LANDSCAPE COMMUNITY:  
THE LANDSCAPE, HISTORY, GEOLOGY AND WILDLIFE OF  
FERRYHILL



*Plan of Ferryhill in 1765 (DCD/E/AA/17/1), reproduced by permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral*

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Society, Ian Kille, Michael Ord, and Peter Ryder







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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A wide range of contributions have been made to the Ferryhill Village Atlas project by members of the local community. These contributions include the provision of photographs and documents, oral history recordings (interviewers and interviewees), project co-ordination and participation in events, such as talks, workshops and guided walks. This process was facilitated by a steering group which included representatives of Ferryhill History Society and the local primary schools, the latter providing accommodation for the meetings. Particular thanks must go to Tim Brown, Geoff Wall and Dick Janney of Ferryhill History Society, to Michael Ord, to Ann Brown of Dean Bank Primary School, Valerie Jago of Ferryhill Station Primary School and Alison Lazenby of Cleves Cross Primary School, and to former Councillor David Farry. General project co-ordination was provided by Ken Bradshaw, Tony Devos and Angela Stoddart of the Limestone Landscapes Partnership.

Chapter 4 devoted to the geology of Ferryhill was written by Ian Kille whilst Chapter 5 covering the areas Ecology was produced by Ivan Dunn and Chapter 7 was authored by Peter Ryder, with illustrations provided by the Archaeological Practice Ltd. A feature section at the end of Chapter 10, devoted to the origins of the Clarence Railway, was written by local historian, Michael Ord. The remaining text was written by Alan Rushworth on behalf of the Archaeological Practice Ltd. Richard Carlton undertook additional research related to the farms of Ferryhill, in particular. The illustrations accompanying the chapters contributed by the Archaeological Practice Ltd were prepared by Marc Johnstone, Claire MacRae, Alan Rushworth and Richard Carlton. Alan Rushworth and Richard Carlton took the modern photographs used to accompany those chapters.

Numerous historic photographs were supplied by Ferryhill History Society, and the various contributors to the Society's photographic collection, through the agency of Tim Brown, whilst others were provided by Michael Ord. The staff of Durham Record Office, Beamish Museum, Bowes Museum and the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers kindly hosted group visits and/or assisted in providing access to the collections and archives under their curation. Images of the following maps and plans held by Durham University Library Archives and Special Collections in the Durham Cathedral Muniments collection are reproduced by permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral (DCD): the 1765 Dean and Chapter estate map of Ferryhill (DCD/E/AA/17/1) and the 1808 plan of Dean and Chapter's estate in Chilton (DCD/E/AA/14/1), whilst the extract from J T W Bell's 1852 Map of the Auckland District of the Great Northern Coalfield (CCB/MP/508/1) is reproduced by permission of Durham University Library Archives and Special Collections. The following maps are reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office (DRO): Saxton's map of County Durham 1576 (DRO D/CL 23/02), the Map of Durham County by John Speed n.d. [1611] (DRO D/XP 26), Morden's Map of County Durham 1695 (DRO D/CL 23/14), 'A new map of the county of Durham' by Jones & Smith 1808 (DRO D/CL 23/46), Hall's map of the Great Northern coalfield 1861 (DRO D/CL 23/73), 'A Plan and Section of the Northern Union Railway' (DRO

Q/D/P97 N), plans and elevations of the 'New Lock-up at Ferryhill' 1906 (DRO CC/ARCH/112). The County Palatine of Durham Survey'd by Capt. Armstrong 1768, revised 1791 (Durham County Record Office Londonderry Estate Archives D/Lo/P 239) and the Map of the Great Northern Coalfield, Hartlepool Coal District, 1843, by J.T.W Bell (DRO D/Lo/P 242/1) are reproduced by permission of the Marquess of Londonderry and Durham County Record Office. 'A Map of the County Palatine of Durham ... by C. Greenwood 1820' (DRO D/St/P 20/2) is reproduced by permission of Lord Strathmore and Durham County Record Office. The tithe maps of Ferryhill (DRO EP/Mer 41/2) and Chilton (DRO EP/Mer 42/2) townships are reproduced by permission of Merrington Parish and Durham Record Office, whilst Bishop Middleham Parish and Durham Record Office have granted permission to reproduce the tithe maps of Mainsforth (DRO EP/BM 27/2) and Thrislington (DRO EP/BM 26/2) townships. The following plans and documents relating to parts of Chilton are reproduced by permission of Lord Eldon and Durham County Record Office: Standalone Farm plans 1844 (DRO D/EI 14/62 & 14/64); the plan of Great Chilton estate 1834 (DRO D/EI 15/100); the Great Chilton estate sale catalogue p. 6-8 (DRO D/EI 15/110); the sale catalogue and plan for Kay's Hill and Chilton Grange Farms c.1853 (DRO D/EI 16/28 & 16/29); and the plans of the Little Chilton estate c.1856 and 1859 (DRO D/EI 21/41 & 21/75). Bowes Museum provided photographs of the Anglo-Scandinavian carved bone strip found during construction groundworks for the current police station on Church Lane, Ferryhill.





# 1. INTRODUCTION

The present study was initiated by The Limestone Landscapes Partnership Scheme, which is administered through Durham County Council and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The report has been assembled by the Archaeological Practice Ltd. with the collaboration of the local community. It provides a synthesis of the known history, ecology and geology of Ferryhill and its immediate surroundings, including Ferryhill Station, the historic settlements of Great and Little Chilton, all defined and contained by the current Ferryhill Town Council district. For the purposes of geological analysis the study has also embraced nearby Thrislington Quarry. Amongst the material contained within are summaries of the area's ecology and geodiversity, a listing of known historic sites, plus a snap-shot view of the historic buildings, including churches and farms. The maps prepared for this document are designed to provide the most complete graphic portrayal of Ferryhill's historical development yet attempted, but the report is not intended to be the final word. Indeed, it is hoped that it will inspire further study of particular aspects of the history of Ferryhill and its neighbouring settlements and their respective communities.

The study is not restricted to the area's built-up settlements, but instead seeks to place the development of those settlements firmly within the context of the wider landscape of which they form the focal points. In relation to historic villages like Ferryhill the contextual landscape is most readily defined by the bounded territory, known as a 'township,' that was attached to the village and exploited by its community. However other territorial units, notably the wider ecclesiastical parish, and topographic features such as the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment, the Ferryhill Gap and the Carrs are also relevant to any comprehensive understanding of Ferryhill and its district (see Chapter 2).

In order to carry out a study embracing the settlement core, the surrounding farmsteads and hamlets, and the full extent of the township/estate territory, whilst attempting also to understand it within the local and regional context, a variety of approaches have been taken. These used information from a wide range of sources, including existing archaeological and historic buildings records, historic maps and documents, historic and aerial photographs and published information, which are summarised in Chapter 3. The geology and geodiversity assets of the area are covered in Chapter 4 whilst the ecology and biodiversity are summarised in Chapter 5. The site gazetteer, compiled principally from the sites listed in the study area on the Durham Historic Environment Record, is set out in Chapter 6 and a survey of the historic buildings of Ferryhill and environs is contained in Chapter 7. This is followed by one chapter (8) examining the territorial units such as townships and parishes, which provide the framework for understanding the interrelationship between historic communities and landscapes, and another (9) summarising previous historical and archaeological investigation of village settlements in north-east England, including their development and morphology – the distinctive forms they take. Then Chapter 10 provides an overall synthesis of Ferryhill's history up to the present. Some concluding thoughts and recommendations for future work are set out in Chapter 11. A full bibliography is included, plus a number of useful historical documents are reproduced in Appendices 1-7.

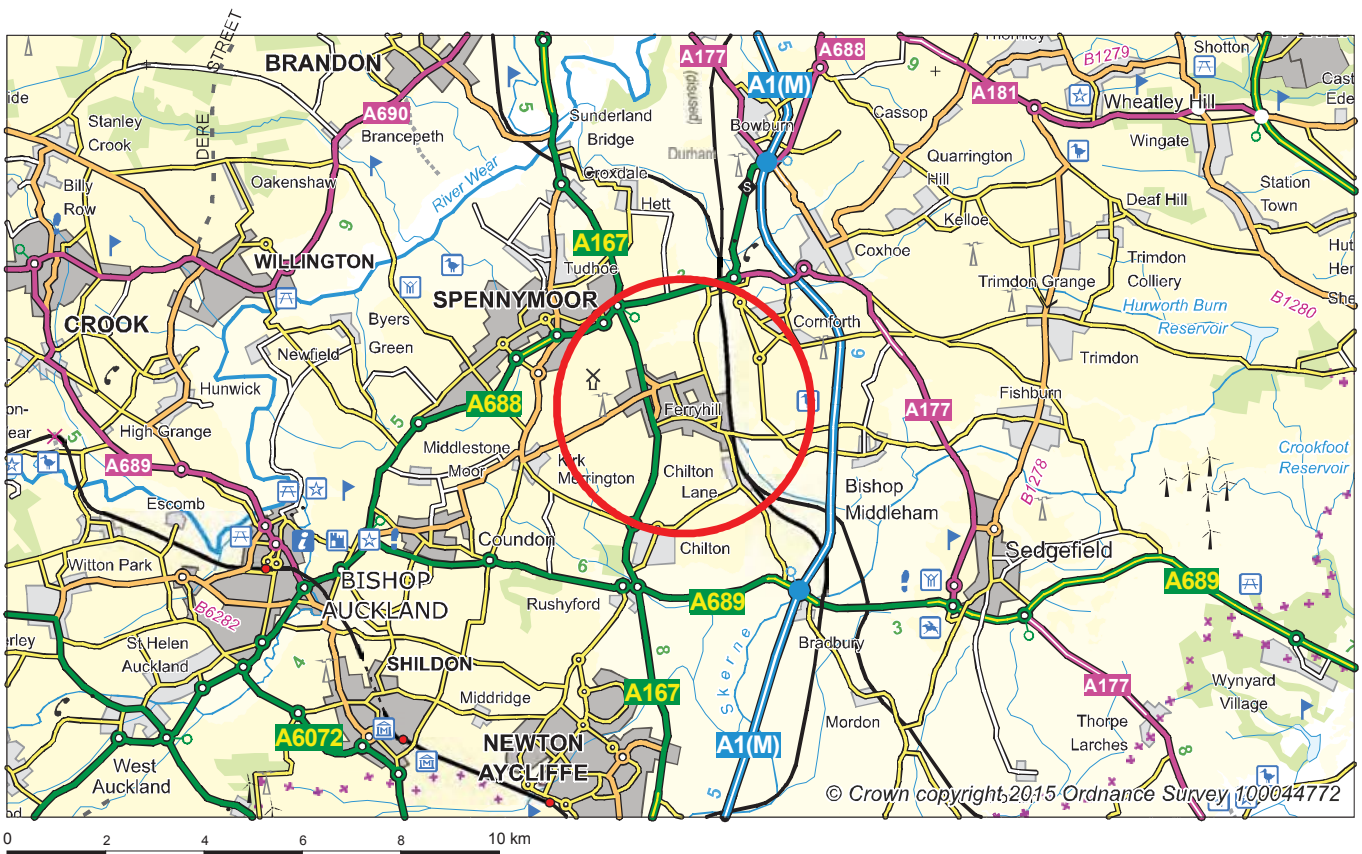
The overriding aim in compiling this atlas has been to provide a summary of what is the present state of knowledge and the available data which can be studied as a starting point for those wishing to explore the past of Ferryhill. There are many additional avenues of research which could be pursued in future. It is hoped that this work may provide some of the raw material to facilitate that future exploration.

# Easington Atlas

## - Location Maps -



*Broad regional view of the Ferryhill Village Atlas Study Area (circled in red) in the northeast of England.*



*Regional view of Ferryhill and the Village Atlas Study Area (circled in red).*

## 2. LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE

### 2.1 Location and Topography

Ferryhill is situated in central County Durham approximately 6 miles (9km) south of Durham city centre and some 10 miles (16km) north of Darlington.

#### 2.1.1 The Study Area

The **study area** is based on the present Ferryhill Town Council area (which corresponds to the bounds of Ferryhill Civil Parish shown on the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map), but adjusted to include the north west corner of the former Ferryhill township, incorporating Red Hall Farm, Skibbereen and part of Low Spennymoor. To the south-east, the town council district/civil parish extends beyond the traditional (19th-century and earlier) limits of Ferryhill to include the ribbon settlements of Chilton Lane and Ferryhill Station, and the farmsteads and hamlets of Little Chilton, Great Chilton and Thrundle.

In terms of the historic territorial communities, or *townships*, the study area thus comprises all of Ferryhill,<sup>1</sup> the north-eastern third of Chilton and the north-west corner of Mainsforth. For the purposes of geological analysis the study has also embraced nearby Thrislington Quarry and makes reference to Thrislington deserted medieval village. The area is bounded to the east by the current *civil parishes* of Cornforth and Bishop Middleham (which have absorbed most of Thrislington and Mainsforth townships respectively), to the south by Bradbury & The Isle and by Chilton, to the west by Spennymoor, which incorporates Kirk Merrington township, the former parochial centre, and to the north by Croxdale & Hett.

#### 2.1.2 Topography

The historic village crowns a long east-west ridge, at an elevation in excess of 160m aOD. The ridge, composed of magnesian limestone, forms the *Limestone Escarpment Ridge*, part of the *East Durham Limestone Escarpment*. Subsequent settlement expansion has been to the south, on the broad, south-facing dip slope (The Broom), to west (Dean Bank), further along the ridge towards Kirk Merrington, and to the east (Cleves Cross), where the ridge slopes down to the edge of the dramatic glacial meltwater channel known as Ferryhill Gap.

However, with the exception of the former Dean and Chapter Colliery site to the north-west, no significant development has occurred to the north of the old village centre, on the steeper escarpment slope. Hence, from the former back lane of the medieval and early modern village it is still possible to gaze out over an unbroken rolling vista of fields and farms and half imagine that two hundred years of industrial development had not occurred. The view in this direction extends beyond East Howle, in the dip immediately below, to the northern boundary of the study area along Thinford Lane, from Spennymoor and Thinford to Metal Bridge, and further still over a broad swathe of the Wear Valley Lowlands. To the north-west the horizon is closed off by the dramatic form of the *Northern Limestone Escarpment*, providing a strong contrast with view directly to the north.

To the east, the gorge of the Ferryhill Gap meltwater channel provides a natural boundary to settlement, reinforced by the Carrs, the wildlife-rich marshes stretching along the bottom of the Gap and by the tracks of the East Coast Main Line, which makes opportune use of this ready made cutting through the otherwise problematic ridge. Only to the south-east, at Ferryhill Station, does settlement extend down to and across this natural limit. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Additionally, a small detached portion of Ferryhill township, comprising 10 fields north of Monks Close farm and Butcher Race, is recorded in the 19th century on the 1838 tithe map and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey. This area is referred to in the report though not considered in the same detail.



western side of the town, the course of the former Great North Road (now the A167) bounds the settlement along part of its course as it climbs the south-facing dip-slope, then carves a canyon, the Ferryhill Cut, through the summit of ridge. In doing so it separates the historic settlement core from the neighbourhood Dean Bank, to the west, built to serve Dean and Chapter Colliery at the beginning of the 20th century, which is reached by bridges across the cutting at St Cuthbert's Terrace (B6287) and Saddler Street. The Limestone Escarpment Ridge itself extends further westward to Kirk Merrington, with the highest point in the study area being at High Hill House Farm, north of the B6287 where an elevation of 184m aOD (over 613 ft) is attained.

On the southern side the limit to settlement is less stark as the dip slope gives way to a rolling landscape of crests and ridges, where the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment Ridge gives way to the Tees Valley Lowlands.

The high magnesian limestone ridge on which Ferryhill sits is thus significant not only in geological and landscape terms but also with respect to regional hydrology since it represents a very clear watershed between the two major river drainage systems of County Durham. Hence the streams emerging from the northern end of the Carrs flow into the Wear, whilst those exiting the southern end of the Gap form the headwaters of the River Skerne which eventually joins the Tees.

## 2.2 Landscape

In terms of landscape character, as defined by the **County Durham Landscape Character Assessment**, Ferryhill itself lies within the *broad character area* known as the **Limestone Escarpment Ridge**, which in turn represents the central section of the **Limestone Escarpment**, itself a distinct *broad landscape type* forming the western edge of the **East Durham Limestone Plateau** County Character Area. The *County Character Areas* are based on Natural England's *National Character Areas*, which may extend through more than one county. The descriptions below are those set out in the Landscape Character Assessment.

**The East Durham Limestone Escarpment Ridge:** A low escarpment with moderately sloping scarp slopes and more gently undulating dip slopes, divided by the steep-sided gorge of the Ferryhill Gap. A patchwork of arable and improved pasture, predominantly arable in the east, with old pre-enclosure field systems which are locally fragmented. Field boundaries are hedges, usually clipped low, with few hedgerow trees. There are occasional limestone walls, notably in the medieval deer park of Bishop Middleham. An open landscape with little woodland other than the young plantations of reclaimed colliery land, and ancient ash woods which line the gorge. Old green villages and hamlets on the ridgetop (Kirk Merrington, Westerton) and in the fringes of the carrs to the south (Bishop Middleham, Mainsforth) are connected by narrow winding lanes. Buildings are of local limestone or sandstone from the nearby coal measures with roofs of clay pan tile or welsh slate and are typically set around a central village green. Larger colliery villages lie on the ridgetop (Ferryhill, Cornforth) and the southern dipslope (Chilton, Fishburn). They are made up of buildings from a number of periods including Victorian terraced housing of red brick and slate, estates of the inter-war and post-war public housing and more recent private development. Settlement edges are abrupt or fringed by allotment gardens and pony paddocks. Large limestone quarries are found on the ridge in the east: the chimney of Thrislington Quarry is a prominent landmark. The ridge is crossed by the A1(M) and busy trunk roads. There are commanding views across the Wear Lowlands from higher ground. To the south the Cleveland Hills form a strong distant horizon.



The northern part of the study area, however falls within the Wear Lowlands CCA, specifically the broad character area defined as the Eastern Valley Terraces within the broad landscape type defined as the Lowland Valley Terraces, whilst on the southern fringe of the study area the Limestone Escarpment gives way to the Lowland Plain around Sedgefield, Windlestone and Aycliffe, forming part of the Tees Lowlands CCA.

**The Wear Lowlands Eastern Valley Terraces:** Gently rolling farmland between the incised valley of the River Wear and the Limestone Escarpment. An open landscape of largely arable farmland with sub-regular patterns of old hedges, fragmented in places, with scattered hedgerow trees and few woodlands. The landscape becomes more wooded towards the Wear where parklands and wooded estates spread onto the terraces at Lambton, Croxdale and Whitworth. The terrace landscape runs up to the escarpment and into the escarpment vales where it becomes more wooded in places, and notable in the former parkland and estate landscapes of Elemore east of Pitlington.

There are large areas of reclaimed colliery land and restored opencast land which contain young hedges, plantations and shelterbelts. Frequent mining towns and villages and the western outskirts of Durham City are connected by a network of busy modern highways and older, narrow, winding lanes. The area is crossed by the A1(M), the east coast main line and the Leamside line, and by major power lines. The escarpment forms a strong horizon to the east.

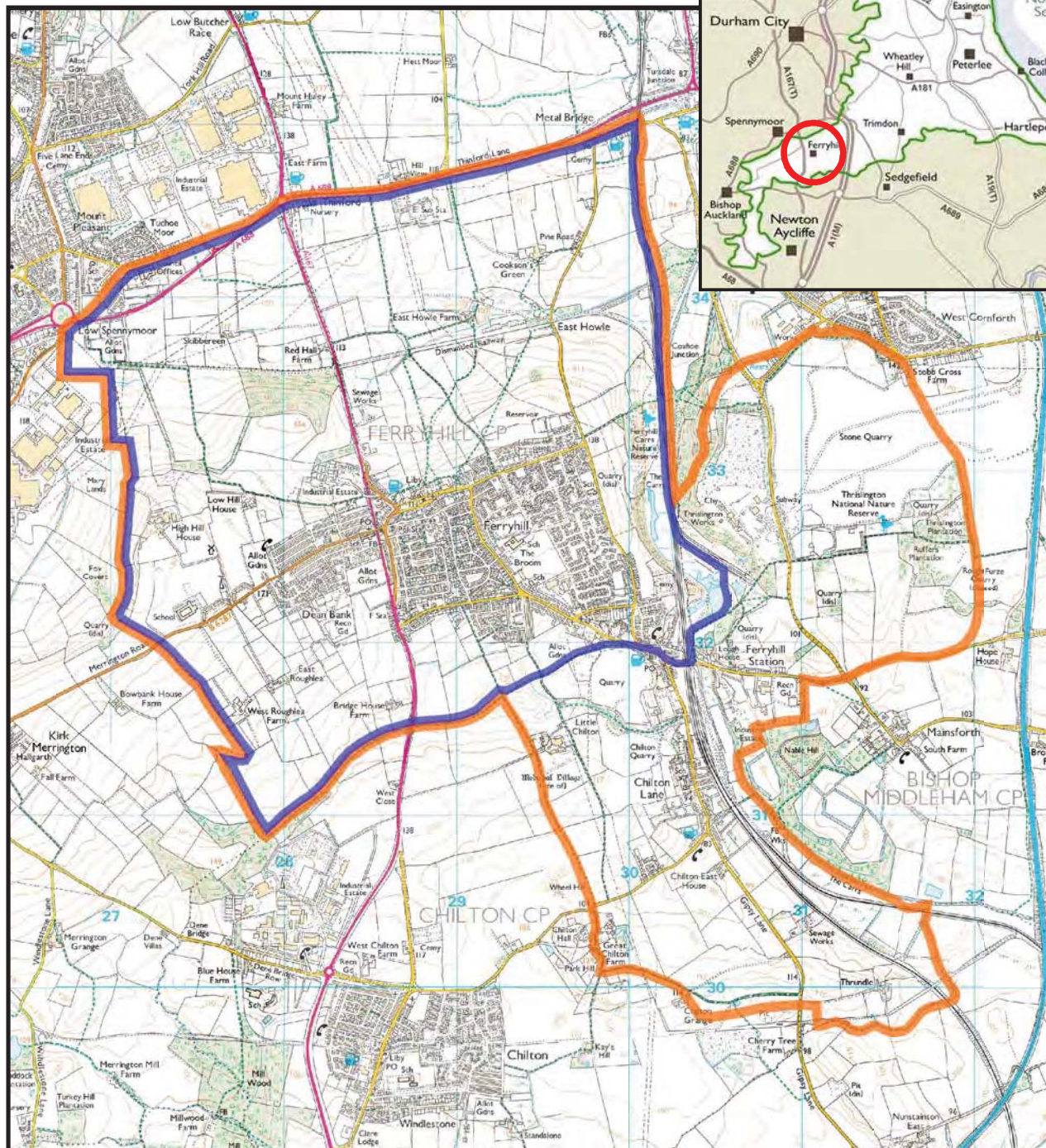
*County Durham Landscape Characterisation Assessment: The Wear Lowlands CCA/Lowland Valley Terraces BLT/Eastern Valley Terraces BCA*

**The Tees Lowland Plain (adjoining Sedgefield, Windlestone and Aycliffe):** Gently undulating or rolling farmland in the fringes of the lowland carrs. A patchwork of arable and improved pasture, but predominantly arable, with old pre-enclosure field systems which are locally fragmented. Field boundaries are hedges, usually clipped low, with scattered hedgerow trees. Tree lines follow small watercourses and ditches. Small broadleaved plantations are scattered across the area. There are more heavily wooded areas associated with parklands at estate farmland at Hardwick and Windlestone. The large new town of Newton Aycliffe lies in the west and the large village of Sedgefield in the east. Smaller villages and scattered farms are connected by narrow lanes. The area is crossed by the busy A167 and A689. There are occasional small limestone quarries and old sand pits.

*County Durham Landscape Characterisation Assessment: The Tees Lowlands CCA/Lowland Plains BLT/Sedgefield, Windlestone and Aycliffe BCA*

# Ferryhill Village Atlas Study Area

...with inset map showing the extent of the Magnesian Limestone Plateau.



0 400 800 1200 1600 2000 m

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— = Village Atlas Study Area

— = Historic Township of Ferryhill



## The Landscapes of Ferryhill



*View looking north across the Wear Lowlands from Ferryhill village on top of the Limestone Ridge, with the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment at top right.*



*View looking NE from Cleves Cross towards the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment running from N-S in the distance.*



*View of the Carrs looking south from the Ferryhill-Thrislington causeway.*



*The farmland near the southern edge of Ferryhill township - view looking south.*



*View looking north towards Ferryhill from Little Chilton.*



*Undulating countryside seen from the top of Wheel Hill. Looking SW towards Chilton Hall (in the trees).*



*The distinctive form of Wheel Hill just north of Great Chilton.*



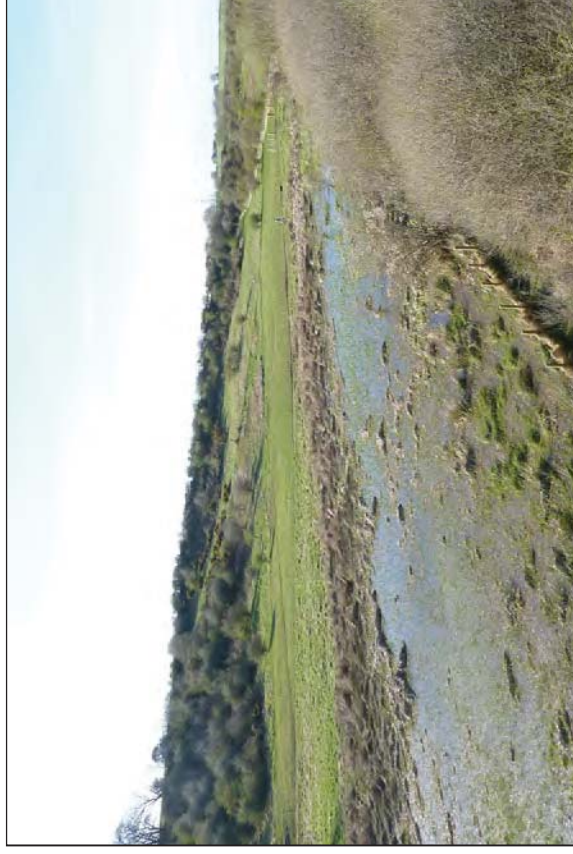
*A sunken lane just south of Great Chilton.*



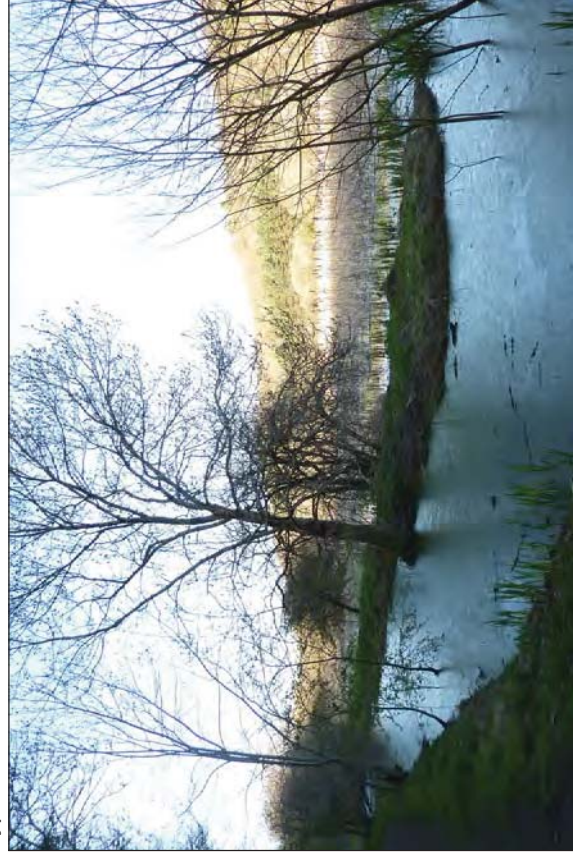
## View of The Carrs today



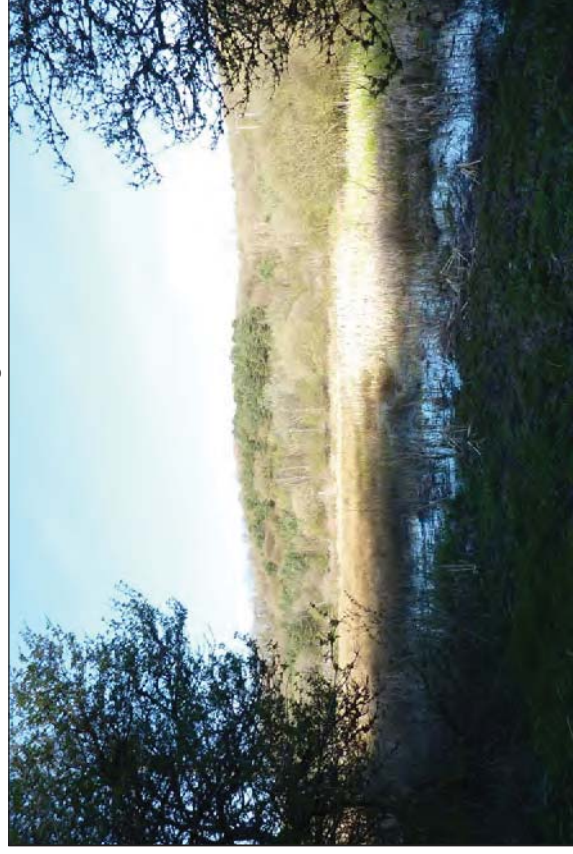
*Typical view of extensive wetland habitat at The Carrs*



*The north end of the Carrs, view looking north-west*



*General views of The Carrs today opposite Thrislington Quarry Works*





## 3. SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

### 3.1 Location of Sources

Accessible regional and national archives, libraries and record offices consulted for documentary, cartographic and pictorial material relevant to the present study include the following:

Durham County Council Historic Environment Record (HER)

Durham County Record Office, County Hall, Durham (DRO)

Durham University Library, Palace Green – Archives & Special Collections (DUL-ASC)

Durham Library (DL)

Ferryhill History Society Archive, The Ferryhill Heritage Centre, Duncombe Cemetery, Ferryhill (FHS – [www.ferryhillarchives.com](http://www.ferryhillarchives.com))

National Monuments Record (NMR)

The Robinson Library, Newcastle University (NUL)

The Archaeological Practice archive (TAP)

### 3.2 Types of Evidence

Assembly of the research material required to produce the Atlas has been achieved by the following methods:

#### 3.2.1 Documentary survey

Documentary records represent the principal source of information for certain aspects of a community's past, notably its medieval origins and development, and its tenurial and ecclesiastical framework. A targeted approach to the analysis of data from such sources was adopted in order to maximise the amount of information gained in the available timescale. Accordingly, primary data gathering focussed on cartographic, pictorial and photographic evidence, whilst the sections relating to Ferryhill in the various county histories for Durham, most notably Volume III of Robert Surtees *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (1823), were consulted to identify particularly important documentary source material worthy of further scrutiny.

#### Historic Maps

All available historic maps and plans were examined and, where possible, copied. These fall into several categories:

- County maps
- Tithe maps and apportionments
- Ordnance Survey editions
- Other surviving detailed mapping e.g. privately commissioned estate maps and colliery maps.

The **county maps** commence with Saxton in 1576 and are very numerous. They may be conveniently examined online at [www.dur.ac.uk/picturesinprint/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/picturesinprint/). A sample of the available county maps comprising Saxton (1576), Speed (1611), Morden (1695), Maire (1711/20),

Armstrong (1768), Smith (1804) and Greenwood (1820) have been reproduced in the Village Atlas.

The earliest of these maps was compiled by the Yorkshireman, Christopher Saxton, in 1576. This is distinguished by extremely careful use of symbols used to denote different types of settlement. Parochial centres, such as Kirk Merrington ('*Kirkmerington*') and Bishop Middleham ('*Mydlam*'), are depicted by a symbol of a church with tower and spire. Most of the other settlements in this part of the county, including Ferryhill itself ('*Ferye sup. mont*'), Great Chilton ('*Chilton mag(na)*'), Little Chilton ('*Chilton p(arva)*'), Thrislington ('*Thruslinton*') and Mainsforth ('*Mansforth*'), are each depicted as a gabled building with what appears to be a wheel attached, perhaps signifying a watermill. Rather than directly signifying that there was a watermill associated with each of these villages or townships (though there was certainly one in Ferryhill for instance), it may represent a shorthand denoting the village was the seat of a manor, since ownership of a mill was a typical lordly attribute. Other villages are shown as crenellated towers, for example the Isle, and Hardwick to the south-east, Coxhoe ('*Coksey*') to the north-east, and Binchester to the west. Again these appear to have a wheel attached. It is not clear whether the difference between these two symbols is significant, though the tower may indicate the presence of a fortified residence such as a tower house (larger castles are depicted with a symbol showing with two linked towers), or perhaps just any substantial gentleman's residence such as a sizeable manor house.

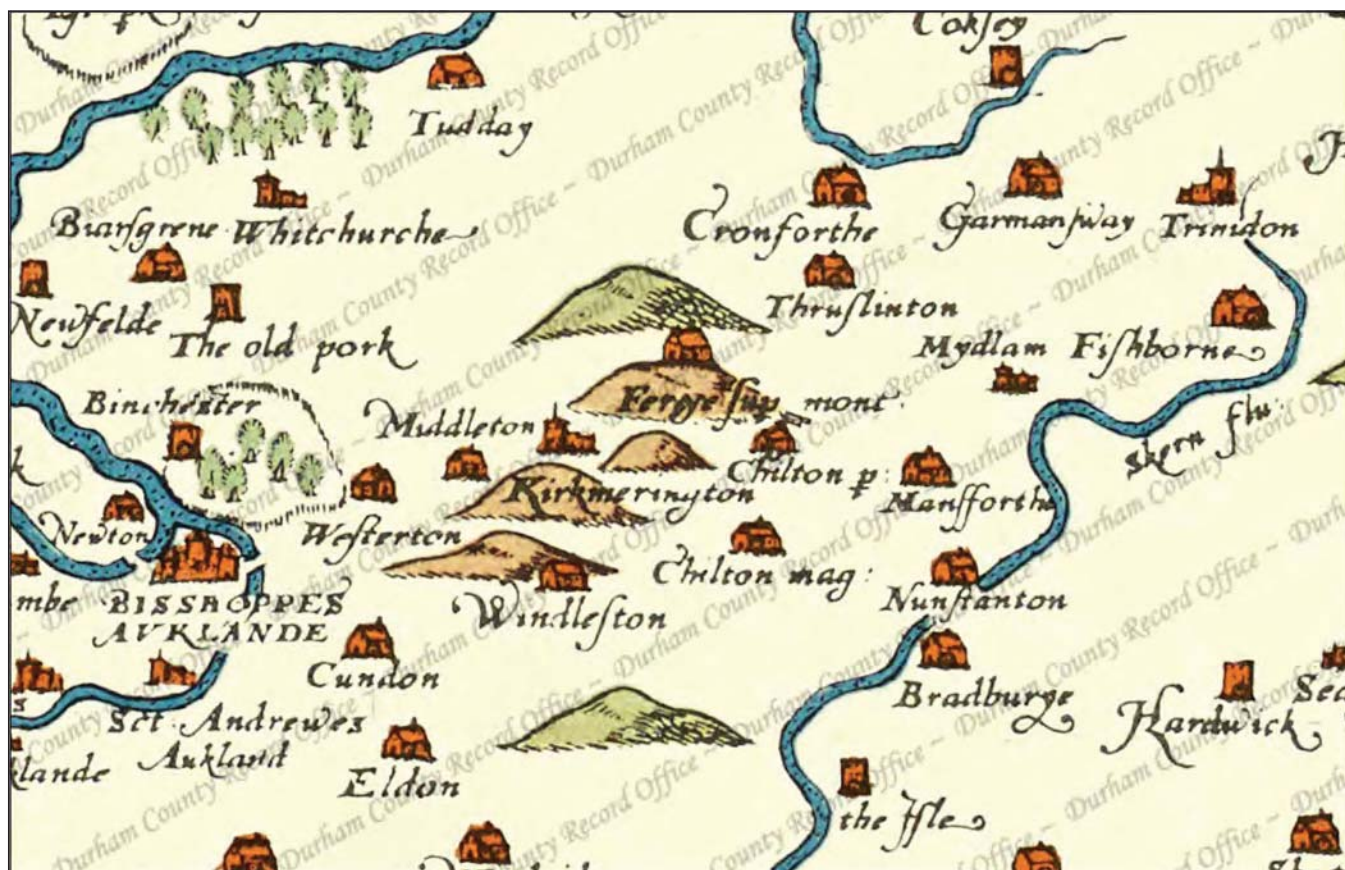
Parks attached lord's residences are depicted as palisaded enclosures capable of holding deer, cattle or other livestock, with Auckland Park, opposite Bishop Auckland, and Brancepeth Park, on the west side of the Wear, being the nearest to Ferryhill. Roads are only indicated by the presence of the occasional bridge, as shown crossing the Wear on the north side of Bishop Auckland (this must represent Newton Cap Bridge which still survives, cf. Pevsner & Williamson 2002, 107).

By contrast John Speed adopts Saxton's parish centre symbol indiscriminately for virtually all the rural settlements he depicts on the county maps he published in his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, which appeared in 1611. Speed's maps were not based on a systematic resurvey. Instead he adapted the county maps of Saxton, Norden and others, acknowledging 'I have put my sickle into other men's corn'. However he did add features such as town plans, including one of Durham itself (probably based on Matthew Patteson's map of 1595, engraved by Christopher Schwytzer) and a vignette and description of the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346, for example.

Both Saxton and Speed depict a rural world characterised exclusively by nucleated villages or hamlets. This was perhaps still broadly accurate, although there is evidence that in some parts of the Magnesian Limestone Plateau the first isolated farmsteads were being established in the 16th and particularly the early 17th century. Over the course of the 17th and early 18th centuries the county maps provide relatively little additional information, since they often recycle earlier material, although the reality of rural settlement was changing rapidly. Some roads are shown from the late 17th century onwards – see Morden's map of 1695 and Maire's map of 1711/20 – benefiting from Ogilby's itinerary maps, which included one strip showing the Great North Road through Ferryhill. Maire also adds the occasional new hamlet such as 'Rushy Ford', where the Great North Road crossed Rushyford Beck, a tributary of the Skerne, south of Ferryhill, and also other features such as the 'Tudhoe Colepitts' north-west of Ferryhill, early coal mines indicated by four circles.

The next step forward in the level of detail depicted is represented by Armstrong's County map. This responded to the initiative launched by the newly founded Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce which was offering premiums for the production of maps at a more detailed scale of around one inch to one mile (Butlin 2003, 247). Armstrong's map shows a network of roads, including the Great North Road crossing





Extract from Christopher Saxton's Map of County Durham (Durham County Record Office D/CL 23/2), 1576, the earliest of the county maps. Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office



Illus. 00: Extract from Speed's Map of County Durham, 1611 (Durham County Record Office D/XP 26). Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office





Extract from Robert Morden's Map of the 'Bishoprick of Durham' 1695 (Durham County Record Office D/CL 23/14). Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office.



Extract from Armstrong's 1768 Map of County Durham - 1791 revision (Durham County Record Office, Londonderry Estate Archives D/Lo 239). Reproduced by permission of Lord Londonderry and Durham County Record Office.





Extract from Jones & Smith's Map of County Durham 1808 (Durham County Record Office D/CL 23/46).  
Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office.



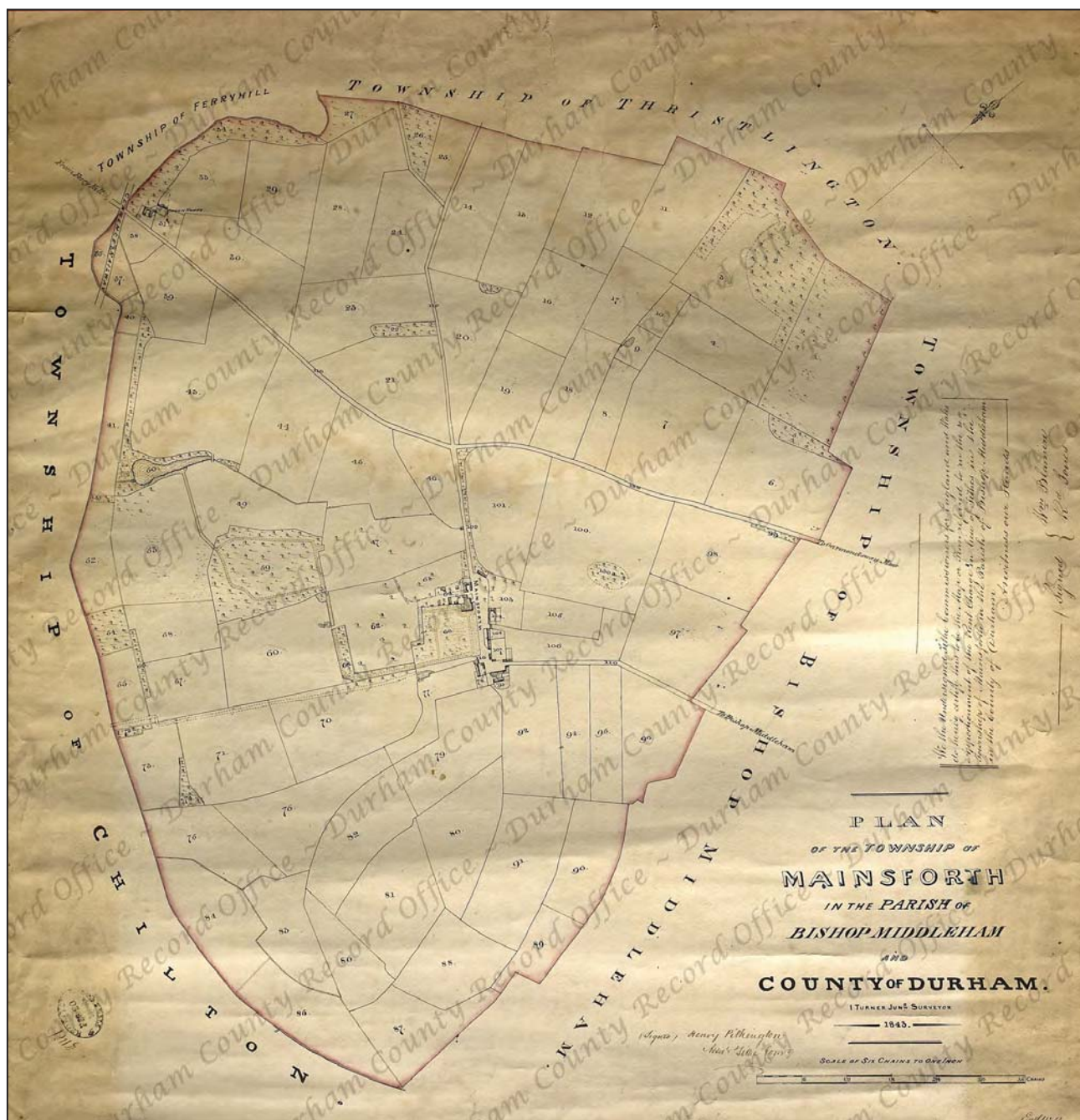
Extract from Greenwood's Map of County Durham 1820 (Durham County Record Office D/St/P 20/2).  
Reproduced by permission of Lord Strathmore and Durham County Record Office.



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*Thrislington Township Tithe Map 1839 (Durham County Record Office EP/BM 26/2).  
Reproduced by permission of Bishop Middleham Parish and Durham County Record Office.*



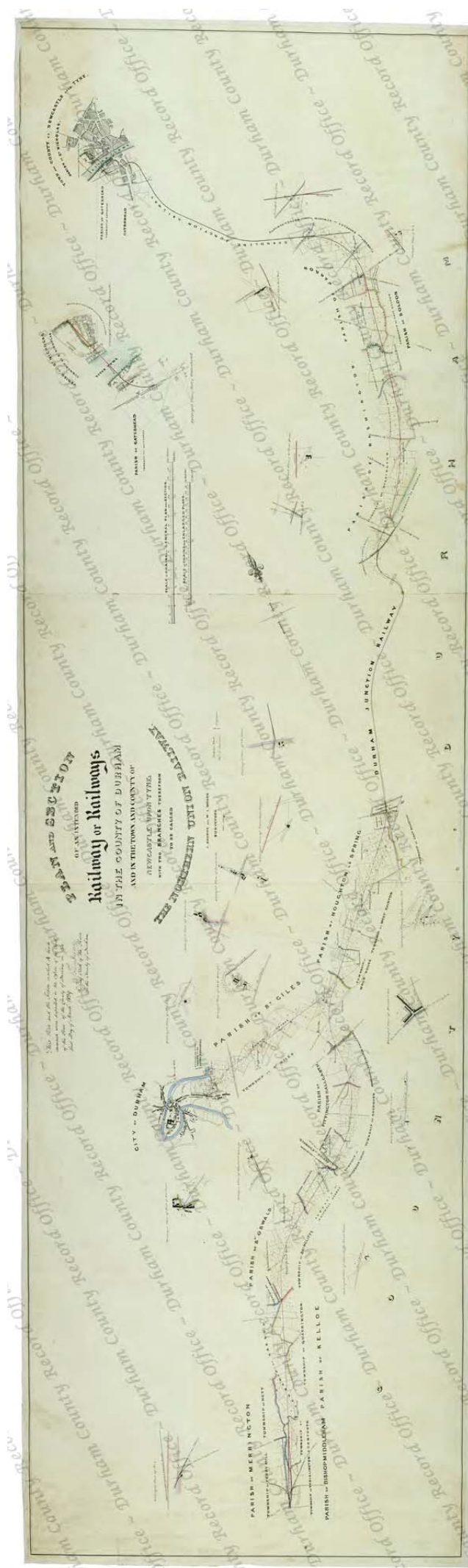


Mainsforth Township Tithe Map 1843 (Durham County Record Office EP/BM 27/2). Reproduced by permission of Bishop Middleham Parish and Durham County Record Office.





Extract from J T W Bell's 1843 Map of the Great Northern Coalfield's Hartlepool District (Durham County Record Office D/Lo/P 242/1), showing railway lines and coal pits in the vicinity of Ferryhill. Reproduced by permission of Lord Londonderry and Durham County Record Office.



Plan and section of the Northern Union Railway c. 1859 (Durham County Record Office Q/D/P97 N). Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office.



# FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS

- Aerial Photographs -



Ferryhill Historic Village Core



Earthworks of medieval village at Little Chilton



Great Chilton: Hall and site of Medieval Village



The modern face of extraction: Thrislington Quarry



the western end of Ferryhill village, the ridgetop road heading westward to the three Merringtons, (Kirk) Merrington with its parish church, Middlestone and Westerton, Thinford Lane running along the northern end of the township and Broom Road/Station Road heading SE down the bank to Mainsforth and Bishop Middleham. It also marks some of the dispersed farmsteads which had been established since the end of the Middle Ages, including Brass House, Thinford and Moor House (later renamed Cookson's Green), though it is not comprehensive in this regard. Little Chilton is also shown as a single farm.

Greenwood's map of 1820 is interesting above all because it depicts the Limestone Escarpment Ridge and surrounding valley lowlands on the eve of industrialisation. It shows an essentially rural settlement pattern of villages, hamlets (the remnants of once larger medieval villages in some cases), and dispersed farmsteads established since the medieval era, including Brass House which is named and several others which are not and the watermill near East Howle. Ferryhill is depicted as a large village and even Great Chilton is shown as being fairly substantial. It also shows the township boundaries, providing the earliest cartographic record of these in some cases (e.g. Chilton).

There are a number of **estate maps** covering Ferryhill and Chilton. Most remarkable is the map of the Dean and Chapter's Ferryhill estate by Richard Richardson (DCD E/AA/17/1/2), held in Durham University Library which is accompanied by a full terrier itemising all the holdings field by field, tenement by tenement. The map itself also shows which lessee held each field and provides a detailed plan of the field layout in all the land held by the Dean and Chapter's lessees, comprising the majority of the township. However freehold lands are only shown in outline, with no indication of their internal field pattern, though the freeholder is named. The village itself is shown in great detail, with the buildings around the green/marketplace being shown as pictograms. It is uncertain how accurate these are drawings, though it is possible that they give a rough impression of size and whether a particular building had one or two storeys. Freehold buildings, however, (which include the surviving Manor House) are for the most part only shown in plan, as grey blocks. In addition the marks in faint red ink lessee to whom the particular parcel of ground was awarded to when the townfields and moor were divided up in 1637. It thus looks backward and provides a record of the layout and tenure of tenancies at a crucial moment when the earlier open fields and common moor were enclosed and divided up. Although the plan doesn't explicitly show precisely how the township was organised prior to enclosure and division, the fact that whole blocks of fields are given the same name, such as Ox-pasture, Cow-pasture, East Field, Well Field, Spennymoor, East Moor and Shelly Moor, implies that these may reveal the outline of the pre-enclosure townfields and moorland.

There are a numerous estate maps with accompanying schedules relating to the various constituent estates and farms in Chilton township held in Durham Record Office, including Great Chilton (D/EI 15/99-100, 109 & 110; 1834 & 1838), Little Chilton (D/EI 21/41, 67, & 75; 1855 & 1859) Standalone farm (D/EI 14/28, 62 & 64; 1842 & 1844), Chilton Grange and Kay's Hill Farm (D/EI 16/28-29; 1855). However, with the exception of the Great Chilton maps, which comprise around a quarter of the township, these all postdate the 1838 Chilton tithe map (the earlier Great Chilton map shows that estate before the construction of the Clarence Railway's Chilton branchline and both display a number of interesting details).

The **tithe maps and apportionments** for Ferryhill (DRO EP/Mer 41/1-2 – 1838) and the adjoining townships of Chilton (EP/Mer 42/1-2 – 1838), Thrislington (EP/BM 26/1-2 – 1839) and Mainsforth (EP/BM 27/1-2 – 1843) have been examined, analysed and in some cases reproduced. In the case of Chilton this provides the earliest comprehensive record of the layout of the fields and a broadly accurate impression of the layout of the historic village settlements. As with those marked on the estate maps described above, the field names recorded in the associated apportionment schedules can provide clues to much earlier land use. Although the tithe maps are broadly reliable, it should be noted that the surveyors who

prepared these maps were not working to the same level of accuracy as implemented in the slightly later Ordnance Survey maps, particularly with regard to the precise details of settlement morphology, as it was not necessary for their purposes. It was not unusual for the tithe commissioners to make use of an old survey prepared by the noted local surveyors such as Thomas Bell, as occurred in the case of Thrislington, for example.

For both villages the tithe plans followed by the **First Edition Ordnance Survey** about twenty years later represent the earliest detailed maps. The First Edition Ordnance Survey also constitutes the earliest comprehensive evidence for the layout of the villages, which can be subjected to close scrutiny to tease out elements of the medieval village plans. The cartographic assemblage for both villages is completed by later editions of the Ordnance Survey.

### **Pictorial representations**

Pictorial representations – prints, sketches and paintings – and early photographs, were examined and, where possible, copied. The principal source of such representations was the archive held by the Ferryhill History Society. Such photographs show the appearance of buildings shown in plan on historic maps, as well as features not included on such plans. In some cases they also provide useful information on the function of such buildings.

### **Published Syntheses and published collections of sources**

Existing published research covering the historic village has been summarised for inclusion in the historical synthesis. The principal work of reference is represented by Volume III of Robert Surtees *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* which includes sections devoted to Bishop Middleham and Kirk Merrington parishes (1823, 1-24, 279-90) and specifically Thrislington and Mainsforth, Ferryhill, Chilton townships or constabularies (pp. 16, 17-24, 284-6, 287-90 respectively).

- Other county history syntheses e.g. Hutchinson (1794, 389-97), Mackenzie & Ross (1834, 310-12), Fordyce (1857, 398-400, 440-43) and the Victoria County History (Page (ed.) 1905-1928).
- Medieval and early modern documentary sources published by the Public Record Office, Surtees Society (SS) and others, or reproduced in works such as Surtees *History and Antiquities*. Collections which proved particularly useful comprised:
  - i. *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, ed. W. Greenwell, Surtees Society **58** (1872), Durham, London & Edinburgh
  - ii. *Halmota Prioratus Dunelmensis*, ed. J. Booth and W. H. D. Longstaffe, Surtees Society **82** (1889), Durham, London & Edinburgh
  - iii. *Durham Cathedral Priory Rentals I. Bursars Rentals*, ed. R. A. Lomas and A. J. Piper, Surtees Society **198** (1989), Newcastle upon Tyne
  - iv. *Durham, Cursitors Records: Inquisitions Post Mortem etc.*, Appendix to the 44th and 45th Reports of Deputy Keeper of Public Records
  - v. *Wills and Inventories from the Registry at Durham* (4 vols., SS 2, 38, 112, 142, 1835, 1860 1906, 1929).
  - vi. *Durham Hearth Tax, Lady Day 1666* (Green et al. 2006)
- Trade directories
- Relevant specialist archaeological and historical literature.

County Durham is fortunate in being well covered by early documentary material. This is the result of its distinctive history with much of the county being held directly by the church in the Middle Ages, either by the bishop of Durham or by the Benedictine priory attached to the cathedral. At some stage towards the end of the 11th century or early in the 12th century the estates of the former Community of St Cuthbert were divided between the bishop and the priory. For villages and townships which were directly held by either of these institutions copious records survive including estate/manorial surveys such as the Boldon Book (initially compiled c. 1183 but surviving only in a series of 14th- and 15th-century copies) and Bishop

Hatfield's Survey (a similar though even more detailed survey of c. 1380). For the priory's lands there are similar survey documents such as the Feodary, compiled in around 1430, but essentially based on much earlier information, as well as record's associated with the priory's manorial, or 'Halmote', court and copious accounts. Many of these documents have been published in volumes produced by the Surtees Society, for example, or by Robert Surtees himself in his county history (*History and Antiquities* ... 1816-40) though there is still a great mass of charters and Priory accounts material which is unpublished – fuel for future PhDs and other academic research. A third category of estates is not on the whole so blessed, however, namely those held by secular lords. It is in this category that

### **3.2.2 Archaeological Survey**

The Durham County Historic Environment Record was consulted in order to prepare a summary gazetteer of all archaeological sites recorded in the township, including industrial archaeological monuments, find spots and communications routes. Sites newly identified during the course of the study have also been added to the gazetteer (see Chapter 6).

Both villages have been examined by a historic buildings specialist, and all buildings of historic interest have been described (see Chapter 7). Photographs of the exterior of each building have been incorporated in the archive gazetteer.

### **3.2.3 Air Photographic coverage**

The existing aerial photographic coverage for Ferryhill, held by the NMR has been examined and significant features noted. The colour satellite imagery provided by Google Earth has also been consulted. The coverage extends right back to series of vertical runs made by the RAF in the mid 1940s and these are in themselves now a valuable historical record of features which, in some instances, have been damaged by more recent agricultural practices and activities such as quarrying. There are also a number of oblique views of sites of known archaeological significance, principally the Iron Age rectilinear enclosure complex of north of Great Chilton, (No. 81; DCHER 15777), a D-shaped enclosure just SE of Thrislington Nature Reserve, between Rough Furze Quarry and Hope House (17; DCHER 1121). In addition four photographs in the Durham University Aerial Photograph Collection show a large rectilinear enclosure just N of Bridge House Farm on the W side of the A167 plus a couple of sub-circular features on the E side of the road (4; DCHER 376).

### **3.2.4 Survey of Village environs**

The wider setting of Ferryhill and neighbouring village settlements has been assessed for the Village Atlas, using the territorial framework of their respective historic townships, through a combination of aerial photographs, historic maps, documents, previous historical syntheses and site visits. Where possible the various components - infield arable and meadow, outfield pasture, woodland – have been identified and different phases of activity evidence of change over time have been noted in the historical synthesis. Information regarding the extent of outlying settlement has also been summarised in the synthesis.

More detailed recording of the surrounding field systems could form the basis of future community-led study. These might involve recording the wavelength of ridge-and-furrow and identifying ancient hedge-lines by the variety of flora present. The data gathered could then be interpreted using the assembled resource of historic maps, aerial photographs and documented history provided by this report.

### **3.2.5 Site inspections**

Site visits were undertaken to examine the settlement and wider township area, their principal monuments, built environment and field systems. Rather than being a comprehensive field survey, this was carried out to enable the project team to characterise the built fabric, archaeological landscape features and wider landscape setting of the village and to examine features which other data collection methods (historic map analysis/air



photography/documentary survey etc.) identified as being of particular importance. Photographs were taken of all the historic buildings and other sites or features of especial significance.

### **3.2.6 Archaeological excavation and survey**

#### **Test pitting**

Test-pitting exercise involving local schools was undertaken on the lawn of the Manor House towards the east end of the historic core of Ferryhill village and on the course of the C19 waggonway/railway which led to Chilton Colliery and Broom Colliery, near Little Chilton. A range of finds were found, including some sherds of medieval pottery at the Manor House.

#### **Historic Building survey (see Chapter 7)**

All buildings of note were photographed in the course of site visits. Summary descriptions of those located in the historic core of the village, around the marketplace, and in Dean Bank, as well as significant surviving religious buildings.

Descriptions of several buildings of special note in Chilton are also included, specifically Chilton Hall, the C17 and later Great Chilton Farmhouse and Little Chilton Farmhouse, which incorporates the remains of a surviving medieval manor house.

### **3.2.7 Public information and involvement**

Several guided walks around Ferryhill village and its wider environs to examine historic buildings, notable archaeological monuments, geological features and sites of ecological significance (e.g. Little Chilton and Great Chilton, the Carrs, Thrislington Quarry) were undertaken, conducted by staff of the Archaeological Practice, historic buildings expert Peter Ryder, geologist Ian Kille and ecologist Ivan Dunn. A variety of ecological monitoring activities were led by Ivan Dunn (see Chapter 5 for full details).

A number of public talks were given by the various specialists involved in the Atlas programme, some to the Ferryhill History Society, some as separate events in the Manor House and the Library including the Geology of Ferryhill by Ian Kille, Investigating Historic Landscapes by Alan Rushworth, 'An armchair guided walk around Ferryhill' by local historian Michael Ord. Visits to the Durham Historic Environment Record and various regional archives were also organised.

A programme of oral recording has also been initiated, with advice and instruction from Richard Carlton and Dr Ian Roberts. Through structured enquiry and conversation with long-standing residents, this is intended to preserve a record of key happenings, past livelihoods and a wealth of other recollections of life in the two communities during the 20th century.

### **3.2.8 Schools Programme**

A programme of classroom-based and outdoor sessions was delivered to the pupils of Cleves Cross, Dean Bank and Ferryhill Station Primary Schools by geologist Ian Kille, ecologist Ivan Dunn and archaeologist Paul Mercer (see feature section below detailing Dean Bank Primary School's activities). These schools also undertook test-pitting at the Manor House in Ferryhill village and on the Chilton Colliery waggonway in Little Chilton (see above).

# The Village Atlas in Action



*Agricultural historian Ian Roberts visiting a farm at Thrundle to record an oral history interview.*



*Documentary Ingathering meeting in full flow*



*Example of a historic council map depicting Ferryhill.*



*Historic photograph of Ferryhill Station yard and Mainsforth Colliery.*



*A historic photograph of Ferryhill Cricket Team. An example of material collected during the 'ingathering' event.*



*Geologist Ian Kille examining an abandoned magnesian limestone quarry face in Ferryhill Gap.*



*Investigating the plants and wildlife of the Carrs with ecologist Ivan Dunn.*



# Uncovering Ferryhill's Past



*Examining the remains of the Swan House with Atlas participant Michael Ord providing scale*



*Buildings archaeologist Peter Ryder describing the late medieval hall at Little Chilton to the village atlas group*



*Old farming equipment discovered inside a barn at Bridge House Farm, Ferryhill*



*Exploring the medieval layout of Ferryhill behind North Row*



*Possible remains of the original Swan House identified*



*Agricultural historian Ian Roberts talking to a farmer at Thrundle Farm*



# Archaeological Testpitting at The Manor House

Pupils from Dean Bank and Cleves Cross Schools explored the history of the town over two days in June 2013 as part of the Ferryhill Village Atlas.

The children dug four 1m square test pits in the garden of the Manor House Inn, with the help of archaeologists from The Archaeological Practice Ltd. Further pits were dug by Ferryhill's schoolchildren in September 2014 during the Atlas celebratory event. Permission to dig up the lawn had very kindly been given by successive owners of the hotel, Mr James Gray and Arthur Scott & Julie Donoghue.



The archaeologists were amazed by the children's enthusiasm as they dug away with trowels and shovels.

Finds included two pieces of medieval pottery (see below), the bowl of a clay pipe, broken fragments of more recent pottery vessels and glass bottles, plus lots of coal, brick and ash.



Archaeologist Richard Carlton explained *'the idea of test-pitting is to gather a representative selection of finds reflecting local settlement going back through time. The more recent finds should lie nearer the surface and the older ones further down'*.



He concluded *'based on what we've found, it looks as though generations of people living at the Manor House have been burning their rubbish and throwing the remains into the back garden'*.





# Archaeological Testpitting at Little Chilton



Children from Ferryhill Station Primary School have been exploring the area's industrial past as part of the Ferryhill Village Atlas. With the help of archaeologists from The Archaeological Practice Ltd, the pupils dug four 1m square test pits near Little Chilton, along the line of the old railway which led from Ferryhill Station to Broom and Chilton Collieries.



The children enthusiastically threw themselves into the task, digging away with trowels and shovels.

Their finds included metal and rubber fittings associated with the railway track, fragments of 19th and 20th-century pottery, glass, coal, bricks and ash, giving the children a clear idea of the kind of activities associated with the railway.



*'Although the waggonways continuing on to Broom and Chilton collieries had been closed by the end of the 19th century this section of line remained in use well into the 20th century to serve the Chilton Lime Works and Quarry and the finds the children have uncovered potentially span the full period'* commented archaeologist Alan Rushworth.



# FERRYHILL SCHOOLS AND THE VILLAGE ATLAS

## Dean Bank Primary School's experiences

First we would like to say how much we have enjoyed learning from the different experts who have worked with us.

We have learned lots about different rocks and their properties and why they are used for different things. Also we learned about the plants and animals in our surrounding area and made bird boxes and bee houses to attract more wild life.

We have really enjoyed learning about the archaeology of the area. Taking part in a classroom dig and test pitting which meant that we could take part in an actual dig. It was amazing to learn all about the Iron Age and to be told how the settlement was set out. We did not know that the Iron Age was so linked with the area we live in. We also learned that a bowl to grind corn that was found at the dig was a prized possession. We have also learned about the Romans in the area and that the road that goes past our school was once a Roman road. Roman things have been found in the quarry we can see from our school.

When we visited the quarry we found out about the three different layers of limestone all different colours. It was very interesting to find out that what we were walking on was once a hot dry desert as our country was once farther south than it is now. We also learned about how the area was once under water called the Zechstein Sea. That was between 295 and 250 million years ago and the evidence is in the rock it left behind the magnesian limestone fossils of fish and shells have been found. We also found out that underneath this is the coal that was very important to Ferryhill.

Our school was built in 1907 and is over a hundred years old which makes it very new in history. We found a picture of the first head teacher he looks very strict and wondered if he came to school in his uniform We have also looked at old maps and photographs of Ferryhill. Ferryhill had a lot more different types of shops than it does now. The car park once had a manmade pond for the ducks and swans of the Bishops of Durham. At Manor Farm the pond there was natural and people used to fish there. In 1965 they had more snow than we have ever seen in the winter. We also saw the place where Roger De Ferry is supposed to have killed the last wild boar and that is how Ferryhill could have got its name. We know there is a lot more to learn about the history of our area.

Beth and Leon  
and the Y5/y6's .

## Atlas School Activities



Children from Dean Bank Primary School visiting Thrislington Quarry.



'The Classroom Dig' - learning about archaeology with Education Officer Paul Mercer.



Dean Bank School kids visiting an archaeological dig of an Iron Age settlement at Great Chilton.



Splitting pieces of Marl Slate to reveal intricate fossils of fish within.



Children from Cleves Cross School working hard during testpitting at the Manor House, Ferryhill, as part of the Village Atlas celebratory event in September 2014.

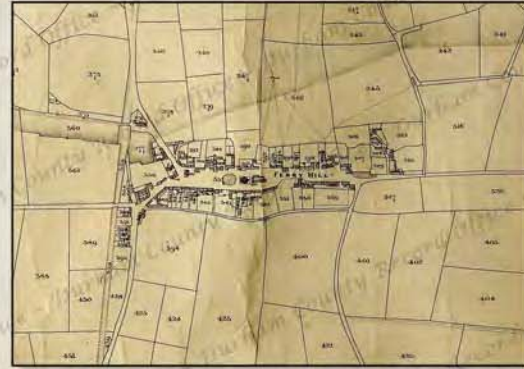


Examining the geology of Ferryhill in the classroom with expert Ian Kille.



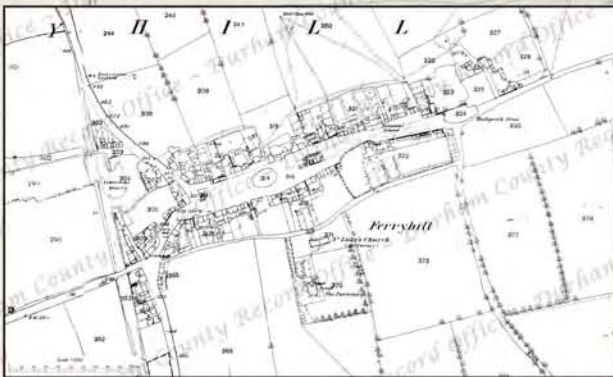


Extract from the 1765 plan of the Dean & Chapter Ferryhill estate (DCD/E/AA/17/1). Reproduced by permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral.

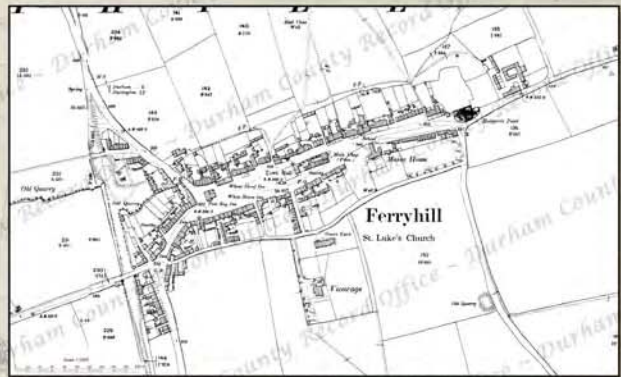


Extract from the 1838 Ferryhill Tithe Plan (DRO EP/Mer 41/2). Reproduced by permission of Merrington Parish & Durham County Record Office.

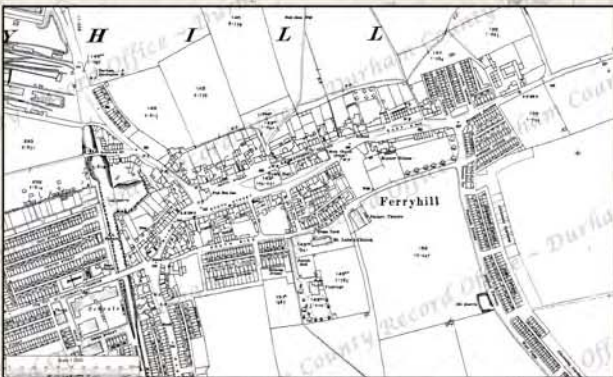
## FERRYHILL THROUGH TIME - Historic Map Regression -



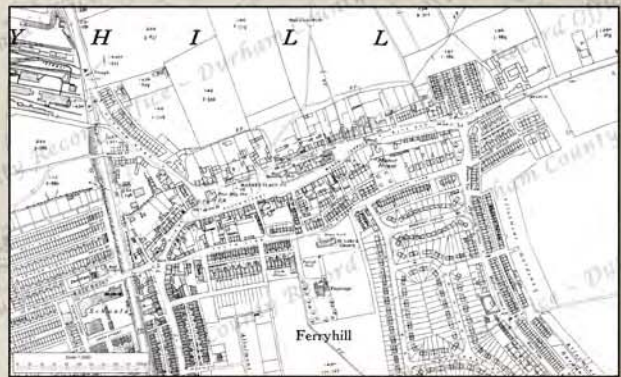
Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1850s



Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1897



Extract from the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1920



Extract from the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1939



Extract from Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1961



Extract from Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500, 1989



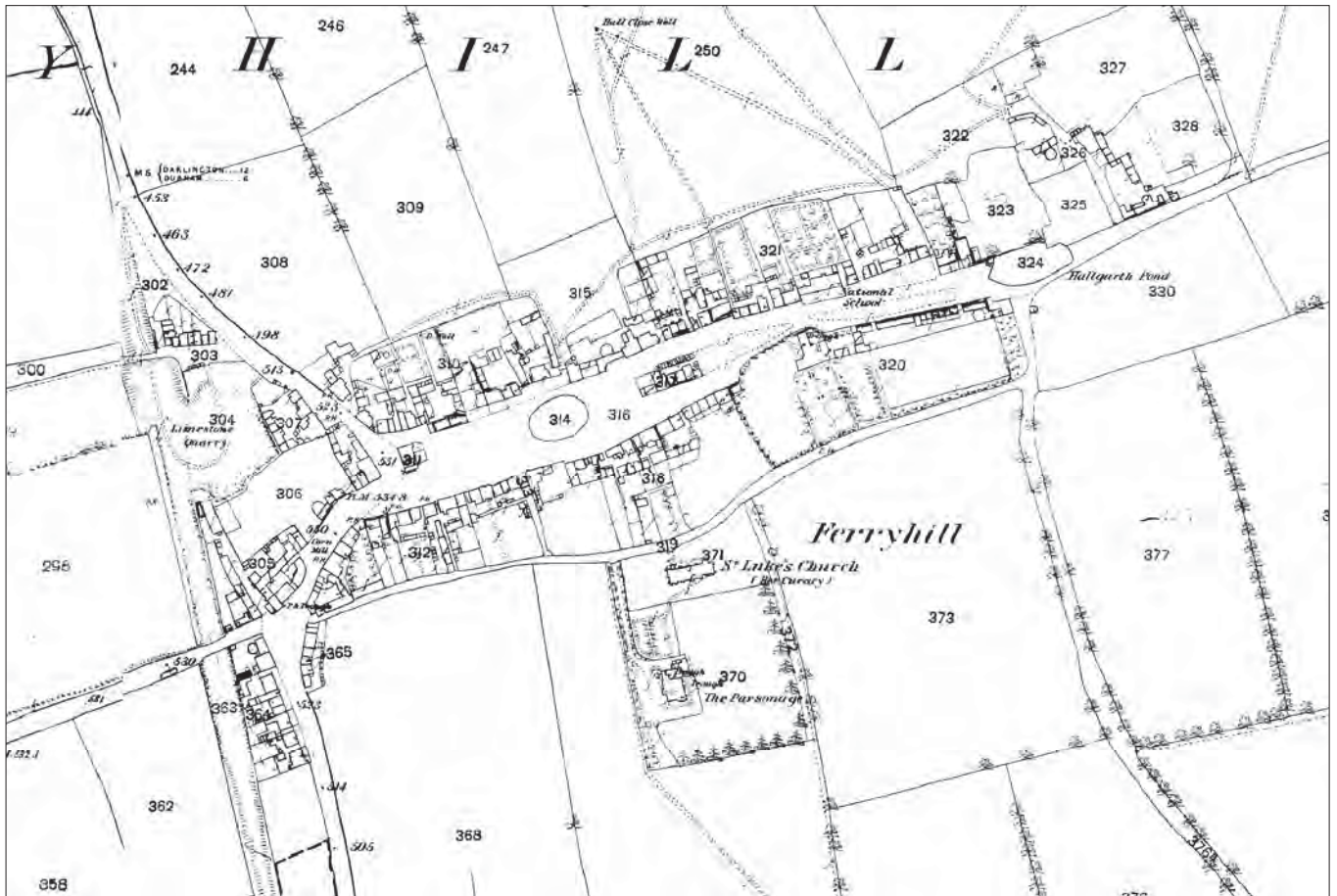


Extract from the Dean & Chapter Estate Plan of 1765 (DCD/E/AA/17/1), showing Ferryhill village core. Reproduced by permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral.



Extract from the 1838 Ferryhill Tithe Plan (Durham County Record Office EP/Mer 41/2), showing Ferryhill village core. Reproduced by permission of Merrington Parish and Durham County Record Office.

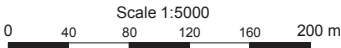




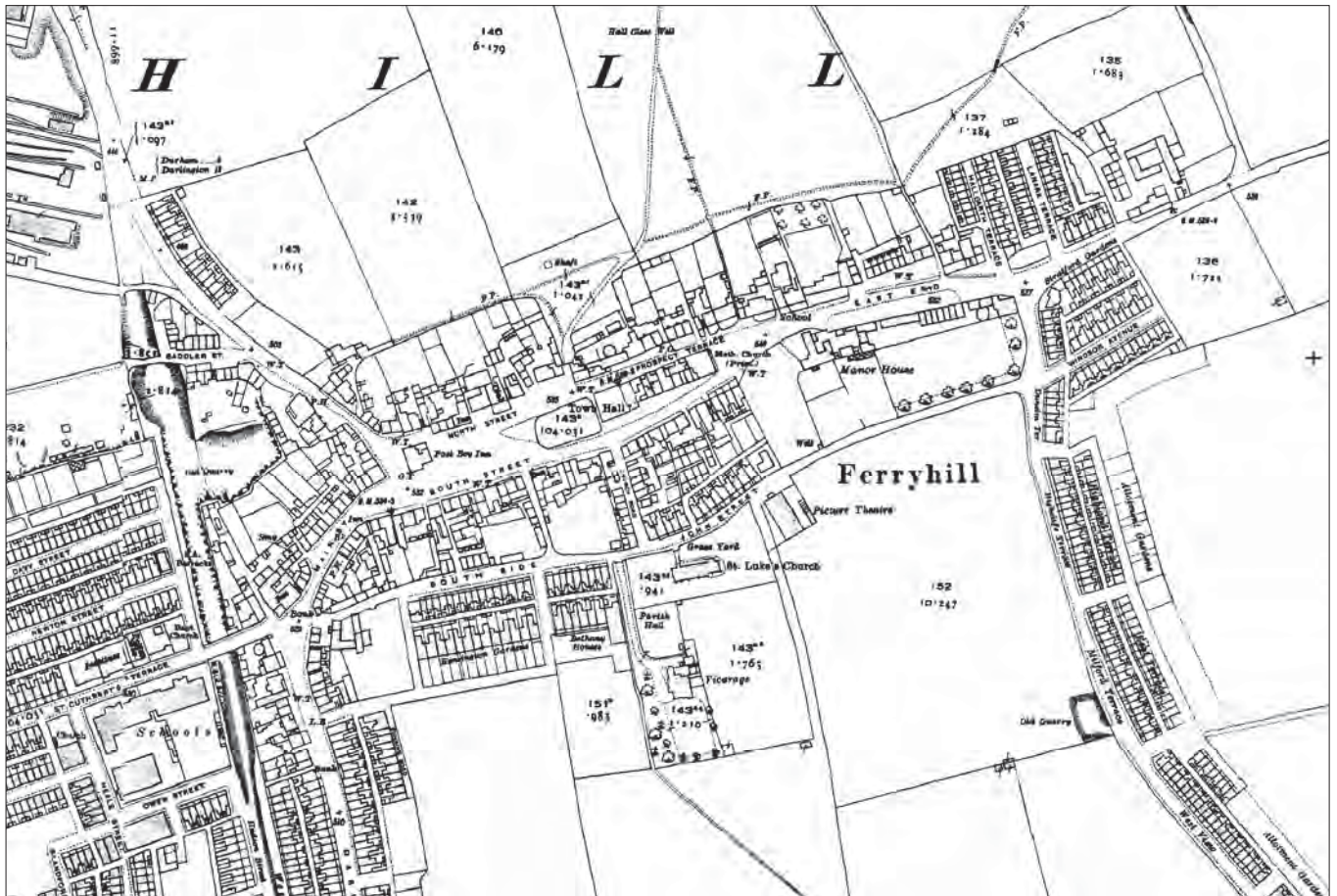
Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 1859, showing Ferryhill Village Core.



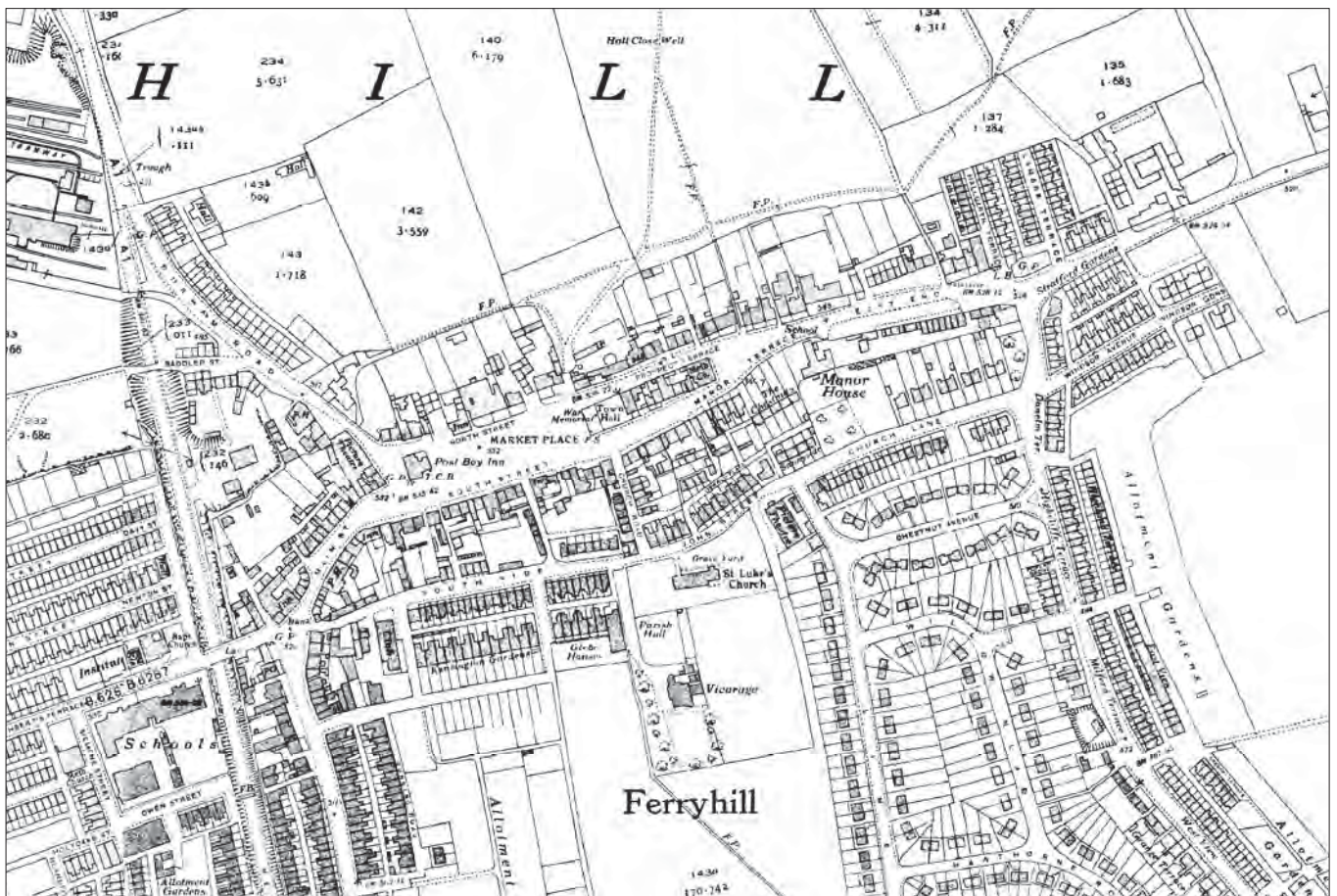
Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey, 1897, showing Ferryhill Village Core.







Extract from the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey, 1920, showing Ferryhill Village Core.



Extract from the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey, 1939, showing Ferryhill Village Core.

Scale 1:5000  
0 40 80 120 160 200 m





Extract from the 1961 Edition Ordnance Survey, showing Ferryhill Village Core.

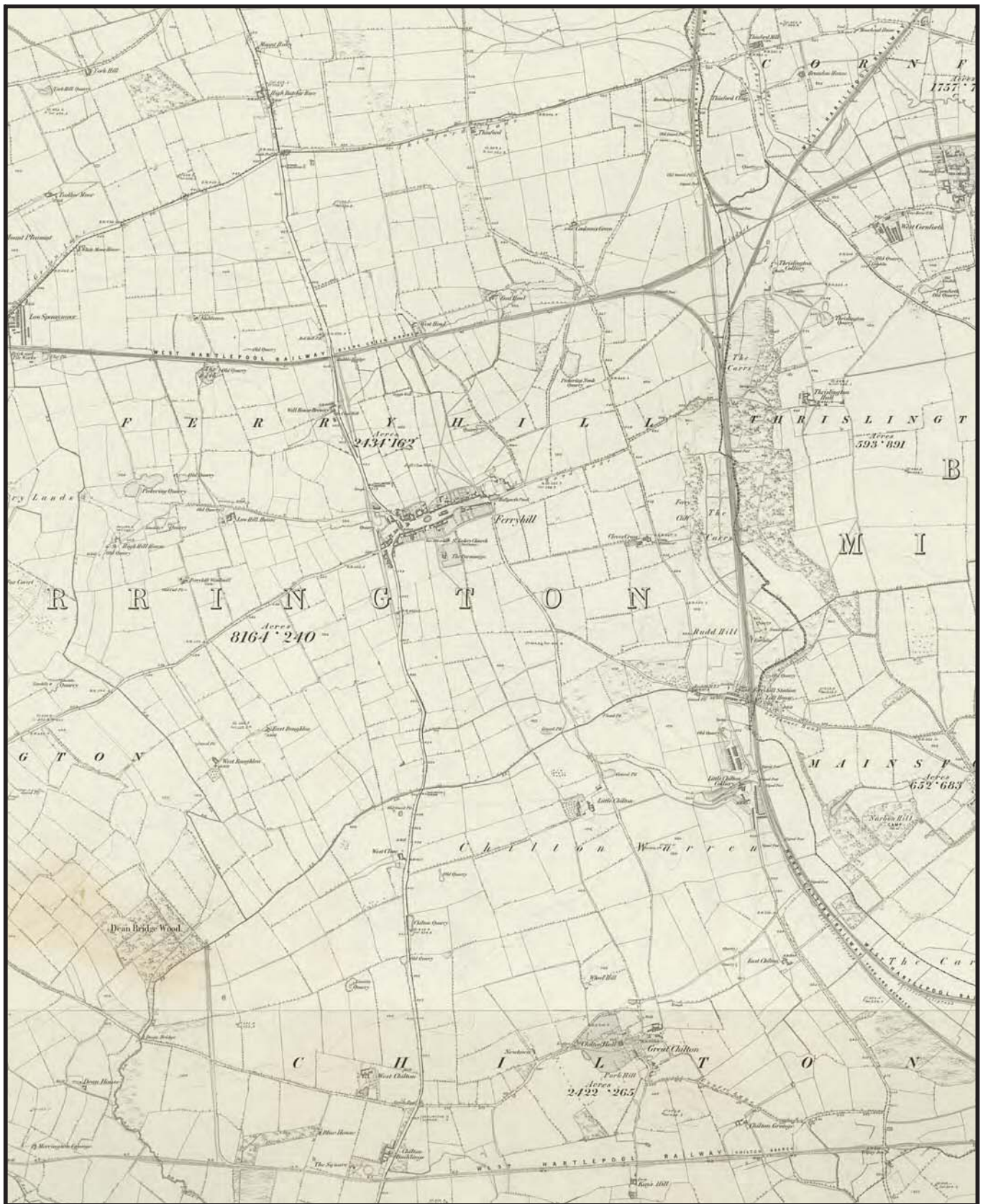


Extract from the 1989 Edition Ordnance Survey, showing Ferryhill Village Core.

Scale 1:5000  
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FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS  
- First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1856 -  
Scale: 6" per mile for main map



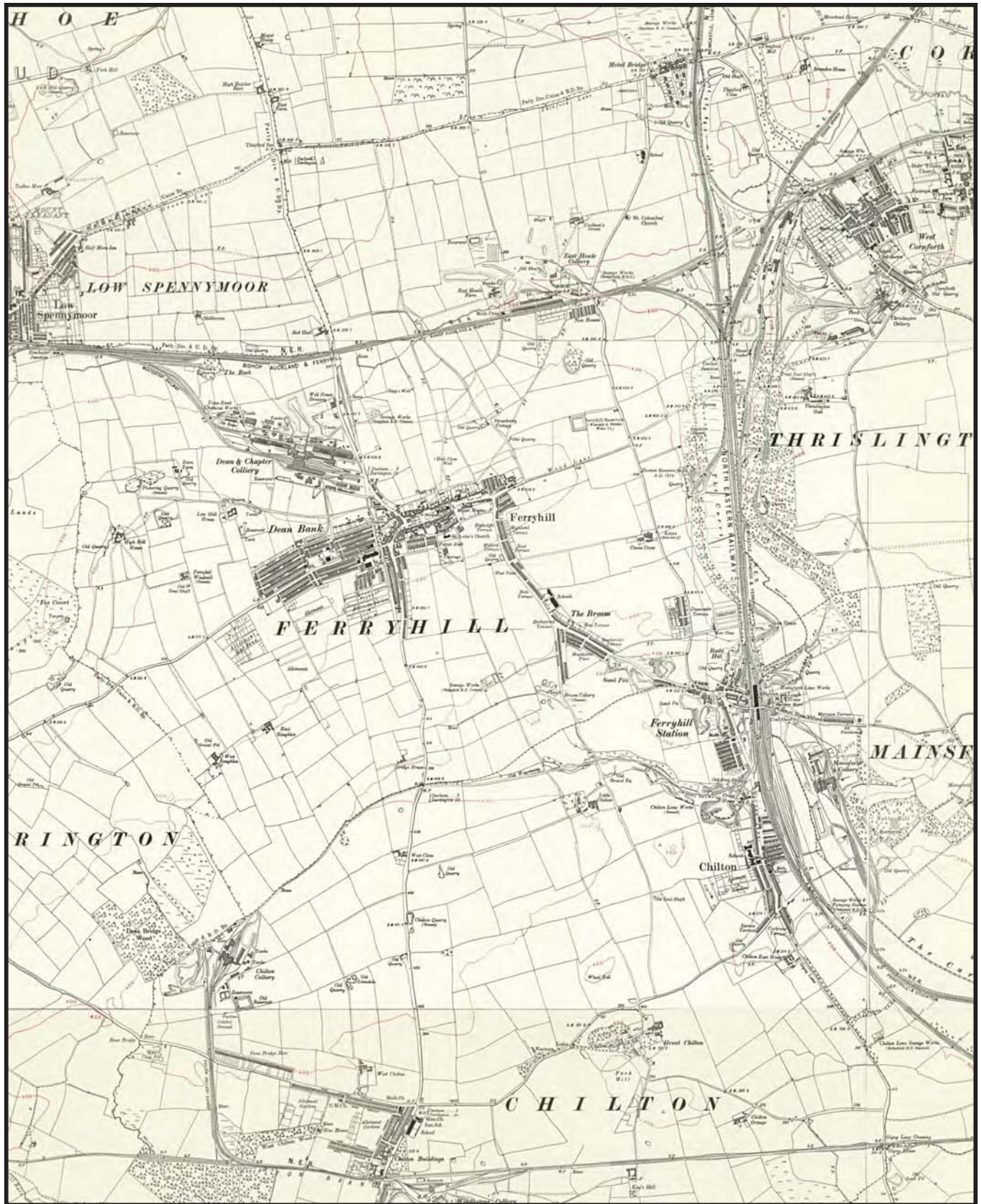


FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS  
- Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1896 -  
Scale: 6" per mile for main map





FERRYHILL VILLAGE ATLAS  
- Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1915 -  
Scale: 6" per mile











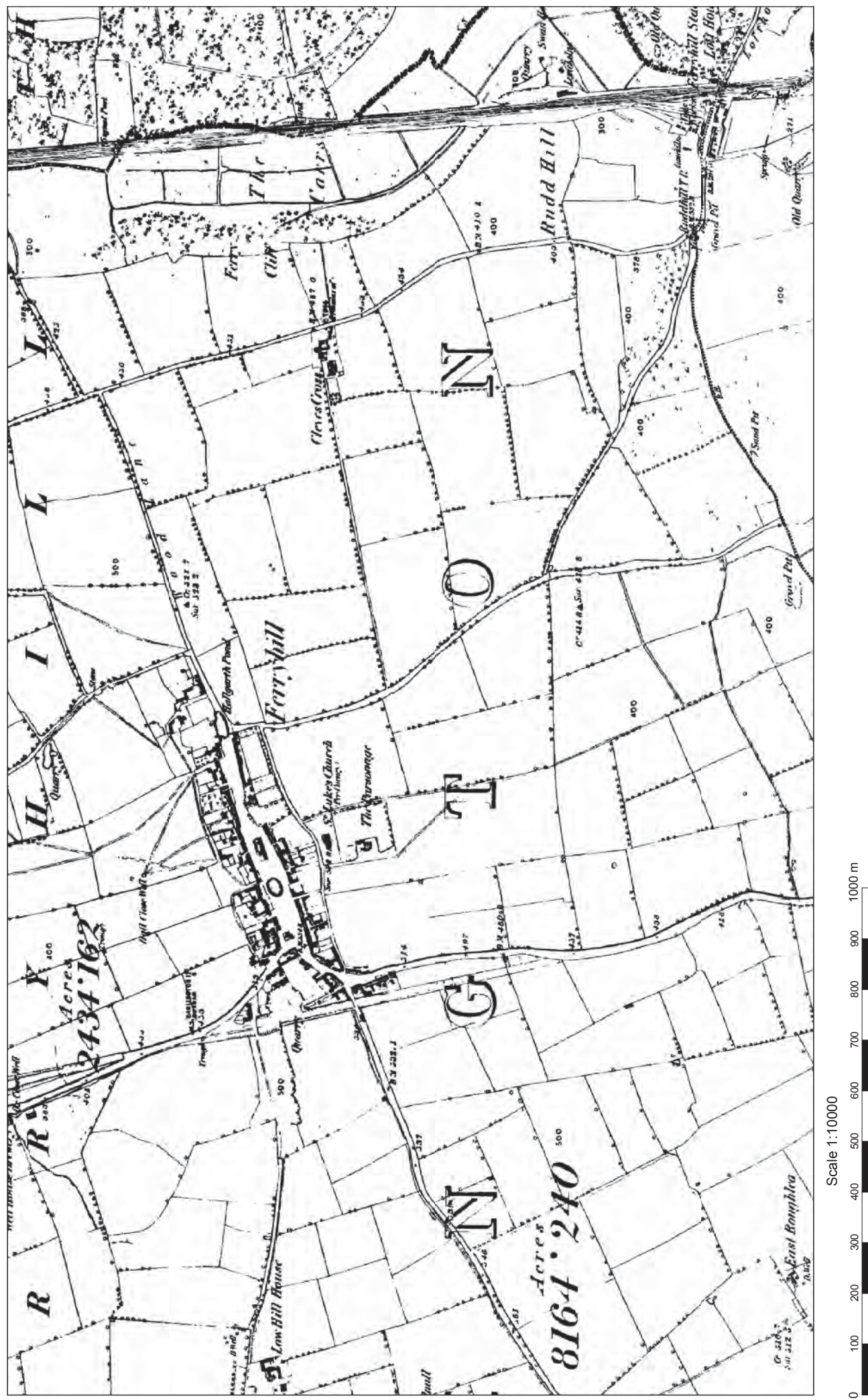




0 400 800 1200 1600 2000 m

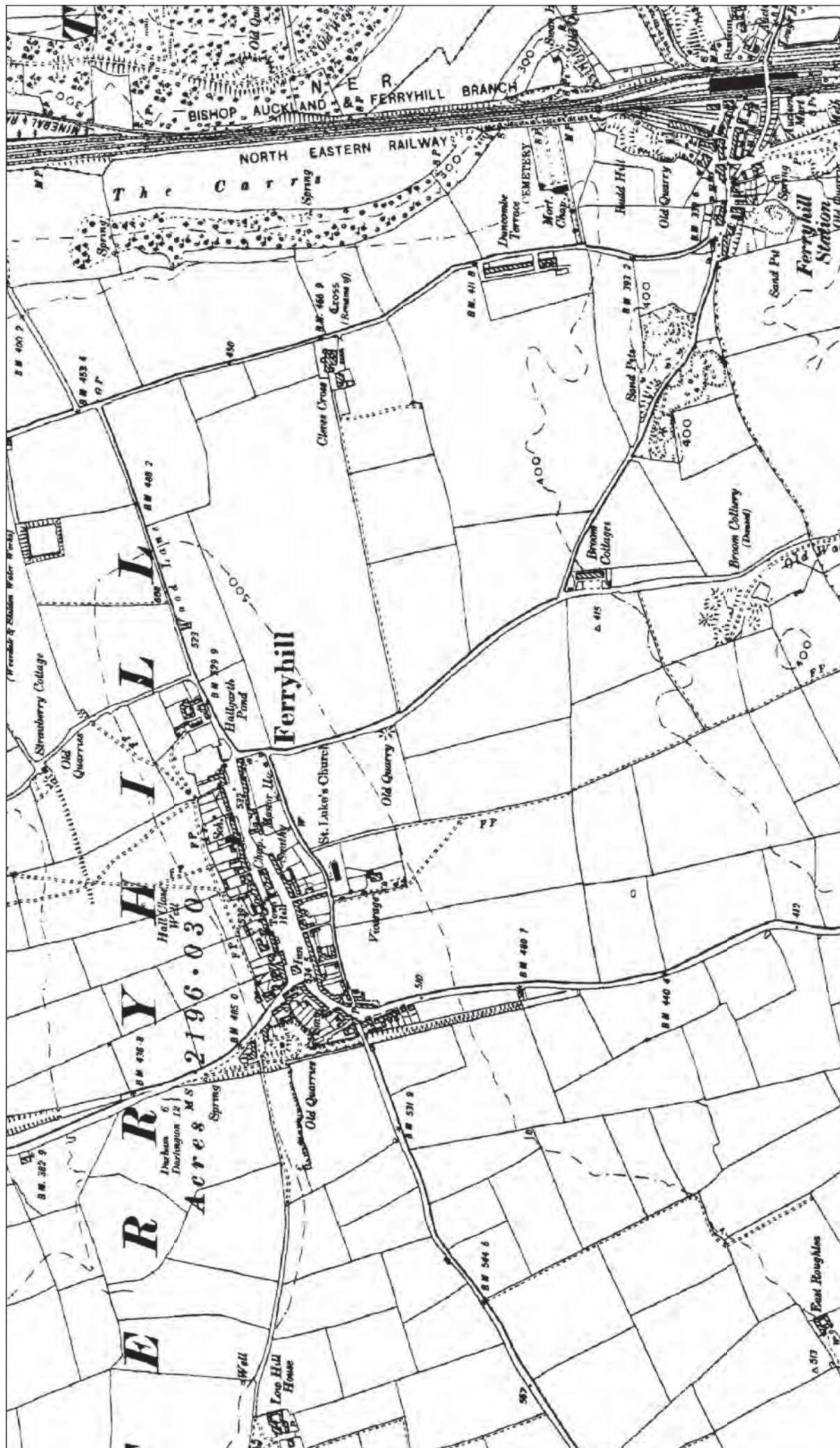
Extract from the 199v Edition Ordnance Survey, 6 inch per mile.



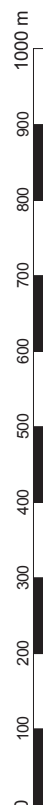


Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, 1861, showing the central study area.



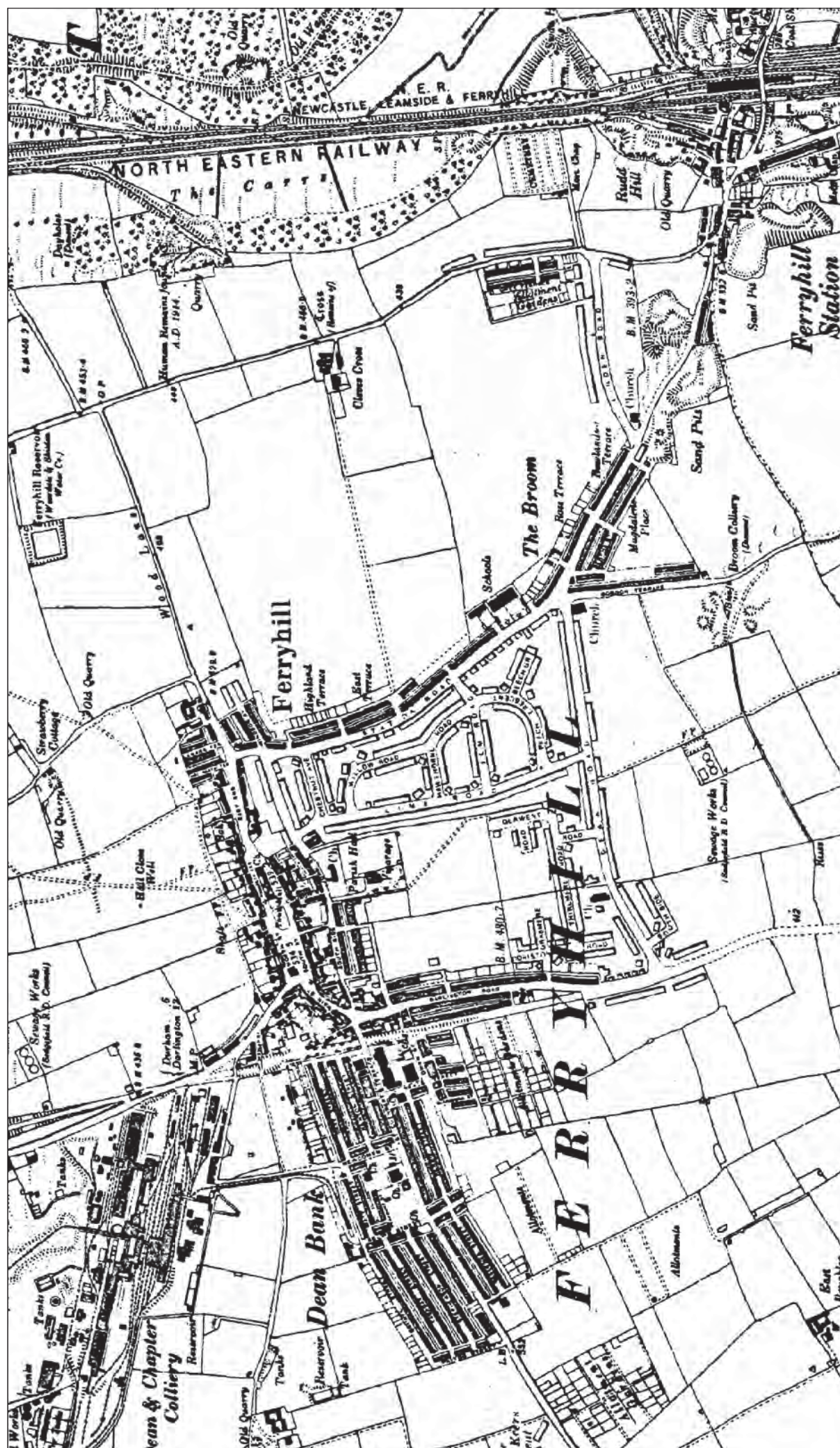


Scale 1:10000



Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, 1898, showing the central study area.





Scale 1:10000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m

Extract from the 6th Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, 1928, showing the central study area.





Scale 1:10000

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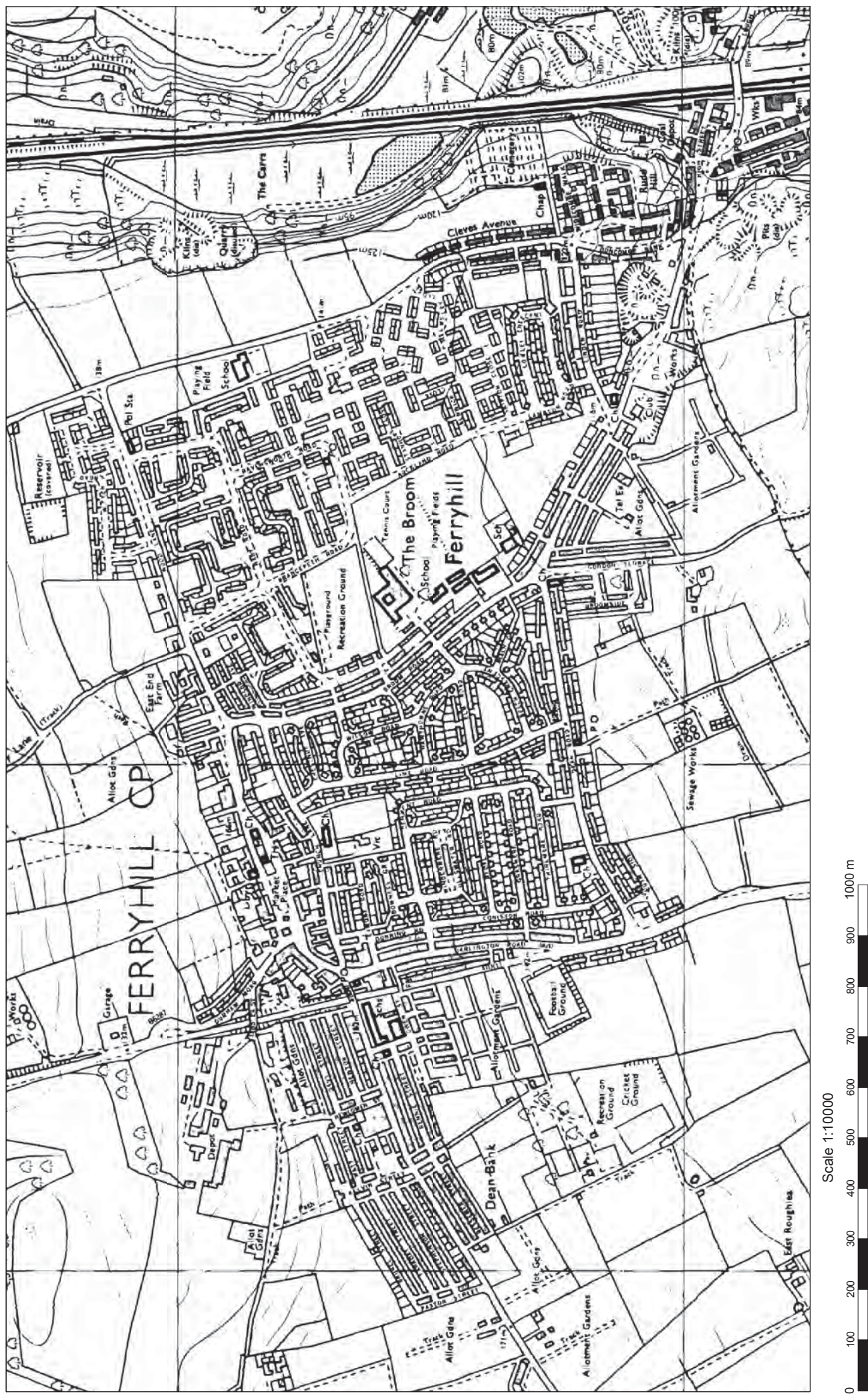


Scale 1:100000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m

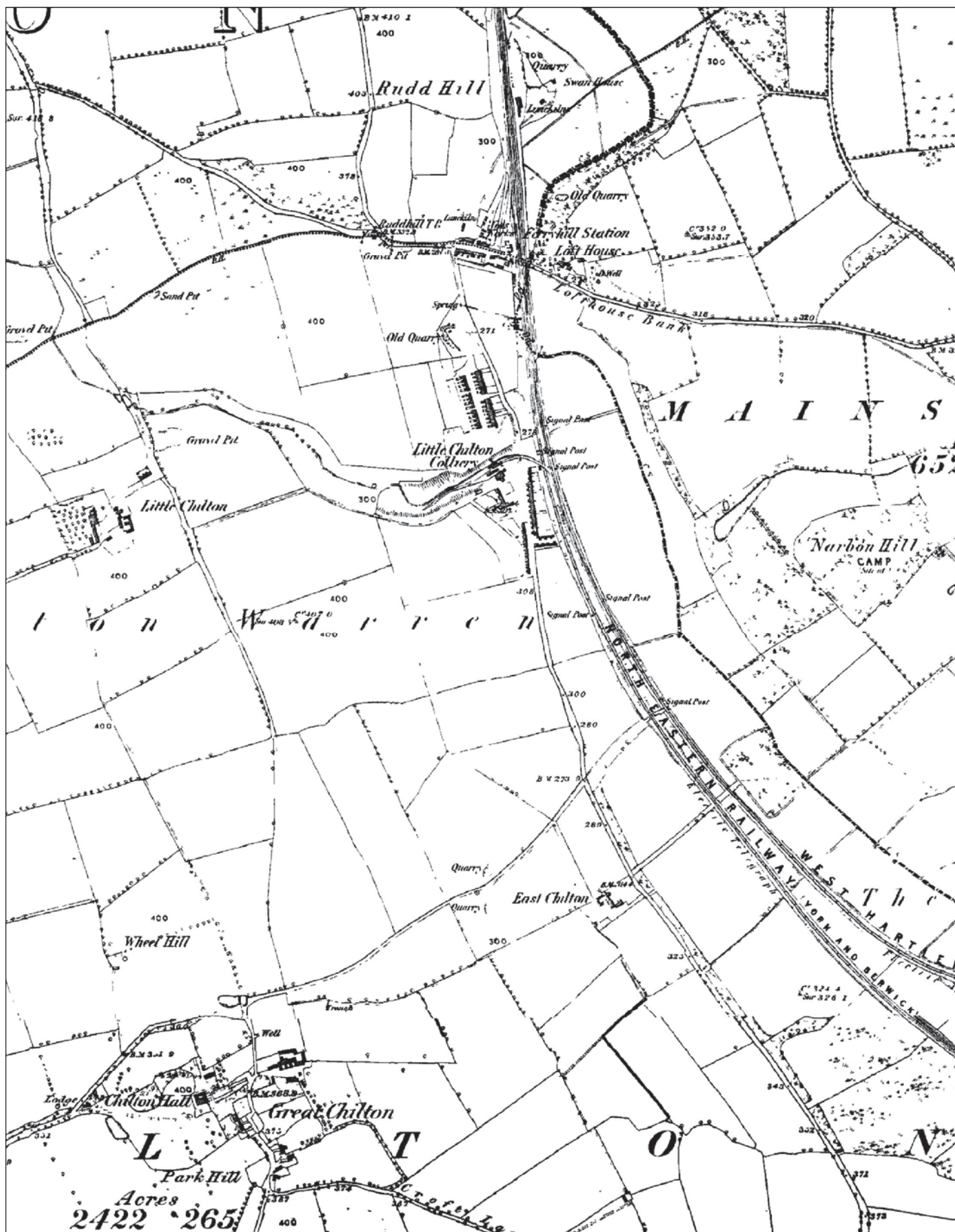
Extract from the 1967 Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, showing the central study area.





*Extract from the 1982 Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, showing the central study area.*



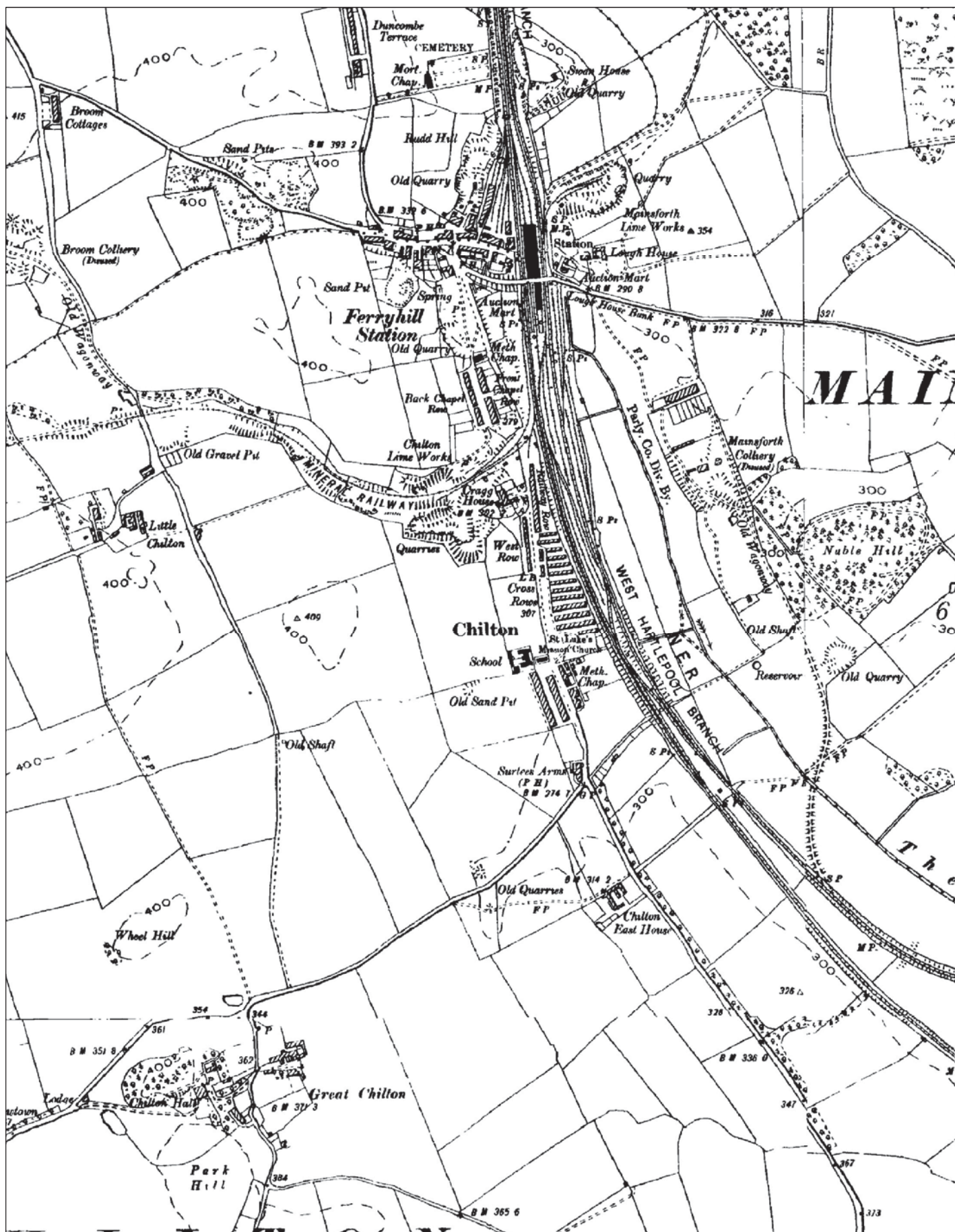


Scale 1:10000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m

Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 6" per mile, 1861, showing Ferryhill Station and Chilton Lane.





Scale 1:10000

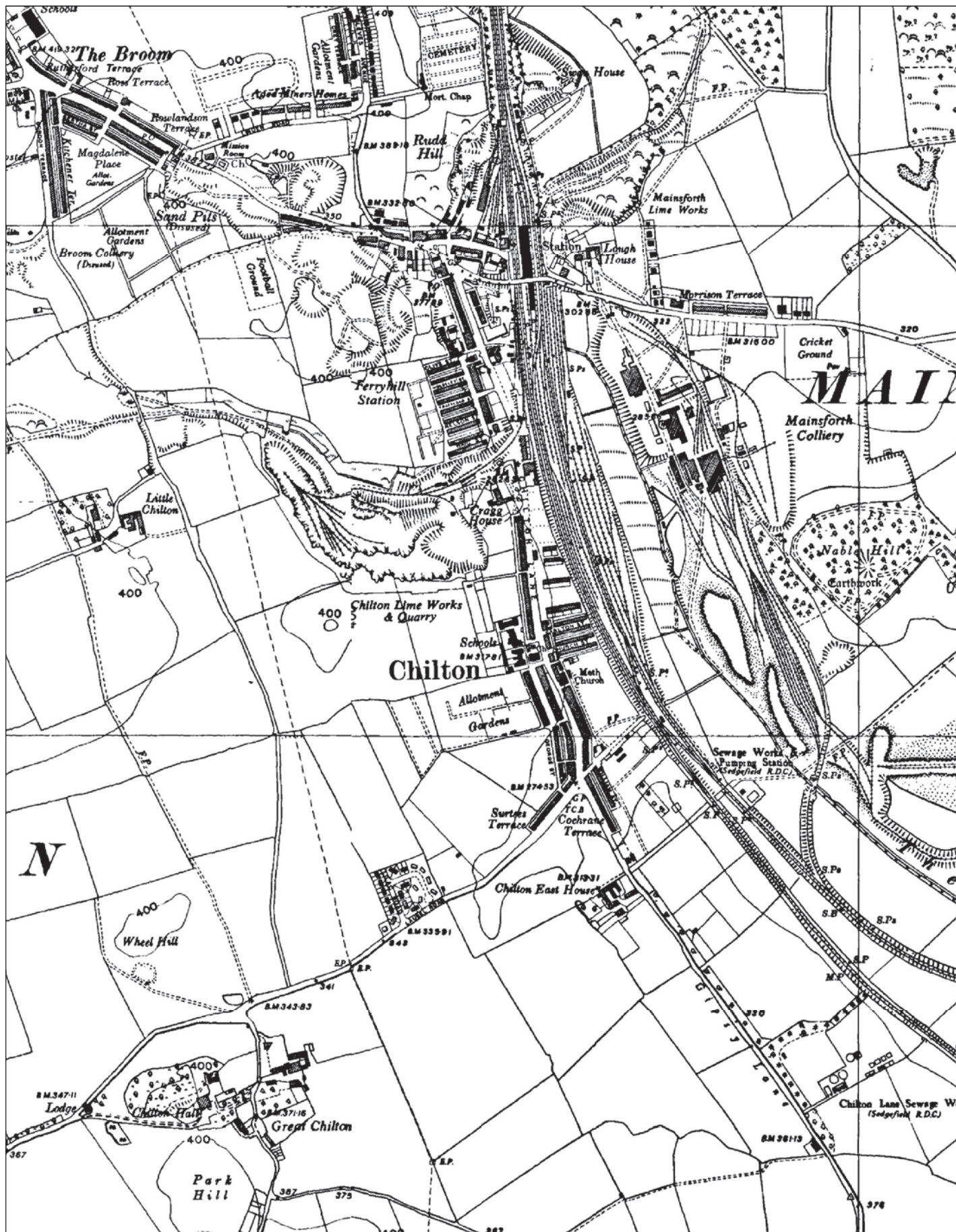


Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey, 6" per mile, 1898, showing Ferryhill Station and Chilton Lane.



*Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 6" per mile, 1924, showing Ferrywill Station and Cwilton lane.*



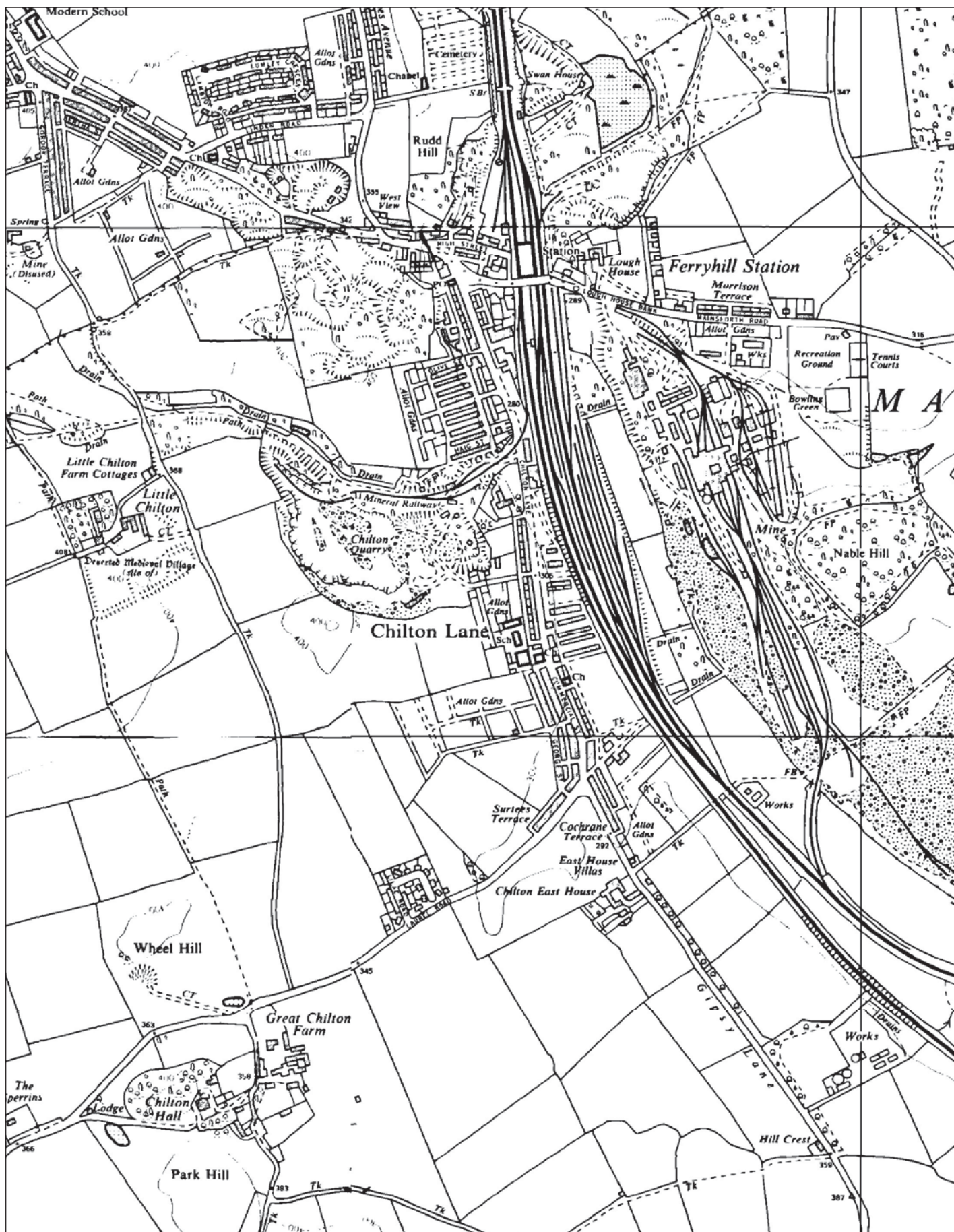


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Scale 1:10000

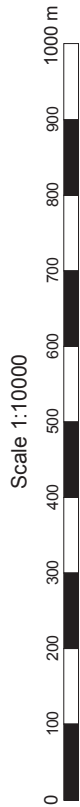
0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m

Extract from the 1966 Edition Ordnance Survey, 6" per mile, showing Ferryhill Station and Chilton Lane.









Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, 1861, showing the northern part of the study area.





Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, 1898, showing the northern part of the study area.

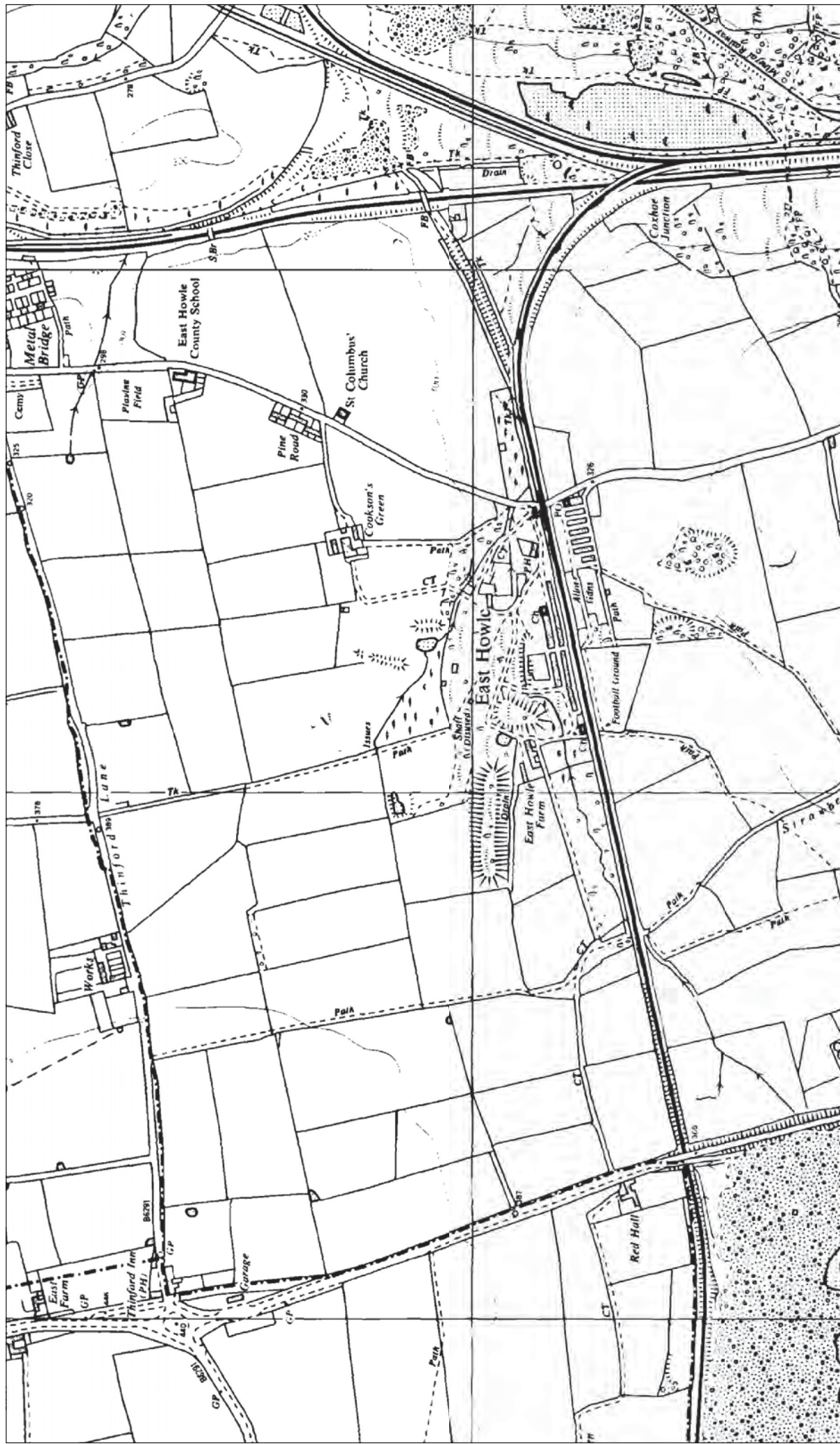












Scale 1:10000  
0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 m

Extract from the 1967 Edition Ordnance Survey 6" per mile, showing the northern part of the study area.