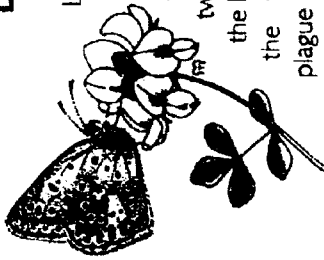


HOB MOOR



Historic Stray & Local Nature Reserve

Little Hob Moor



Linked to the ancient common by the subway under the railway is Little Hob Moor where, at the top of the slope (12), there are two stones, the lower of which is the Plague Stone. During the visitations of the plague in the 16th and 17th centuries, victims

were brought from the city and housed in wooden lodges on Hob Moor. They would pay for food brought to them by placing money in water or vinegar in the central depression in the Plague Stone.

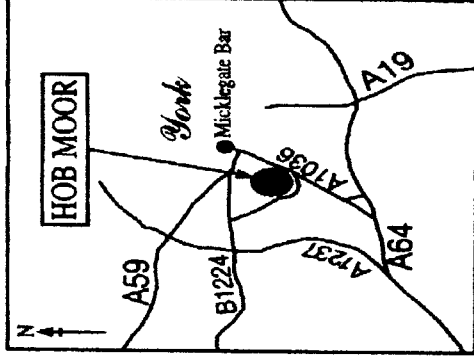
Next to the Plague Stone is the Hob Stone, the effigy of a knight, placed vertically. It is much eroded but nevertheless the Knight's head and the shield protecting his left arm can be discerned, as can traces of the inscription, on the back of the stone, which read:



"This image Long
Hob's name has bore
who was a Knight
in time of yore
and gave this
Common to ye Poor"

The Roman road that linked York and Tadcaster runs under Little Hob Moor, about 40 metres from the present Tadcaster Road and parallel to it. The path leading from the road down to the subway is a very ancient access to Hob Moor. It is referred to as Hoblaine in a document dated 1602, when it led down to a bridge and a water mill.

Come and experience the space and cloudscapes, the wildlife and history, set apart from the urban environment yet found within it!



Caring for Wildlife and Heritage

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A Brief Introduction to Hob Moor

Along with the Knavesmire, Hob Moor is one of the two ancient commons of the City of York, on which freemen have had rights of pasture since time immemorial. The custom of putting cattle out to graze on the Moor still continues today, between May 1st and Hallowe'en.

The main expanse of the Moor has the kind of flora and fauna of old pastureland; there are meadow buttercup, bulbous buttercup, common sorrel and pignut, and ladysmock on the damper patches. On the sandier soils of the eastern part of the Moor, there are common bent, cat's ear, harebell and patches of gorse (1). The habitat is perfect for meadow pipit and skylark, both of which breed here.



There is a variety of habitats round the edge of Hob Moor: a small copse of silver birch and sycamore (2); species-rich hedges containing English elm, guelder rose and hazel (3); a raised area of heathy grassland (4) where the plants include tormentil, sheep's sorrel and heath bedstraw, and where sedge warbler, reed bunting, bullfinch and lesser whitethroat can be seen. There are becks on three sides of the Moor and kingfishers are occasionally present.



During a visit to the Moor, other birds and numerous species of mammals and insects can be seen. In recent months, these have included: woodcock, kestrel, sparrowhawk, heron, wren, goldfinch, greenfinch, rabbits, fox, frogs, field mouse and various bats. The song of the skylark is a particular joy.



The importance of the ecology of Hob Moor's 89 acres has been acknowledged by its designation as a Local Nature Reserve. In addition to this, Hob Moor and Little Hob Moor have some archaeological and historical features of exceptional interest.

In the field nearest to North Lane (5) and in the area between the two school sites (6), the parallel curving ridges and furrows of mediaeval cultivation strips can be seen. The central area (7) (the original ancient common) has straight, narrow ridge and furrow, aligned roughly east to west, dating from the early 1800s when, during the Napoleonic Wars, it was horse-ploughed for food production.

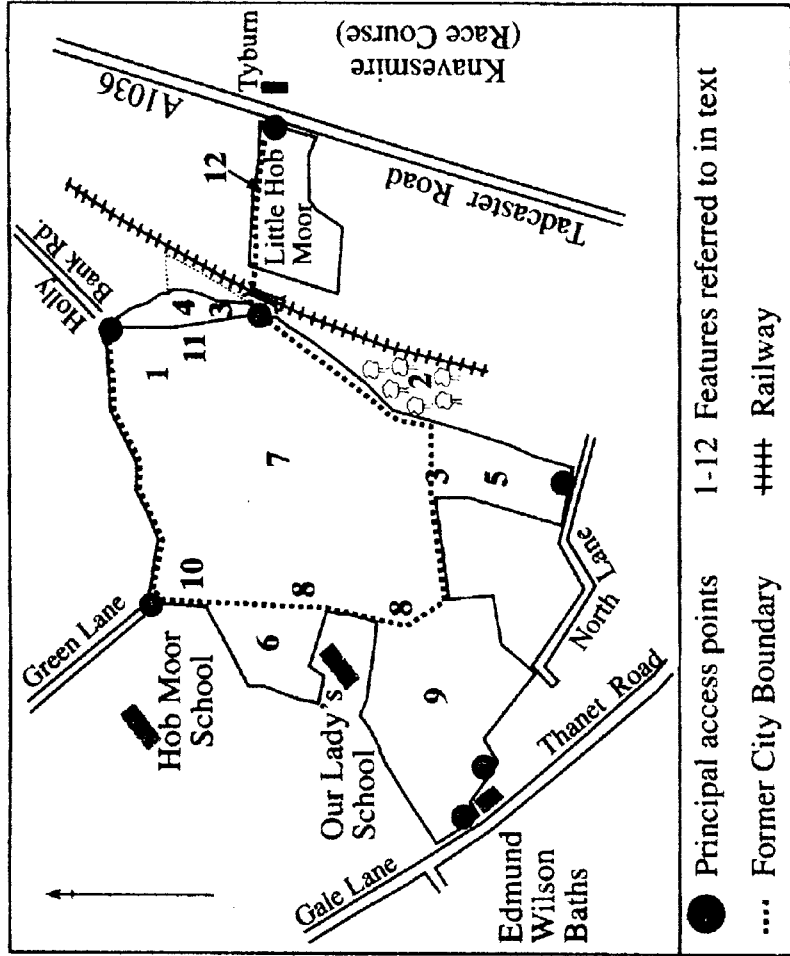


The former city of York boundary went round the ancient common, following the becks, including one on the west side which can still be seen as a ditch (8), water-filled after heavy rain.

For at least 100 years, there were brickworks on and around the Moor. Near the swimming baths is the site of Kelsey's Pond (9), a former clay-pit, which was completely filled in during the 1950s.

There are fine views of the Minster from the very obvious straight track leading north-eastwards to the Holly Bank Road access; this is part of the footpath which used to lead across the fields from Askham Bryan to Holgate and up to The Mount.

From 1920 to 1946, there was a golf course on the Moor; remnants of greens can be seen near the Green Lane access (10) and between the subway and the Holly Bank Road access (11).



● Principal access points 1-12 Features referred to in text
 Former City Boundary +---+ Railway