

2023

Yorkshire Dales
National Park

Community
Archaeology
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THE HAGG ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT (2021 SEASON)

Fremington, Swaledale

NGR 405688 499023

Community Archaeology Project

Project 448-22-EXC | March 2023



on behalf of SWAAG

VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD
Archaeological Practice

CONSETT INNOVATION CENTRE
PONDS COURT BUSINESS PARK, GENESIS WAY
CONSETT, COUNTY DURHAM, DH8 5XP

✉ CONTACT@VINDOMORA.INFO

☎ 01207 390010

🌐 VINDOMORASOLUTIONS.CO.UK



Community Excavation

The Hagg

The Hagg, Fremington, Swaledale
Yorkshire Dales National Park

March 2023



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Registered in England & Wales | Company Registration No. 9505415
Registered office: 9 Consett Innovation Centre, Ponds Court Business Park
Genesis Way, Consett, County Durham, DH8 5XP

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SUMMARY OF PROJECT REFERENCES

Name of location:	The Hagg
Address of location:	Fremington, Swaledale, Yorkshire Dales National Park
National Grid Reference:	NGR 405688 499023
Client:	Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group
Project Type:	Community Archaeological Excavation
Project Site Code:	HFS21
Vindomora Solutions Ltd reference:	448-22-EXC
Report Author:	Tony Liddell
Report Version/Date:	V2 / 23 Mar 2023
This document date-stamp:	Thursday, 23 March 2023
OASIS Identifier:	vindomor1-513815
Ordnance Survey Licence reference:	100053142
Google Earth Pro Licence:	Licensed 2015-23

CONCISE SUMMARY OF REPORT

In September 2021 Vindomora Solutions Ltd provided professional support to the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group during a continuing community excavation at The Hagg Romano-British settlement at Fremington, Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The excavation season was funded by the Royal Archaeological Institute.

Investigations were undertaken in three areas. The extension to the hillock excavation in the northwestern corner of the main settlement area produced potential evidence of an Iron Age presence on site: this is the first evidence of such, and does suggest the post-holes west of the main domestic hut circle may belong to an early roundhouse. The excavation area also confirms construction and activity in the late 3rd century AD, running through to the 4th century. The excavation also confirmed the presence of stone flagging continuing to the north and northwest, with further inspection of the earthworks beyond the fenceline to the north suggesting a northwestern extension to the farmstead.

The excavations along the southwestern extent of the southern enclosure suggested that rather than an entrance within the corner, the empty area noted in the LIDAR and earthwork survey instead suggested a section of slump/collapse. The further trenching confirmed the presence of the southern enclosure outer boundary, and also suggested the presence of a potential entrance.

The limited investigation by the springhead to the north of the site suggests man-made structure to the east side of the outfall, though no dating evidence was recovered.

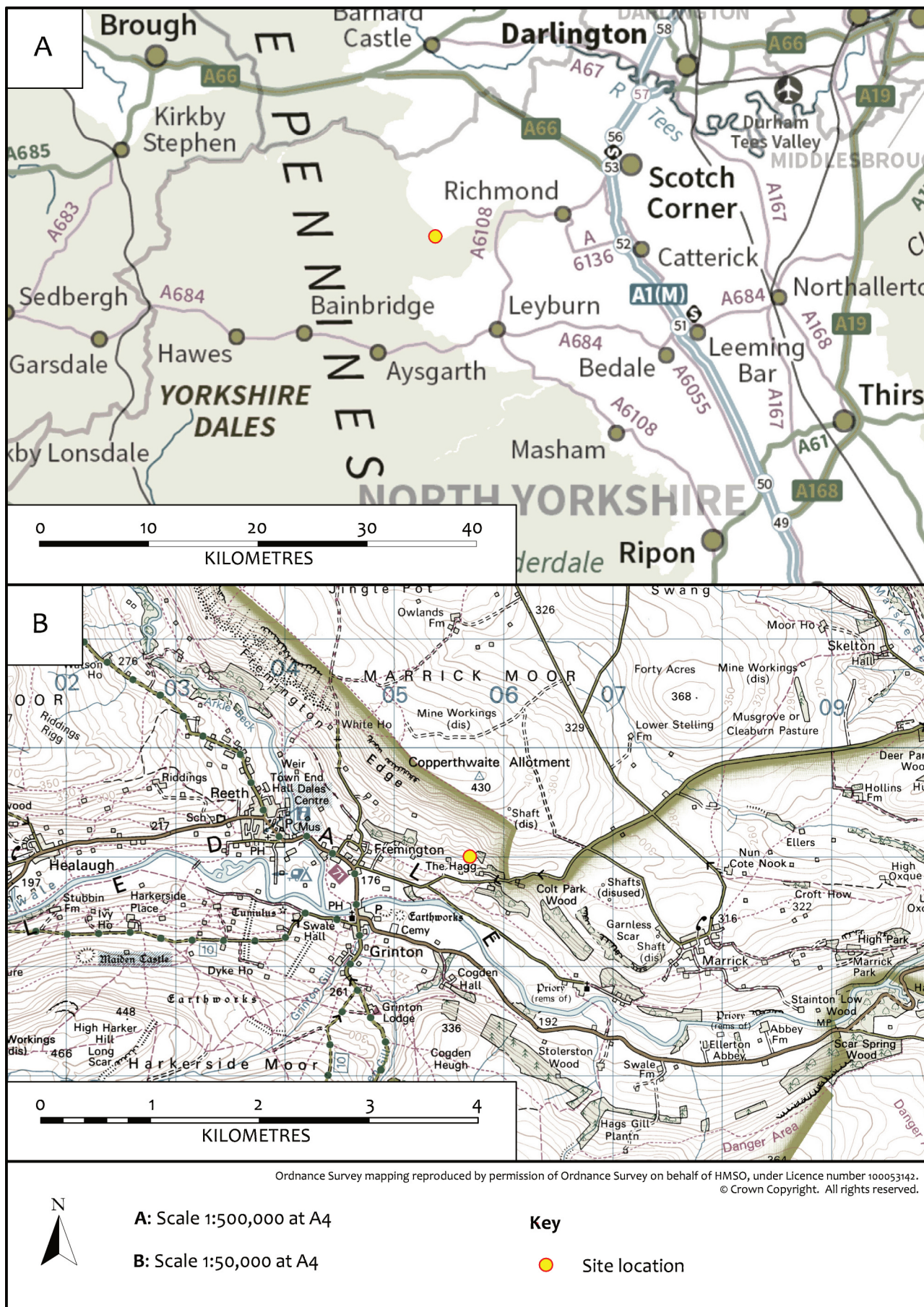


Figure 1. Location of the site, regionally

1. THE PROJECT

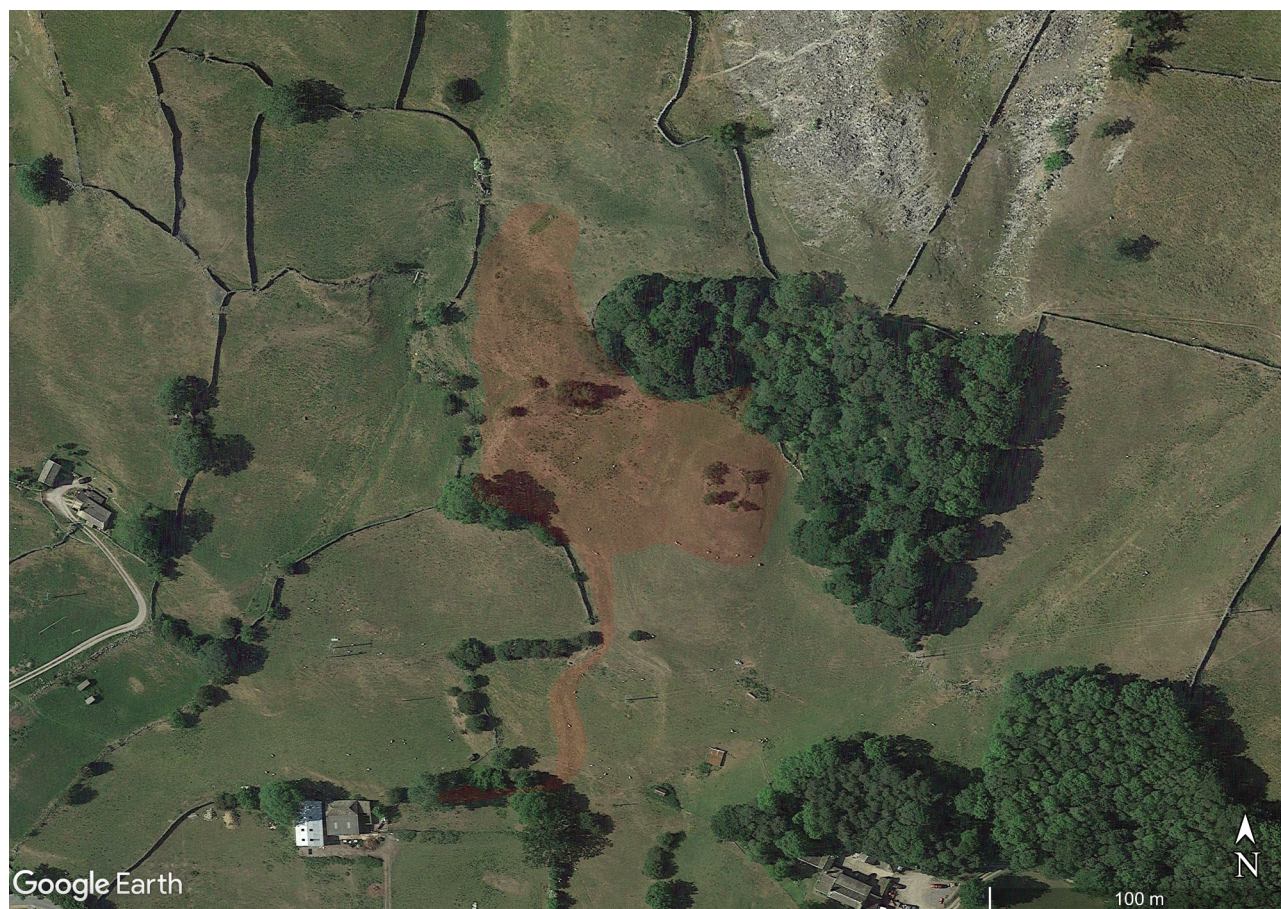


Plate 1. Aerial view of the suspected extent of the settlement (dataset 2022 Google)

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Surveys and exploratory excavations by the *Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group* (SWAAG) since 2012 at The Hagg site have suggested the presence of roundhouses, walls, trackways and features associated with a possible settlement/farming complex. Analysis of finds indicated that the site is Romano-British, abandoned towards the end of the 4th century AD. However there has as yet been no evidence indicating when the site was established or how it developed.

1.1.2 Although Swaledale has many recorded examples of sites with similar surface features, only one near Healaugh has been excavated (Flemming 1998). Consequently the potential information from The Hagg site could add significantly to the Swaledale cultural and historical record, and to an understanding of how early farming and settlements developed. This report details the fieldwork undertaken in 2021 funded by the Royal Archaeological Institute (RAI).

1.2 Project location

1.2.1 The Hagg Farm Romano-British farmstead is situated east of Fremington in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference national grid reference 405693 498999.

1.2.2 The site lies to the northeast of West Hagg and to the northwest of The Hagg Farm. Directly to the north and east of the Romano-British site is Hagg Plantation. To the west of the site is a natural drop, with a glacial mound marked by a Post-medieval circular wall to the east.

1.2.3 Figure 1 shows the location of the scheme regionally and Figure 2 locally.

1.3 Professional standards

1.3.1 This project complied with the following professional standards:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Code of Conduct*;
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Standard and Guidance for field evaluation*;
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation*;
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*;
- Historic England (2015) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*;
- SYAS (rev 2019) *Yorkshire, the Humber and the North East: Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process*;
- UKIC (1990) *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives for Long Term Storage*.

1.4 Staffing

1.4.1 Professional site supervision of the work was undertaken by Mick Coates and John Appleby, archaeologists for Vindomora Solutions Ltd. This report and its illustrations were produced by Tony Liddell, Principal Archaeologist for Vindomora Solutions Ltd.

1.4.2 Specialist analysis was undertaken by Archaeological Services Durham University (paleoenvironmental sample analysis), Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (radiocarbon dating), Kevin Rielly (animal bone) and Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (pottery).

1.5 Acknowledgements

1.5.1 Many thanks go to David Clarke and family for access to the site and their continuing enthusiastic support. Thanks also go to the Royal Archaeological Institute for funding the 2021 season, and to the students and volunteers who took part in the fieldwork.

1.6 Health and Safety

1.6.1 All work on site abided by the *Health and Safety Act* of 1974 and all its subsequent amendments. All fieldwork projects are undertaken in accordance with the Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers (FAME) manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* and the Vindomora Solutions Ltd *Health and Safety Manual* (v9, 2021).

1.6.2 Appropriate care and attention was undertaken during the works, and appropriate PPE utilised.

1.7 Archive

1.7.1 A full archive has been compiled in line with the specification and current UKIC and English Heritage Guidelines. The project code is **HFS21** (**H**agg **F**arm **S**waledale 20**21**). Vindomora Solutions support the **Online Access** to the Index of Archaeological Investigation**S** project (OASIS). As a result, this report will be made available to the project under the unique identifier **vindomor1-513815**.

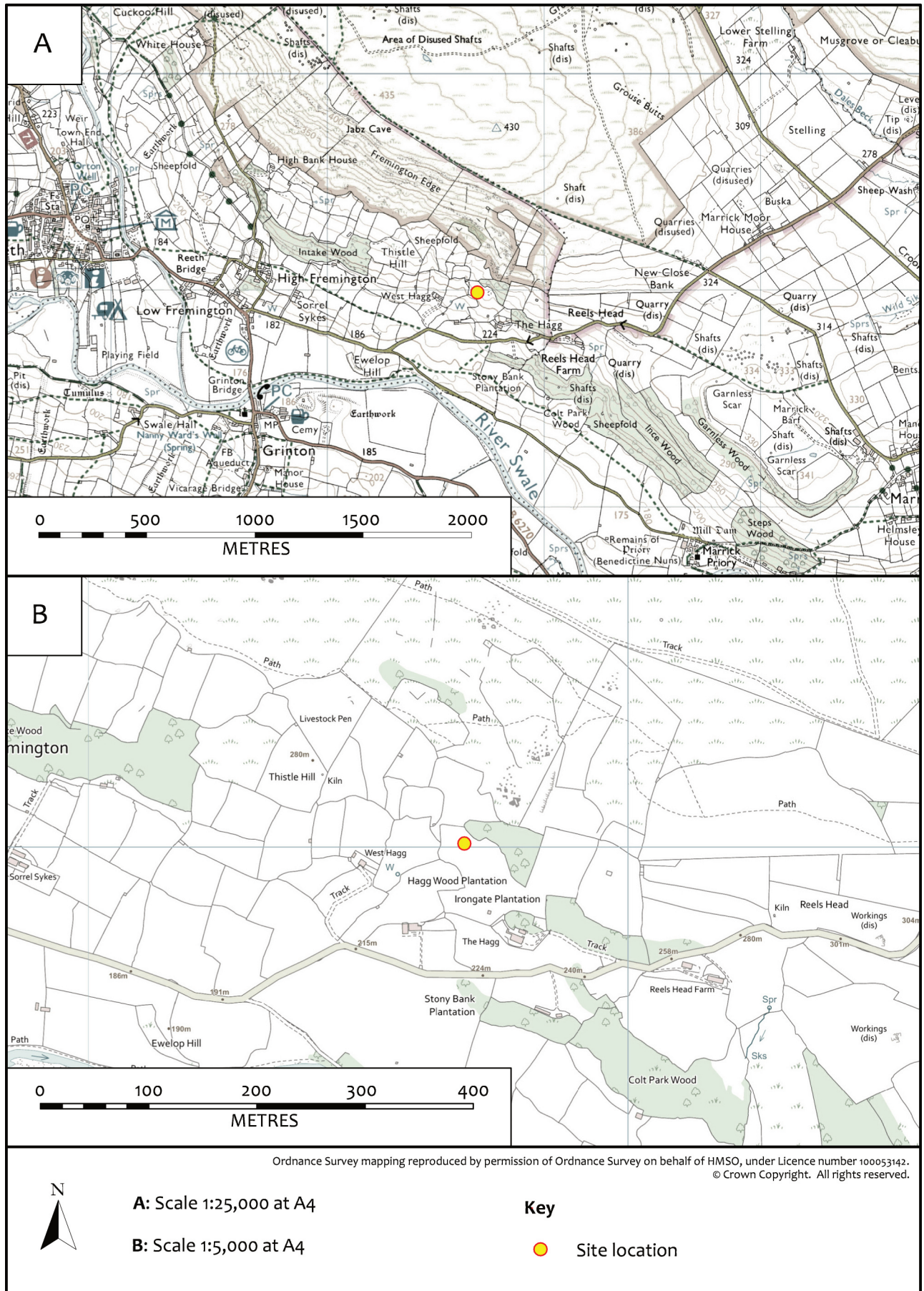


Figure 2. Location of the site, locally

2. BACKGROUND

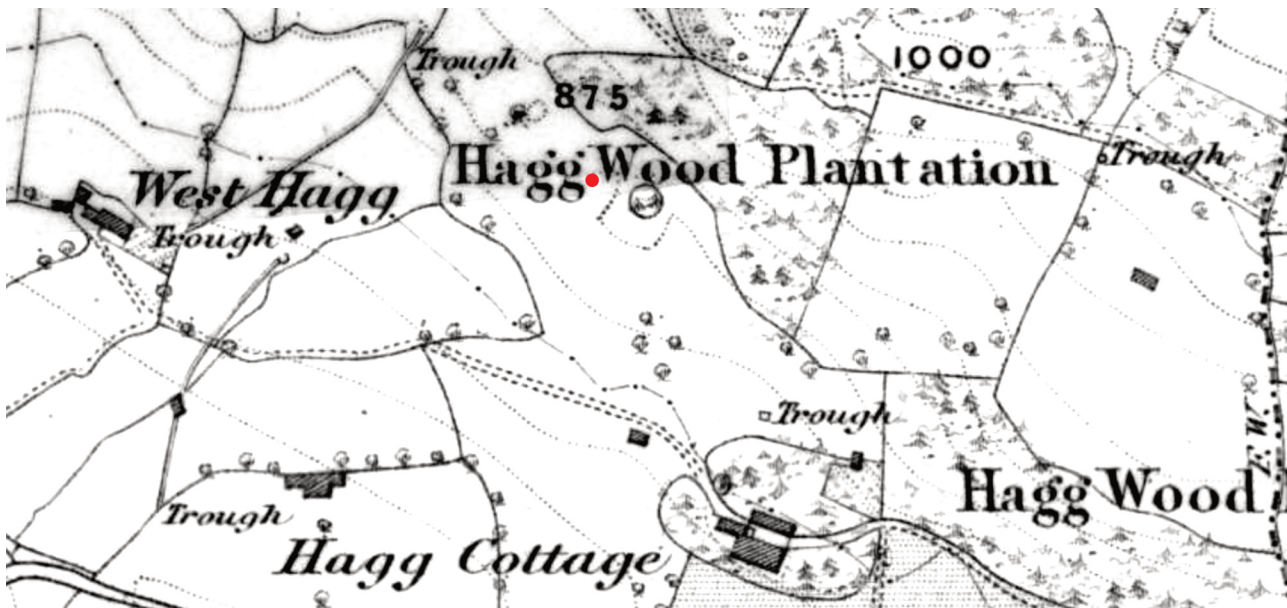


Figure 3. Extract from the 1857 Ordnance Survey map showing the site location in red.

2.1 Geology

- 2.1.1 *Alston Formation (parent unit Yoredale Group)*: “Limestone with subordinate sandstone and argillaceous rocks. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 337 and 328 million years ago during the Carboniferous period” (British Geological Survey 2022). Over this lies glacial till comprising clay, sand and gravels.

2.2 Elevation

- 2.2.1 The site lies at an average of 259m OD (Ordnance Datum, height above sea level).

2.3 Historical/Archaeological

- 2.3.1 The Romano-British site appears to have been heavily robbed during the Post-medieval period, presumably with materials being used within the agricultural landscapes associated with West Hagg and Hagg Farm (Hagg Cottage on historic maps). A circular wall was also constructed during the Post-medieval period on the crown of a glacial mound directly east of the settlement core. This circular feature was in place by 1854 (see Figure 3: the 1857 mapping was surveyed three years earlier than it was published).
- 2.3.2 There has been considerable lead mining and limestone quarrying to the north, and to the east evidence of at least one Later medieval bale fire (lead smelting) has been identified.
- 2.3.3 In July 2010, SWAAG produced their Archaeological Report No. 1, “*The Fremington Project: An Iron Age/Romano-British Landscape at Hagg Farm*” (Laurie, Eastmead and Denison-Edson 2010). The report identified an archaeological landscape comprising potentially nine separate settlements or farmsteads centred on West Hagg and extending across Sorrel Sykes to Marrick Priory Farm. The settlements lie within a contemporary co-axial field system. The report incorporated an earthwork survey of all of the proposed settlements undertaken in 2009. The site has initially been identified as being of archaeological interest in 1997 by Ed Dennison Associates who surveyed the site as part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority project, *The Hill Farming Initiative*. It that survey, Ed Dennison Associates suggested the site was likely that of a Later medieval farmstead.

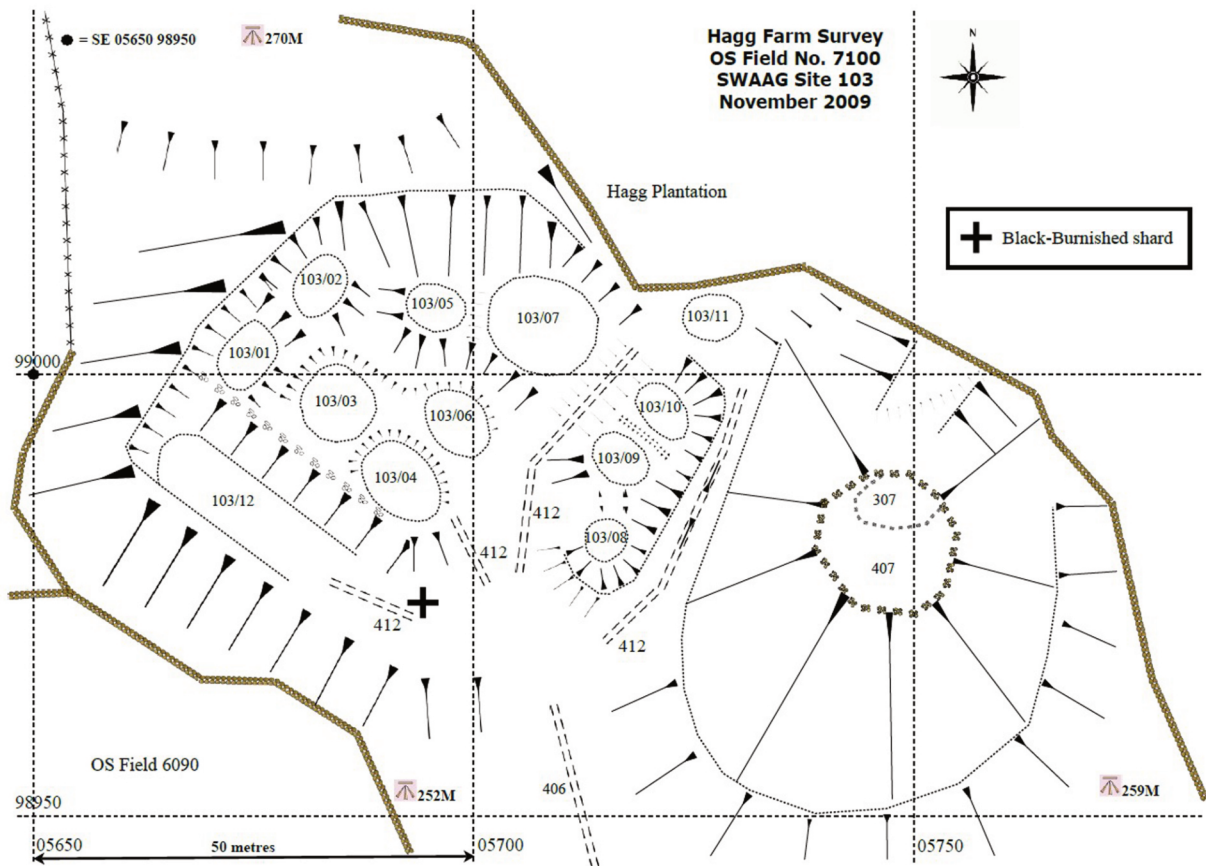


Figure 4. Earthwork survey produced by SWAAG in 2009

- 2.3.4 The 2010 SWAAG project identified the current study area as **Site 103** or ‘The Hagg Plantation Settlement’. Site 103 is described as “...the most significant settlement at Hagg Farm showing a more regular and developed site plan. This settlement may represent higher status, Romanised, influences.” The earthwork survey of the site produced by SWAAG in 2009 can be seen on Figure 4.
- 2.3.5 Investigation of the site began in earnest in 2011 with Archaeological Services Durham University (ASDU) undertaking a resistivity and magnetometry survey on behalf of SWAAG. The survey showed a well-defined enclosure, with annexes to the east and southeast.
- 2.3.6 The positive geophysical survey results allowed SWAAG to move forward with site excavation, with the group membership undertaking the works, initially supervised by ASDU in 2012-13 and then by Vindomora Solutions Ltd from 2016 onwards (2014 was undertaken without professional supervision).
- 2.3.7 The following excavation programme took place between 2012 and 2021:
- **2012:** Initial excavation of three open areas and a small slip trench, revealing the remnants of two potential hut circles, one of which was dated to the 3rd century AD and a stone revetted track;
 - **2013:** A long evaluation trench was excavated across the top of the eastern glacial mound which indicated that the circular wall atop it was Post-medieval in date. A number of further trenches were excavated extending the areas inspected in the previous season, revealing flagged surfaces and the revetted enclosure bank;
 - **2014:** Excavation with the eastern annex as well as test pitting across a potential southern entrance;



Plate 2. Aerial view of the settlement in Winter 2002 (dataset 2023 Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky)

- **2016:** Five evaluation trenches were excavated targeting geophysical anomalies, resulting in cobbled surfaces, and two flagged platforms being identified, the latter associated with late Roman pottery;
- **2017:** The 2017 grant-funded excavation proved invaluable to the interpretation of the site, with the presence of a large courtyard established with entrances from the east and a further entrance to the south leading to a southern annex. Further work into the roundhouse first discovered in 2012 also presented evidence of a porched structure with a pathway leading up northeast to the as-yet unexcavated upper platform. Further pottery remains, as well as quernstone fragments, a silver Roman coin and a crossbow brooch of a rare type also added to the evidence uncovered. The civil engineering of the site with evidence of crinoidal limestone for aesthetic effect was also noted;
- **2018:** This season saw a northern extension of the 2017 open area excavation which identified upper flagged platform and potentially the floor of a further oval building, likely a storage or work-related building as no evidence of a hearth was recovered;
- **2019:** This season concentrated on two areas - the excavation of a trench on high ground overlooking the main settlement to the northwest, and the southeastern annex. Evidence of occupation was noted in the high ground, and the southeastern annex was found to be a multi-phased flagged compound containing at least one feature likely to be a corn dryer.

2.4 The Hagg settlement within its wider landscape

2.4.1 As suggested by Laurie et al in 2010, the settlement appears to be part of a larger archaeological landscape with the site aligning with **Site 102** to the south (see Figure 5).

2.4.2 The extent of the settlement can be further highlighted by the study of aerial imagery and LIDAR

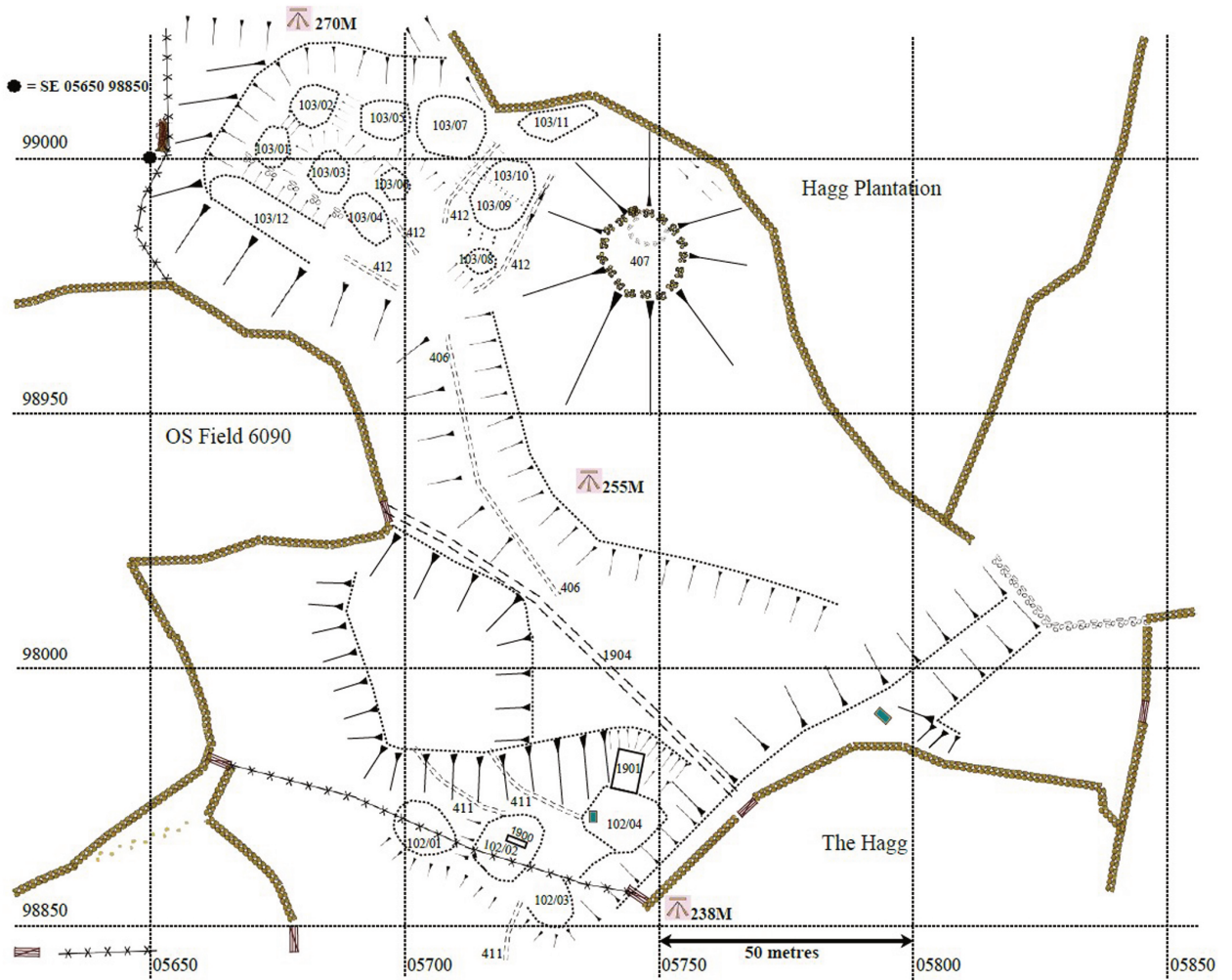
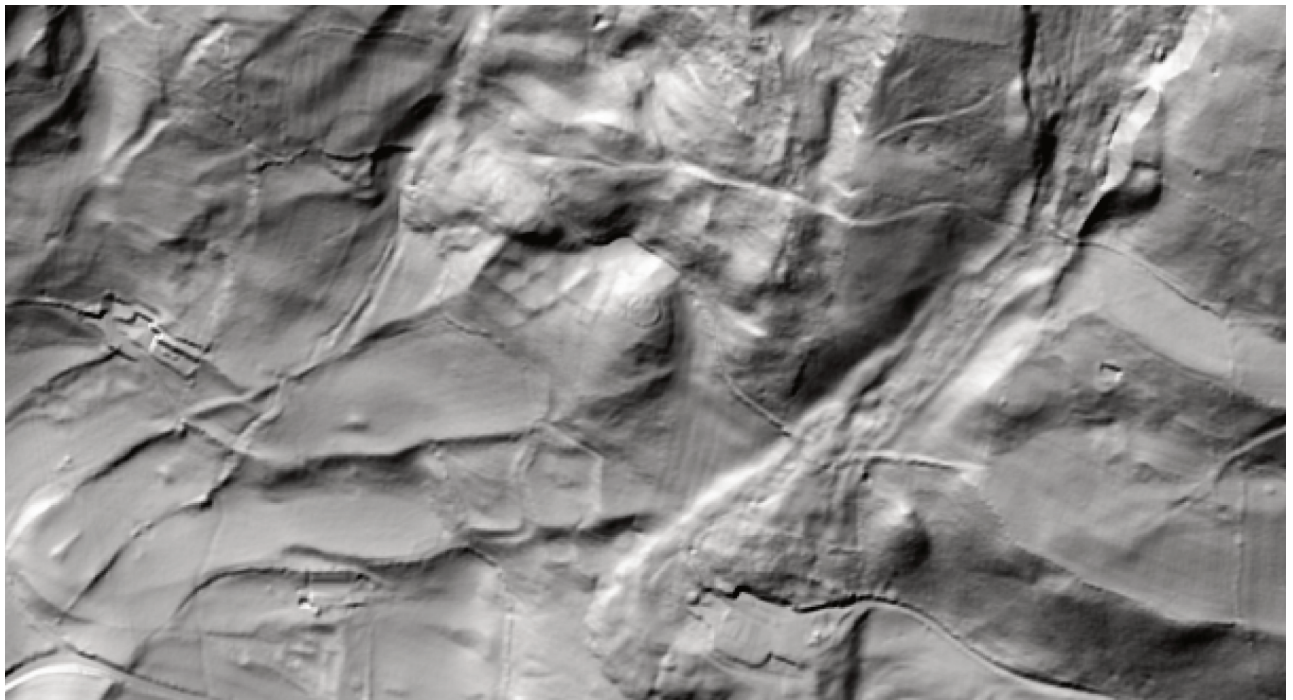


Figure 5. Survey produced by SWAAG in 2009, showing the potential relationship between Sites 102 and 103.

Plate 3. LIDAR dataset covering the wider area, centred on the glacial mound (dataset © 2020 DEFRA)



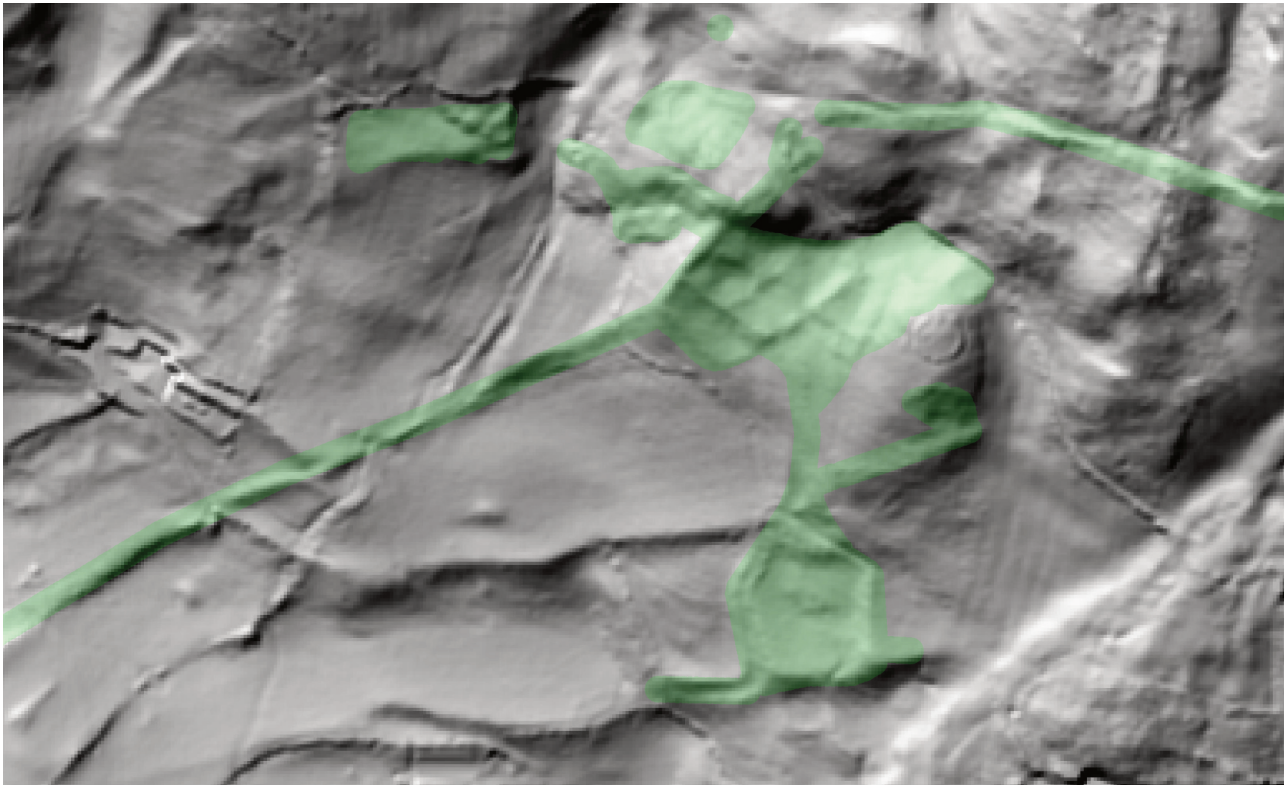


Plate 4. Speculative interpretation of the LIDAR dataset with potential Romano-British activity highlighted in green (dataset © 2020 DEFRA)

(Light Detection And Ranging). The Environment Agency LIDAR coverage of the area is complete at a resolution of 1m (2020 dataset), which maps the site's earthworks out well.

- 2.4.3 Plate 2 shows the site from an aerial perspective as it was during the Winter of 2002. The earthworks of the main settlement can be seen west of the glacial mound with further earthworks south of the mound.
- 2.4.4 LIDAR imagery shows the 2020 DEFRA dataset for the area. The plot suggests that the settlement is a focal point in the Romano-British landscape, with activity to the southeast and the northwest. Plate 3 shows the 2020 DEFRA dataset centred on the glacial mound.
- 2.4.5 Plate 4 provides a speculative interpretation, with Site 102 connected by a track or road leading from the southern entrance of the main settlement, and further potential platforms to the northwest. The main site enclosure can also be seen to utilise a large embankment at its western edge, which on the LIDAR can be seen to continue southwest down to the River Swale. Speculation suggests that this embankment may be the degraded remains of a raised trackway, potentially linking the Hagg site with what is thought to be contemporary activity at Grinton.
- 2.5 The site excavations up to 2021
- 2.5.1 A plan of the excavations up to the 2021 season can be seen on Figure 6. The plan includes the Ordnance Survey base plan as well as the hachure survey undertaken in 2013. Figure 7 shows a basic interpretation of the excavated area.
- 2.6 Research Agenda
- 2.6.1 The Research Frameworks Network (2023) suggests that the site belongs either within the *West Yorkshire Research Agenda* or the *South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework: North Yorkshire* does not appear to have a designed research framework. Neither network is appropriate to the site.



Figure 6. Plan of the excavated areas of the site up to 2021.

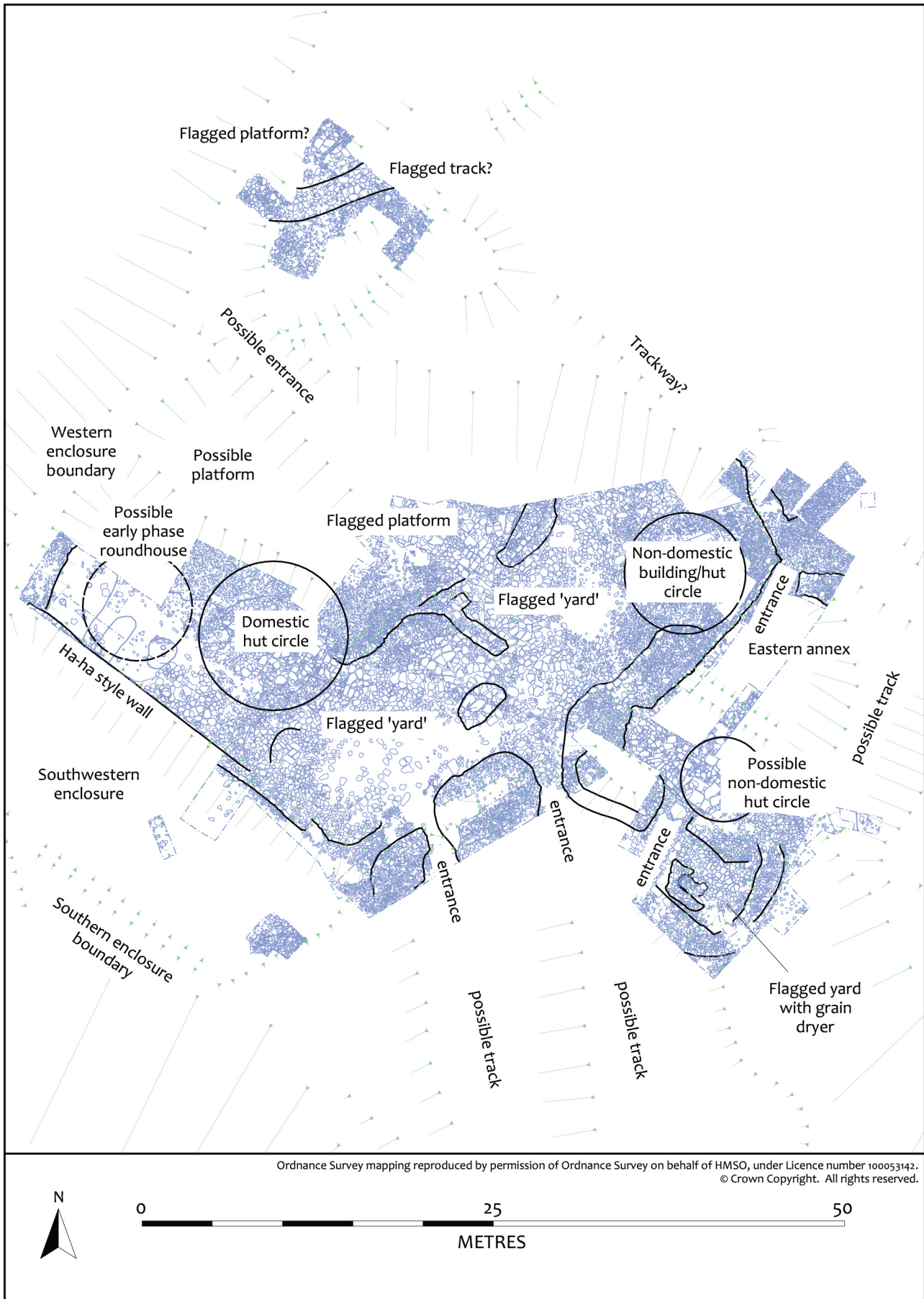


Figure 7. Plan of the excavated areas of the site up to 2021 showing basic interpretation.

3. EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY



Plate 5. Site de-turfing in 2016

3.1 Basic excavation methodology

3.1.1 Excavations were undertaken by hand, with turf cut and removed (stored nearby for later re-use). The overburden was then removed, with exposed features cleaned and recorded again by hand.

3.1.2 Once each excavation season was completed, the excavation areas were backfilled and turf re-established.

3.2 Recording

3.2.1 Cleaned areas and individual features were recorded photographically (digital), with images containing a scale as appropriate to the feature being recorded. The photographs were also recorded on pro-forma record sheets. Images also included working shots and general landscape images.

3.2.2 The site was planned utilising a mix of traditional site illustration and photogrammetry with the edges of features and control points established by GPS.

3.2.3 The feature and context recording was undertaken by SWAAG project leader Philip Bastow as well as the supervisory archaeologist present. For ease of reference, context numbers were labelled as (#) for deposits and fills, [#] for cuts and (G#) for natural geological substrates. Contexts were then grouped into individual archaeological features (F#) for interpretation purposes.

3.3 Finds and Sampling

3.3.1 Where appropriate, palaeoenvironmental samples were retrieved for analysis from features



Plate 6. Cleaning flagstones in Area 1

deemed by the excavation team to be uncontaminated by modern intrusion. Samples are denoted in the text by {S#}.

3.3.2 All artefacts recovered were bagged and recorded by Feature and Context identifiers.

3.3.3 Note: no items deemed to be Treasure Trove have yet to be encountered within the scheme.

4. THE 2021 EXCAVATION



Figure 8. Plan of the excavated areas during the 2021 season.



Plate 7. Area 1 from the northwest

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section contains a technical description of the archaeological remains uncovered. An overall plan of the investigated areas can be seen on *Figure 8*. Note that the context identifiers continue in sequence from previous seasons.

4.2 2021/Area 1

4.2.1 This area overlapped with the 2019 excavation on the top of the hill at the northwestern corner of the main settlement area, and progressed the excavation to the west and northwest. The 2019 excavation had suggested the presence of a potential flagged track or surface, so the decision to overlap was made to allow the feature to be seen in visual context, rather than in drawn plan only. *Figure 9* shows the results of the excavation, with the new 2021 season material highlighted in red. An overhead view of the site can be seen on *Plate 8*.

4.2.2 The excavated area revealed a number of features.

4.2.3 Running northeast-southwest through the centre of the site was a flagged area (138)/(139) measuring approximately 5m wide. Whether this was a road/track or working/building platform could not be ascertained within the trench: interestingly, the northern visible extent of the flagging contained a crinoidal-limestone filled slot (137) measuring 1.3m long by 0.19m wide flanked by what appears to be postholes [153]/(154) and [155]/(156). In the northern extent of the excavation area was a further flagged area (166), beneath the southern edge of which was a curvilinear stone-filled ditch [158]/(159).

4.2.4 Between the two areas of flagging was a roughly cobbled surface (136). This surface contained

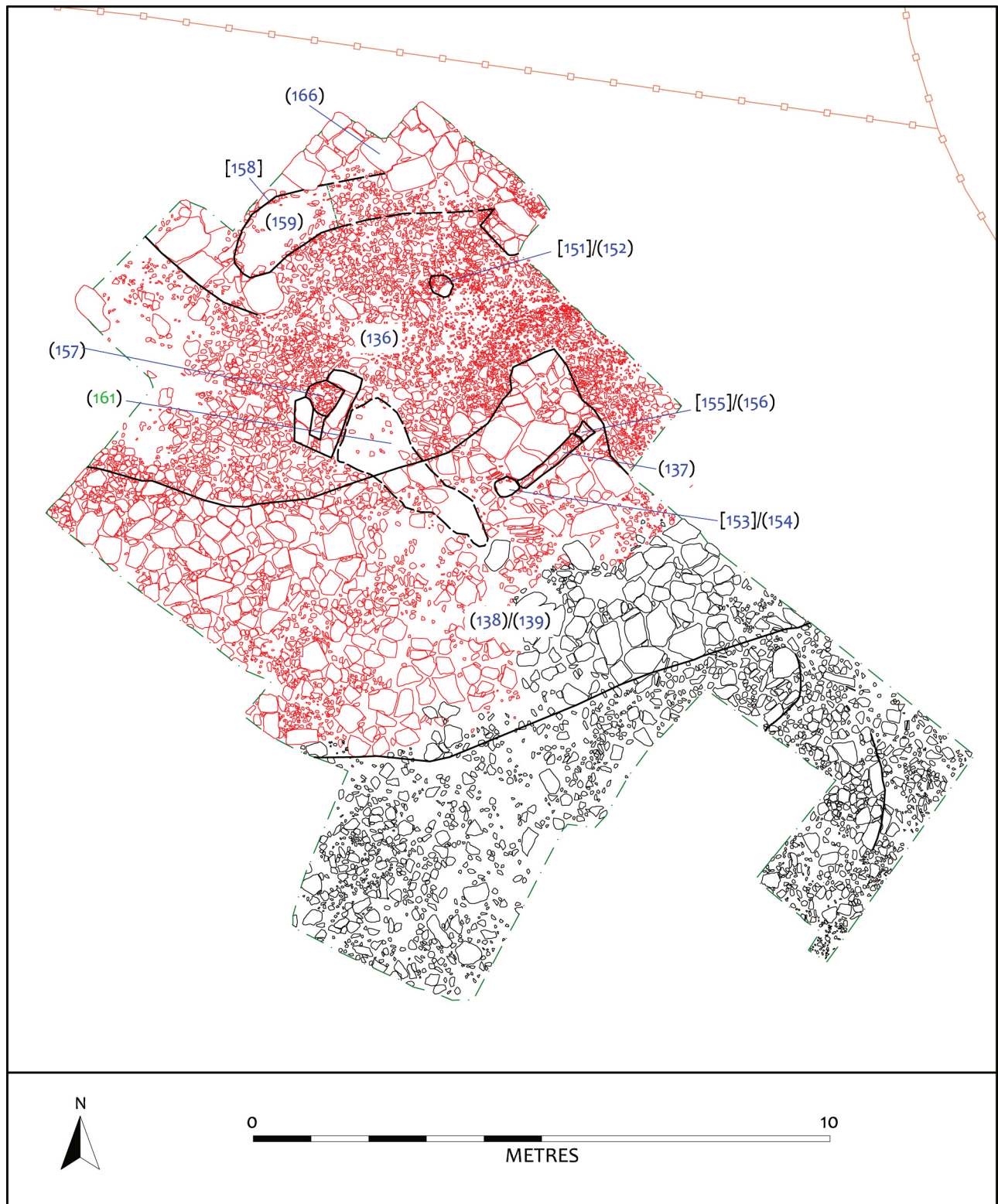


Figure 9. Plan of the 2021-Area 1 excavated area combined with the 2019 excavation.
The 2021 area is highlighted in red.

two features of note, a likely post-pad [151]/(152) and a small stone structure (157) containing visible charcoal context.

- 4.2.5 Over the archaeological remains was a thin layer of subsoil, averaging only 0.02m thick. This layer (167) comprised a light dark grey/brown sandy and friable loam. Over this was a topsoil/turf layer (168) averaging only 0.15m thick. Natural undisturbed geology was observed beneath both (136)



Plate 8. Photogrammetric reconstruction of 2021-Area 1

and (138) as (161), a dark grey/black deposit of shale.

- 4.2.6 **Small stone structure with charcoal deposit (157):** Located at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) 405686 499031 was a small stone feature. The feature (see Plate 9) comprised a small cut approximately 0.6m in diameter and 0.3m deep containing a dark grey clay with visible charcoal. The feature was framed on the east and south by upraised stonework, possibly suggesting the remnant of a small hearth.
- 4.2.7 No artefacts were recovered from the deposit, but ecofacts from the sample taken from the feature produced trace charred rhizomes and charred false oat grass. There was also modern intrusion in the form of an uncharred nutlet of bugle. A radiocarbon date of the oat grass tuber was undertaken, giving a date of approximately 333 BC \pm 24 years. Obviously, the presence of modern material within the sample suggests the possibility of contamination, but the radiocarbon date suggests that the feature may be the earliest so far found on the farmstead site, suggesting an Iron Age presence on the site. The validity of the date could be tested with dating material from the cobbled surface (138) into which the feature had been cut: to date no



Plate 9. Feature (157) looking east

datable material for this deposit has been found.

- 4.2.8 Ditch or pit [158]: Due to time constraints this feature was only partially investigated. The 2m long excavated area (NGR 405686 499035) comprised the western terminus of a stone-lined ditch or elongated pit measuring an average of 1.03m wide and 0.6m deep.
- 4.2.9 It was noted that the feature appeared to have one undifferentiated fill (159), a dark grey-brown firm and slightly silty clay with visible flecks of charcoal, chunks of clay and numerous cobbles and small stones. Slabs belonging to flagged surface (166) were seen to have sunk into the fill, suggesting that the slabs originally were set across the surface of the ditch.
- 4.2.10 At the base of the feature was a deposit of animal bone, still set within (159). The animal bone recovered comprised one hundred and four identifiable fragments, with the specialist analysis undertaken identifying a small number of sheep (or goat), pig and cattle all showing butchery marks, with the remaining ninety-nine bones belonging to “a single adult individual, including a large part of the axial skeleton as well as the fore and hindlegs”. The analysis suggests that the cow would have been mature (over six years old) and would have stood between 1.125 and 1.145m at the shoulder. A radiocarbon date was undertaken on a cattle tibia, giving a date of approximately AD 251 ± 24 years.
- 4.2.11 The feature fill produced no artefacts though the sample taken from the fill produced a number of ecofacts in the form of pitted charred cereal grains, comprising barley, wheat, sheep’s sorrel, cleavers and grass. The deposit also contained Hazel and Maloideae charcoal. A radiocarbon date was undertaken on a charred barley grain, giving a date of approximately AD 275 ± 24 years.
- 4.2.12 The two radiocarbon dates suggest that the deposition of the cow was likely contemporary with



Plate 10. The excavated slot into ditch [158] looking west

Plate 11. The excavated slot into ditch [158] looking southwest



Plate 12. Posthole [151] looking west

the excavation of the ditch. Taking the radiocarbon dates on face value (with due to levels of confidence it could be suggested should not be undertaken) the dates overlap suggesting a potential deposition (if the theory of backfilling immediately after the cow was deposited is correct) of AD 251-275.



- 4.2.13 Post-hole [151]: Small posthole (NGR 405688 499033) 0.35m in diameter cut through cobbled surface (136). The cut was only 0.11m deep, and contained small gravels with what appears to be a flat post-pad (152) in the form of a creamy-grey limestone at the base.
- 4.2.14 Crinoidal 'slot' (137): This northeast-southwest aligned feature (NGR 405690 499031) was originally noted during the 2019 season, but was cleaned fully in 2021 and found to have associated (assumed) post-holes at its extents. The feature measured 1.33m long, 0.16m wide and was a deliberate construction utilising a central core of crinoidal limestones, lined on its northwest and southeastern aspects by upright limestones.
- 4.2.15 At its northeast extent was a squared posthole [155] (NGR 405691 499031) complete with

Plate 13. Crinoidal feature (137) with postholes [153] and [155] looking southwest





Plate 14. Posthole [155] looking south

Plate 15. Posthole [153] looking south





Plate 16. Crinoidal strip (137) looking west

- packing stones. The posthole measured 0.23m long, 0.22m wide and 0.34m deep, with a post-pad stone at its base. The cut was filled with a dark grey friable loam (156).
- 4.2.16 At the crinoidal feature's southwestern extent was a further posthole [153] (NGR 405689 499030). The posthole measured 0.37m long, 0.34m wide and 0.28m deep, with what appeared to be a deposit of shale (161) at its base. The cut was filled with a dark grey clay-loam (154).
- 4.2.17 Four sherds of pottery were retrieved from the posthole: three sherds of generic 'Roman' pottery and one sherd of mortarium base, giving a date between AD 230-350. A sample of the fill was also analysed and while it identified the presence of heather and spelt wheat, as well as either apple, hawthorn or whitebeams and likely modern intrusions of marsh cinquefoil, the charcoal elements were too small for radiocarbon dating.
- 4.2.18 Flagged surfaces (138) and (166): A slot was excavated into the flagged surface, with the 'slot' initially thought to be a surface drain and recorded as context [147]/(148). The excavation was inconclusive as to whether or not this was indeed a surface drain or merely a break in the flagging pattern: nevertheless, a single fragment of Crambeck Parchment Ware pottery was recovered from the matrix, giving a *terminus post quem* suggesting AD 270 as the earliest date for the construction of the surface, though equally the sherd could have been naturally filtered from the subsoil (167) over the flagging. The southern extent of the surface appeared to have multiple layers of stone, suggesting potentially a deliberate build-up of the surface at that point or maybe simply slipped stone due to the drop in the site to the south. Equally, it is unknown at this stage if the extent of flagging (138) denotes a surface separate to flagging (166) or if the stone between them has simply been robbed. Flagging (166) in the northern extent of the excavation area can be seen to continue to the north and northwest.
- 4.2.19 Subsoil (167): This layer comprised a light dark grey/brown sandy and friable loam, averaging only 0.02m thick. This subsoil layer sealed the archaeological remains below. This was recorded as sub-context OB2. Five sherds of pottery were recovered from this soil accumulation in 2021, Roman in date and from AD 300+.
- 4.2.20 Topsoil (168): The topsoil averaged 0.15m thick across the excavation area, and was found to contain twenty sherds of pottery in the 2021 season. This included six sherds of East Yorkshire Calcite Gritted ware, three sherds of Central Gaulish Samian, five generic sandy reduced ware sherds, three sherds of sandy oxidised fabric and O4A and three sherds of Crambeck Parchment Ware. These all give a date of AD 360+.

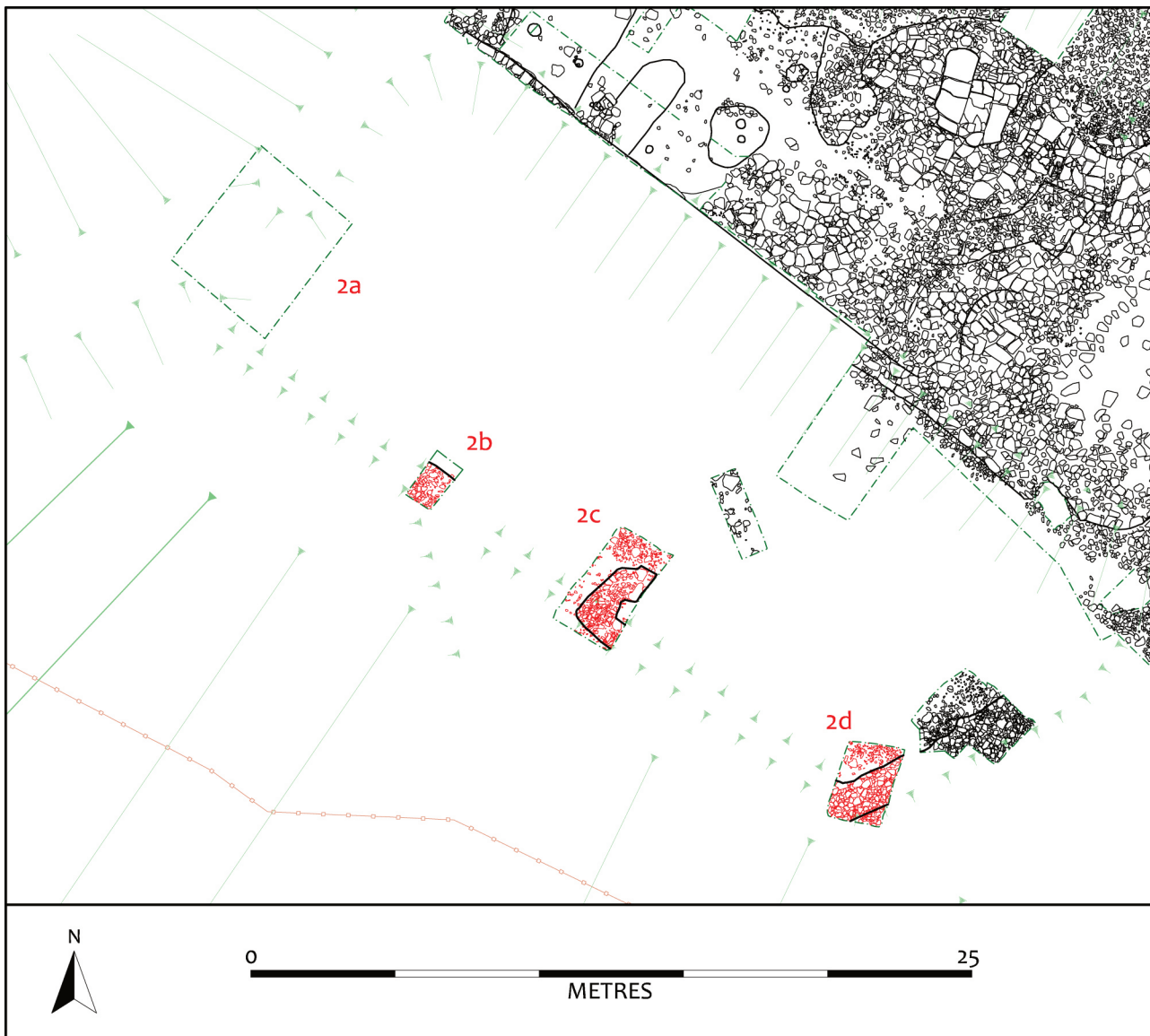


Figure 10. Plan of the 2021-Area 2 excavation areas (highlighted in red).

4.3 2021/Area 2

- 4.3.1 Area 2 comprised four investigations into the southwestern outer boundary enclosure. The westernmost excavation (2a) was positioned on the southwestern corner of the enclosure, which appeared to have a potential entrance within it. The other three aimed at establishing the continuation of the southwestern enclosure wall.
- 4.3.2 Area 2a: This was recorded as 'Area 6' on site and measured 5m long by 4m wide. The upper 0.1m comprised topsoil/surf (171) recorded as subcontext OB1 during the excavation, with a further average of 0.11m deep subsoil (169) below (subcontext OB2). A 1.5m wide slot was excavated down to the limestone outcrop (170) against the western edge of the trench (see Plate 17).
- 4.3.3 One of the breaks in the limestone was initially thought to be a drain (subsequently debunked) but was recorded as [147]/(148).
- 4.3.4 One sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the topsoil in this trench: the sherd was not sufficient to narrow the period down.
- 4.3.5 Area 2b: This was recorded as 'Area 8' on site and measured 1.8m long by 1.1m wide. The southwestern 1.4m extent of the trench comprised a rubble mound likely belonging to the southwestern enclosure (28), see Plate 18. A depth of 0.32m of hillwash (145) lay to the north,

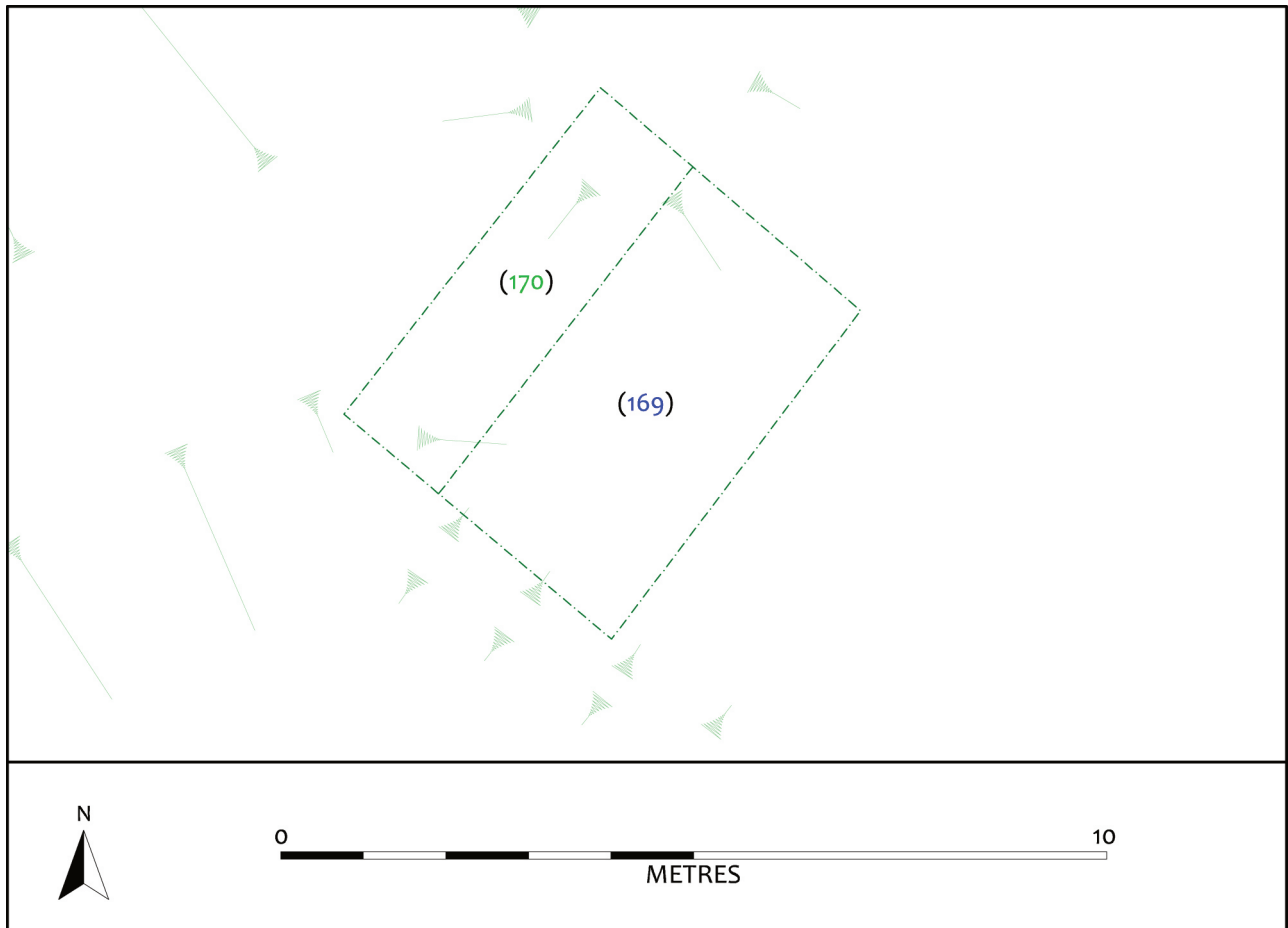


Figure 11. Plan of the 2021-Area 2a excavation area.

Plate 17. Area 2a, natural (170) looking northeast





Plate 18. Excavation 2b looking west

Plate 19. Excavation 2c looking northeast



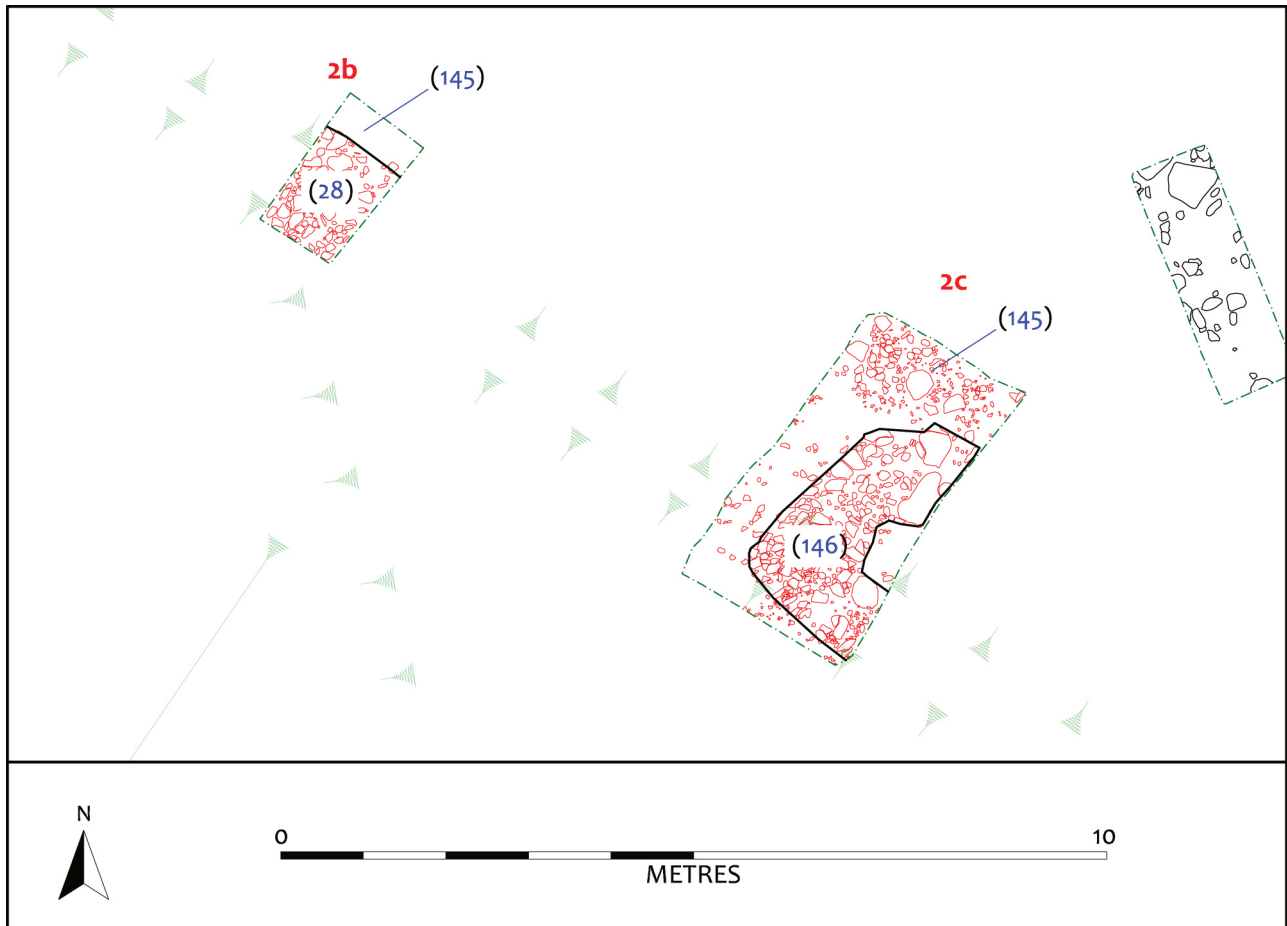


Figure 12. Plan of the 2021-Area 2b-c excavation area. The 2021 excavated material is highlighted in red.

which produced a single sherd of Roman pottery: the sherd was not sufficient to narrow the period down.

- 4.3.6 **Area 2c:** This was recorded as ‘Area 7’ on site and measured 4m long by 2m wide. The trench contained a 1.16m wide curved terminus (146) to the eastern extent of enclosure (28) which potentially suggests the presence of a southern entrance to the enclosure (see Plate 19), though the surviving earthworks suggest otherwise.
- 4.3.7 No subsoil was noted in the area, barring hillwash (145). Over the trench was a thin 0.08m thick layer of topsoil/turf (172) recorded as subcontent OB1 on site. This overburden contained a single rim of a Huntcliff type jar, dating post-AD 360.
- 4.3.8 **Area 2d:** This was recorded as ‘Area 9’ on site and measured 2.8m long by 2m wide. The trench was positioned to check the alignment of the enclosure wall (28) previously identified. The trench contained a 1.3m wide section of tumbled enclosure wall, proving the alignment. The continuation of roughly cobbled surface (27) north of the enclosure wall was also confirmed (see Plate 20).
- 4.3.9 No subsoil was noted in the area. Over the trench was a thin 0.09m thick layer of topsoil/turf (173) recorded as subcontent OB1 on site. This overburden contained a single fragment of sandy oxidised fabric, sandy reduced jar rim fragment and three East Yorkshire Calcite-gritted ware sherds, the latter dating to the late 4th century.
- 4.4 2021/Area 3
- 4.4.1 Area 3 involved the excavation of two keyhole test pits located 40m to the northwest of 2021-Area 1 and lying to either side of the outflow from an active spring. These test pits measured 1m²

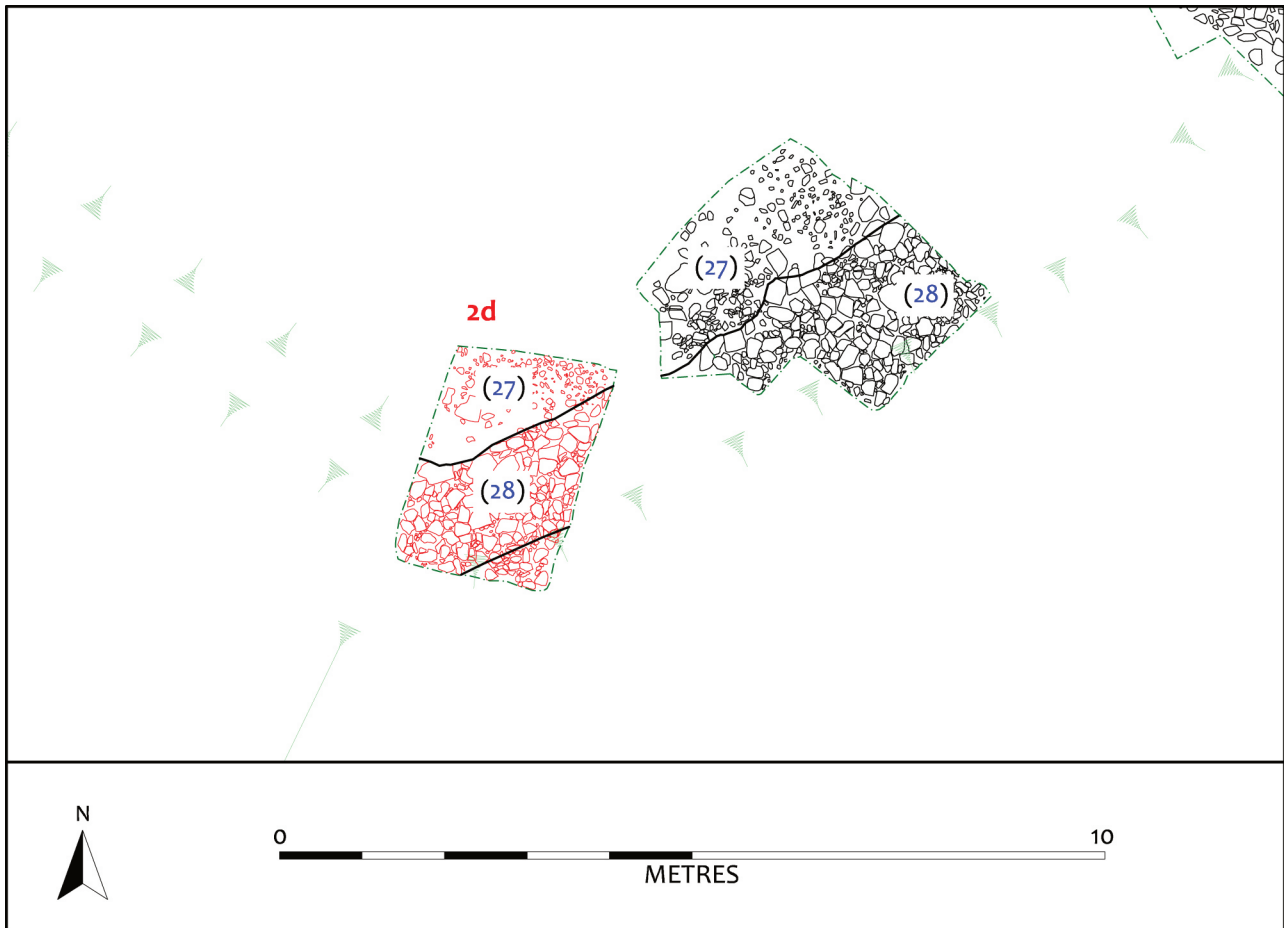


Figure 13. Plan of the 2021-Area 2d excavation area. The 2021 excavated material is highlighted in red.

Plate 20. Excavation 2d looking southwest





Plate 21. Test pit (east) looking north

Plate 22. Test pits east and west with springhead central, looking northeast



and were simply recorded with photography. The location of both test pits can be seen on Figure 8 and Plate 22. The western test pit contained rubble but wasn't fully investigated. The eastern test pit contained placed limestones, suggesting structural remnants (see Plate 21).

5. DISCUSSION



Figure 14. Plan of the investigated areas at the end of the 2021 season.

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The extension to the hillock excavation in the northwestern corner of the main settlement area

produced potential evidence of an Iron Age presence on site: this is the first evidence of such, and does suggest the post-holes west of the main domestic hut circle may belong to an early roundhouse. The excavation area also confirms construction and activity in the late 3rd century AD, running through to the 4th century. The excavation also confirmed the presence of stone flagging continuing to the north and northwest, with further inspection of the earthworks beyond the fenceline to the north suggesting a northwestern extension to the farmstead.

- 5.1.2 The excavations along the southwestern extent of the southwestern enclosure suggested that rather than an entrance within the southwestern corner, the empty area instead suggests a section of slump/collapse. The further trenching confirmed the presence of the southern enclosure outer boundary, and also suggested the presence of a potential entrance.
- 5.1.3 The limited investigation by the springhead to the north of the site suggests man-made structure to the east side of the outfall, though no dating evidence was recovered.

6. REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES

6.1 Repositories

6.1.1 **Online:**

Beamish Museum People's Collection. Online at <http://collections.beamish.org.uk/>

Britain from Above Project. Online at <http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>

British Library. Online at <http://www.bl.uk/>

British Geological Survey. Online at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Historic England Archive. Online at <http://archive.historicengland.org.uk>

Keys to the Past. Online at <http://www.keystothepast.info>

PastScape Project. Online at <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/default.aspx>

Portable Antiquities Scheme. Online at <https://finds.org.uk/>

ViewFinder Project. Online at <http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/>

6.1.2 **Record Offices/archives:**

Newcastle City Library. Local Studies, Princess Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1DX

Durham Record Office. County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

Tyne and Wear Archives. Blandford House, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JA

Vindomora Solutions Ltd Archive. Prospect House, Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7PW

6.1.3 **Other:**

Google Earth Pro

6.2 Sources

6.2.1 **Chartered Institute for Archaeologists:**

(2014) Code of Conduct.

(2014) Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation.

(2014) Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.

6.2.2 **Department for Communities and Local Government:**

(rev. 2019) Communities and Local Government: National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.3 **English Heritage:**

(2008) Conservation Principles - Policies and Guidance

(1991) Managing Archaeological Projects. Second edition

6.2.4 **Historic England:**

(2015) Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment - The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide

6.2.5 **Ordnance Survey mapping:**

1861, 1862 Town Plan, 1896 Town Plan, 1898, 1940, 1952, 1970 and 2021 editions

6.2.6 **Research Frameworks:**

Petts, D. & Gerrard, C. (2006) Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment. Durham

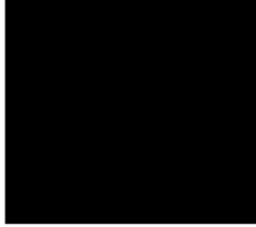
APPENDIX 1: SPECIALIST REPORTS

RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

31 October 2022

Laboratory Code SUERC-106985 (GU62155)

Submitter



Site Reference HFS21

Context Reference 157

Sample Reference <46>

Material Charred false oat grass tuber

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -25.7 ‰

Radiocarbon Age BP 2283 \pm 24

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

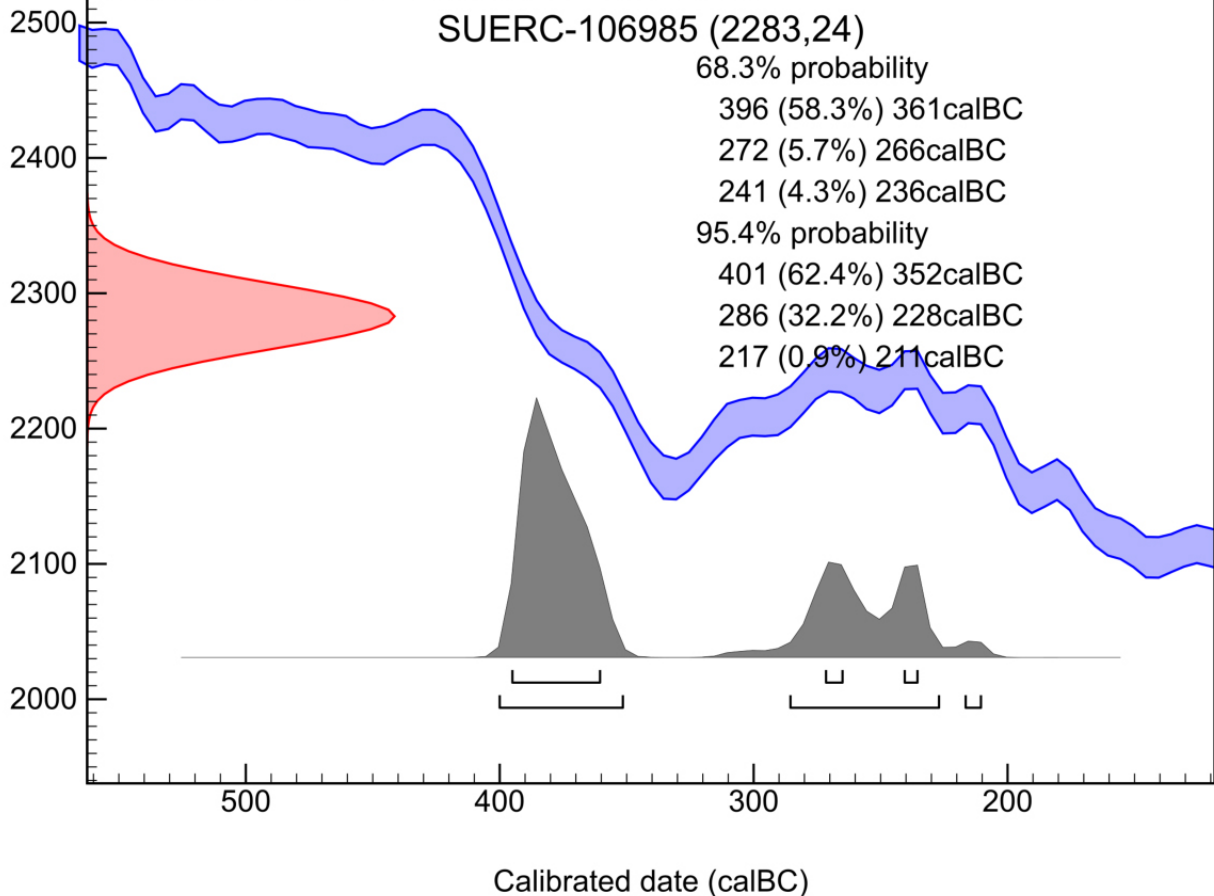
Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :

E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by :

P. Nayantub

Radiocarbon determination (BP)



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

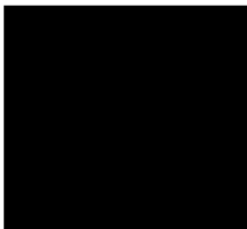
† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57

RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

31 October 2022

Laboratory Code SUERC-106986 (GU62156)

Submitter



Site Reference HFS21

Context Reference 159

Sample Reference <47>

Material Charred barley grain

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -22.9 ‰

Radiocarbon Age BP 1675 \pm 24

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

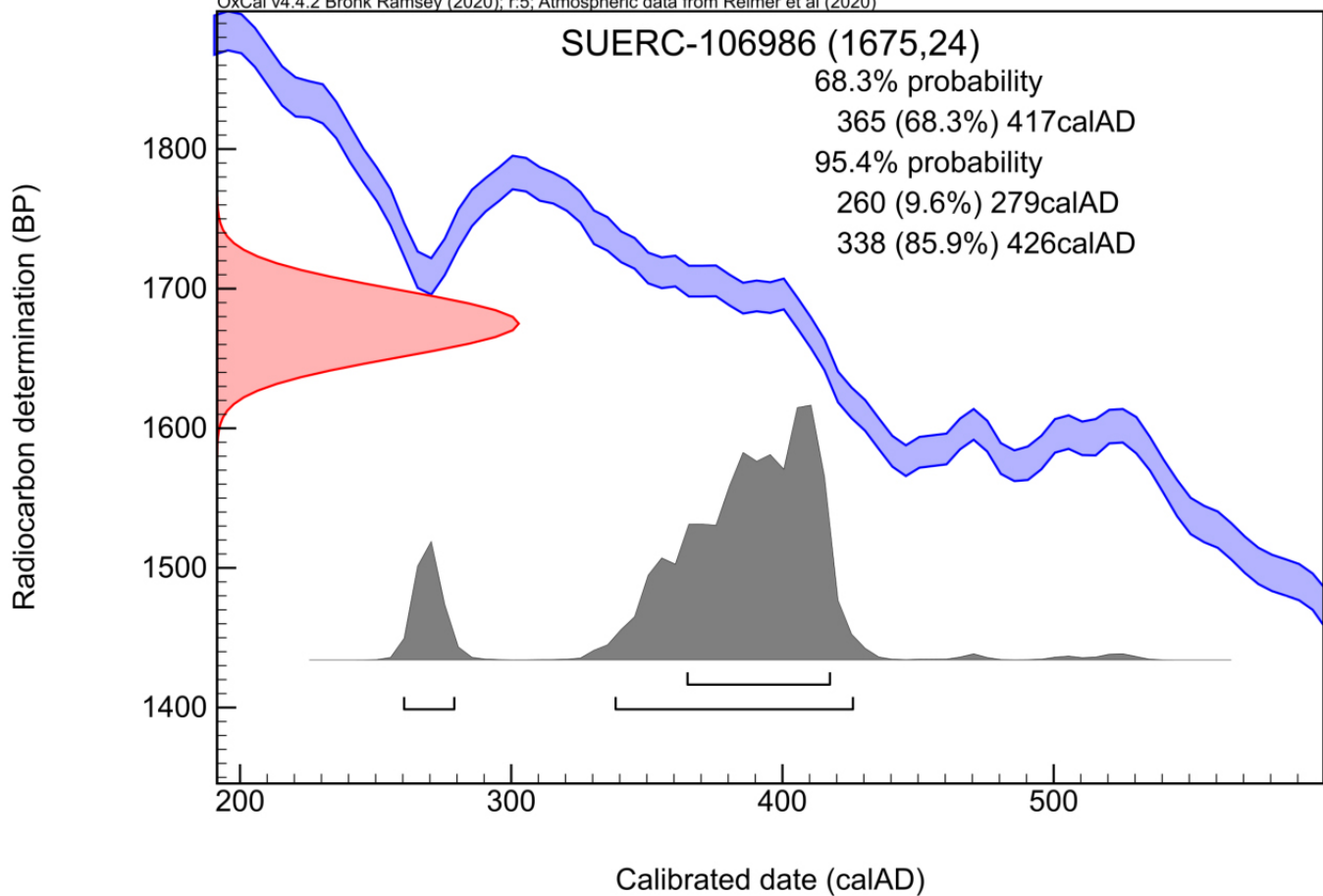
For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :

E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by :

P. Nayantub



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57

RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

31 October 2022

Laboratory Code SUERC-106987 (GU62157)

Submitter



Site Reference HFS21

Context Reference 159

Sample Reference <49>

Material Cattle tibia

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -21.9 ‰

$\delta^{15}\text{N}$ relative to air 5.8 ‰

C/N ratio (Molar) 3.3

$\delta^{34}\text{S}$ relative to VCDT 13.6 ‰

C/S ratio (Molar) 509

N/S ratio (Molar) 153

Radiocarbon Age BP 1723 \pm 24

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

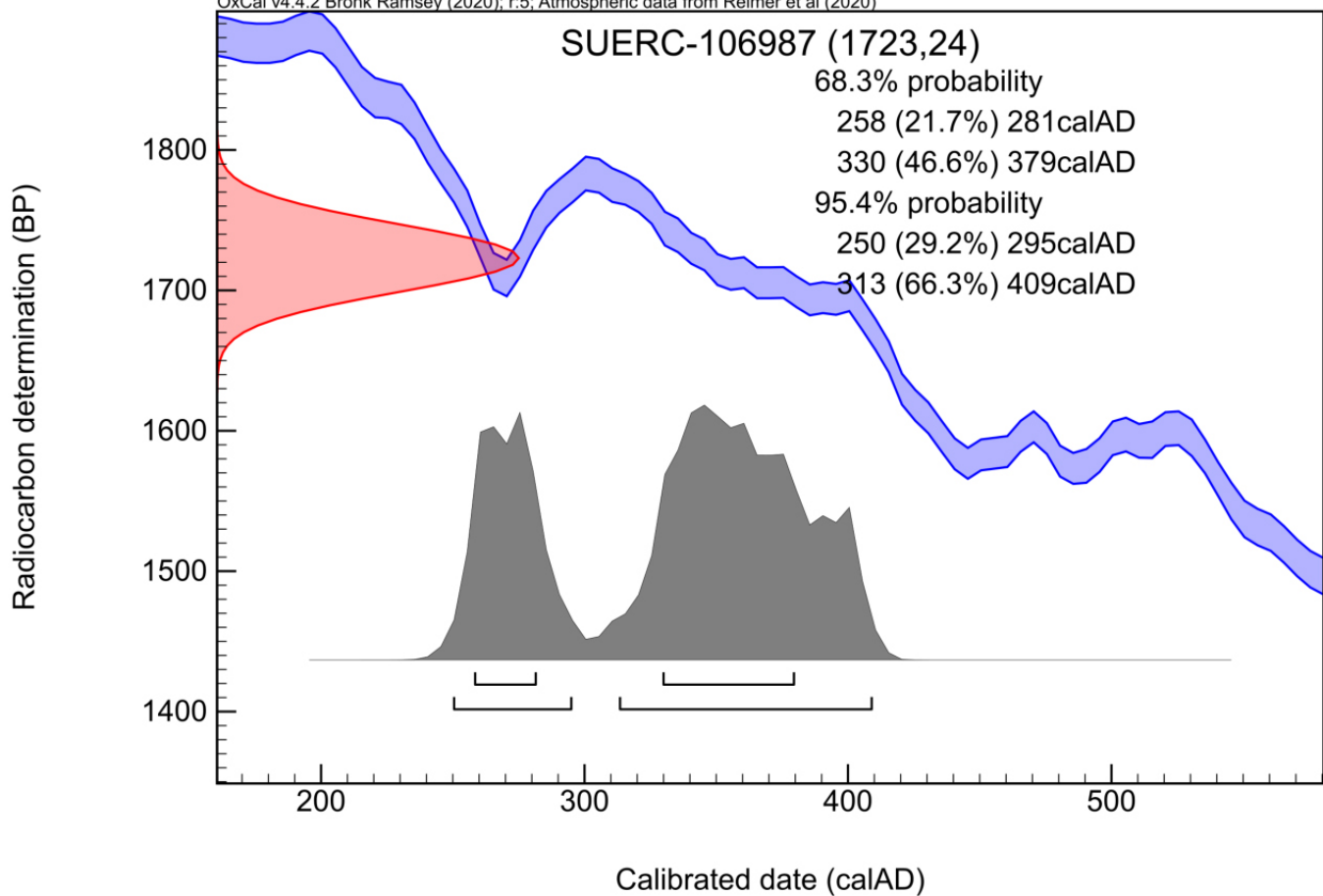
For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :

E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by :

P. Nayantub



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2020) *Radiocarbon* 62(4) pp.725-57

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Swaledale and Arkengarthdale
Archaeology Group

Hagg Farm
Swaledale
North Yorkshire

palaeoenvironmental assessment

report 5752
April 2022

Contents

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents a palaeoenvironmental assessment of three bulk samples taken during archaeological excavations of a Romano-British settlement at Hagg Farm, Swaledale, North Yorkshire.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG) and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 Palaeoenvironmental evidence is consistent with the provisional Roman date, particularly given the presence of cf. spelt wheat, 6-row barley and probable charred remnants of heathland turves. The results are comparable to previous palaeoenvironmental data from Hagg Farm.

Recommendations

- 1.4 No further analysis is required for the samples.
- 1.5 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. The residues were discarded following examination.
- 1.6 The following plant remains are recommended as the best options for radiocarbon dating and are ranked by their likelihood to provide a reliable date; other options are available if required (see Appendix 1):-

[159] <47> pit/linear ditch – Charred barley grain

[157] <46> burnt spread – Charred false oat-grass tuber

2. Project background

Location and background

- 2.1 Archaeological works were conducted by SWAAG at Hagg Farm, Swaledale, North Yorkshire. This report presents a palaeoenvironmental assessment of three bulk samples comprising a posthole fill [154], a burnt spread [157] and the fill [159] of a stone-lined pit or possible linear ditch, all probably Roman in date.

Objective

- 2.2 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the palaeoenvironmental potential of the samples, establish the presence of suitable radiocarbon dating material, and provide the client with appropriate recommendations.

Dates

- 2.3 The samples were received by Archaeological Services on 21st February 2022. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 1st and 30th April 2022.

Personnel

- 2.4 Assessment and report preparation was conducted by Dr Charlotte O'Brien. Sample processing was by Cyrus Edgcombe.

Archive

- 2.5 The site code is **HFS21**, for **Hagg Farm Swaledale 2021**. The finds, flots and charred plant remains are currently held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University awaiting collection.

3. Methods

- 3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500µm mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery, flint, glass and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were examined at up to x60 magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope. Identifications were aided by comparison with modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University, and by reference to relevant literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006). Habitat classification follows Preston *et al.* (2002). Plant nomenclature follows Stace (2010).
- 3.2 Selected charcoal fragments were identified, in order to provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating and to determine the nature and condition of the assemblages. The transverse, radial and tangential sections were examined at up to x500 magnification using a Nikon Eclipse microscope. Identifications were assisted by the descriptions of Schweingruber (1990), Gale & Cutler (2000) and Hather (2000), and modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University.
- 3.3 The works were undertaken in accordance with the palaeoenvironmental research aims and objectives outlined in the regional archaeological research framework and resource agendas (Roskams & Whyman 2007; Hall & Huntley 2007; Huntley 2010).

4. Results

- 4.1 The samples produced small flots comprising a few charcoal fragments and small to moderate quantities of charred plant remains. These include cereal grains, heather twigs, rhizome/tubers (including false oat-grass) and weed seeds (sheep's sorrel, bedstraws, grass). Pit/ditch fill [159] has the largest quantity of cereal grains which are predominantly barley. Poor condition prevents further identification of most of the grains, although the twisted shape of some of them points to 6-row barley (*Hordeum vulgare*). The few wheat grains have the parallel sided-form typical of spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*). Animal bone/tooth fragments are present in [159]. There are no finds in the other samples.
- 4.2 Detailed palaeoenvironmental results and a provisional date for each context are presented in Appendix 1. Material for radiocarbon dating is listed in the recommendations section.

5. Discussion

- 5.1 The palaeoenvironmental evidence is consistent with the provisional Roman date, particularly given the presence of probable spelt wheat and 6-row barley which were the principal crops for this period (Hall & Huntley 2007; Greig 1991). Furthermore, the charred remains of heather twigs, rhizomes and propagules of acid grassland plants such as sheep's sorrel, are all listed as characterising the remnants of burnt turves in the archaeological record (Hall 2003), which is another characteristic of late prehistoric and Roman sites within the region. The results are comparable to previous palaeoenvironmental data from Hagg Farm (Archaeological Services 2014; 2017; 2019; 2020).

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 No further analysis is required for the samples. If further work is undertaken at the site, the results of this assessment should be added to any additional palaeoenvironmental data produced.
- 6.2 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. The residues were discarded following examination.
- 6.3 The following plant remains are recommended as the best options for radiocarbon dating and are ranked by their likelihood to provide a reliable date; other options are available if required (see Appendix 1):-

[159] <47> pit/linear ditch – Charred barley grain
[157] <46> burnt spread – Charred false oat-grass tuber

7. Sources

Archaeological Services 2014 *West Hagg Site 103 Swaledale, North Yorkshire: archaeological excavation*. Unpublished report **3360**, Archaeological Services Durham University

- Archaeological Services 2017 *Hagg Farm, Swaledale, North Yorkshire: palaeoenvironmental assessment*. Unpublished report **4647**, Archaeological Services Durham University
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- Preston, C D, Pearman, D A, & Dines, T D, 2002 *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*. Oxford
- Roskams, S & Whyman, M, 2007 *Yorkshire Archaeological Research Framework: research agenda*. York
- Schweingruber, F H, 1990 *Microscopic wood anatomy*. Birmensdorf
- Stace, C, 2010 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge

Appendix 1: Palaeoenvironmental data

Sample	Context	Feature	Volume processed (l)	Flot volume (ml)	C14 available	Rank	Notes
45	154	F153 - posthole	6	20	?	*	Small flot comprising a trace of charcoal, a small charred heather twig and a charred wheat grain (cf. spelt) – probably too small for C14. The charcoal is Maloideae (apple, hawthorn, whitebeams). Two uncharred achenes of marsh cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla palustris</i>) are probably modern intrusions and reflect an area of damp ground. No finds. Iron Age / Romano-British?
46	157	Burnt spread	6	40	Y	*	Small flot comprising modern roots (some woody), a trace of charred rhizomes and a charred false oat-grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>) tuber. Little evidence of fuel waste. A single uncharred nutlet of bugle (<i>Ajuga reptans</i>) is probably a modern intrusion and reflects an area of damp ground. No finds. Iron Age / Romano-British?
47	159	Stone lined pit or linear ditch	11	50	Y	**	Small quantity of charcoal in good condition (Hazel and Maloideae stemwood). Moderate assemblage (n=93) of charred cereal grains in poor condition (pitted). These are predominantly barley (some twisted), with a few wheat grains (one is spelt type). Low numbers of charred seeds from sheep's sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>), cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>) and grass. Finds: animal bone and a tooth. Iron Age / Romano-British

[Rank: *: low; **: medium; ***: high; ****: very high potential to provide further palaeoenvironmental information.
? = material may be unsuitable for AMS dating due to poor condition or long-lived species]

Assessment of the animal bones recovered from Hagg Farm, Swaledale. N Yorkshire (HSF21)

Kevin Rielly, June 2022

Introduction

The site was situated just to the east of Fremington within the Yorkshire Dales national Park. in Swaledale, North Yorkshire. A survey and later excavations (2019 and 2021) revealed a series of hut circles within a rectilinear enclosure wall. The later excavations were concentrated within the north-western part of this enclosure, this dominated by an area of stone flagging, beneath which was found a curvi-linear feature containing a large quantity of animal bones which were subsequently hand recovered.

Methodology

The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered. A concerted effort was undertaken to refit as many bones as possible, noting the actual number of fragments prior to refitting.

Description of faunal assemblage

All the bones came from a single deposit, the fill (159) of a curvi-linear feature, this just below a flagged surface. While this fill remains undated, pottery dates from other deposits suggest an overall time frame between the 2nd and the end of the 4th century AD, with a concentration of activity dating to the later Roman period, essentially dating from the mid-3rd into the 4th century i.e., up to the settlements demise (potentially in the 5th century).

The total number of bones is 185, all hand collected, these reducing to 104 fragments following refitting. There is a minor quantity of sheep/goat and pig bones, comprising three and a single fragment respectively, which, alongside a single cattle bone, can be interpreted as general preparation and food waste. The remaining 99 cattle bones appear to be part of a single adult individual, including a large part of the axial skeleton as well as the fore and hindlegs (see Table 1). Note that various parts are missing, as demonstrated by the figures for the Minimum Number of Elements compared to the Expected Number of Parts, where for example there are just three thoracic vertebrae represented compared to the 18 generally found in a cattle skeleton. Certain parts may well be absent due to recovery, here including the smaller parts as the carpals and some tarsals, while others could be absent due to disturbance and/or truncation. No obvious

articulated parts were recognised in situ, while the remaining bones are clearly fragmented, notably including the ribs and vertebrae, while the femur is represented by a single right distal fragment and the tibiae by two (left and right) distal pieces. The only complete limb bones were a single radius and metacarpus. The latter bone was also clearly associated with the only surviving phalanges. In addition, the skull is essentially composed of loose teeth alongside a small part of the bulla tympanica and one occipital condyle. Some of the fragmentation/disarticulation may have been deliberate however, as knife cuts were observed on the anterior surface of the right navicular cuboid and adjacent cuneiform. These could represent dressing cuts except that the associated right metatarsus is included in this collection. Otherwise, they may represent skinning cuts. Unfortunately, the equivalent left tarsals were not present.

This animal, looking at the teeth and the epiphysis fusion, was clearly a mature adult, in excess of 6 years of age (after Jones and Sadler 2012, 16). This stood between about 112.5 to 114.5cm at the shoulder (following von den Driesch and Boessneck 1974) and may well have been a cow, here based on metrical and sex data taken from the Roman settlement at Faverdale near Darlington (Rielly 2012, 147).

Conclusion and recommendations for further work

The collection is essentially composed of a few food waste items alongside the disturbed and/or truncated remains of an adult cattle skeleton. These bones are from a relatively well dated deposit, both parts of the assemblage suffering a relatively high degree of fragmentation (noting that the sheep and pig component is entirely composed of loose teeth) although generally well preserved. The major component, the cattle skeleton, is clearly the major point of interest, forming the focus of any additional work. It is recommended that comparisons should be made with cattle size data from other Mid-Late Roman sites in this area, these including the various sites, somewhat to the east and north-east, extending along the Roman road of Dere Street, including Catterick (Meddens 1990a and 1990b and Stallibrass 1997 and 2002), various sites centred on Healam Bridge (Jacques et al 2017), Piercebridge (Rackham 2008) and Faverdale (Rielly 2012, 147). The presence of a near complete cattle skeleton may well have 'ritual' connotations and while none of the previously mentioned sites provided complete or partial cattle remains, they have been found at the Late Roman sites of Shiptonthorpe and Rudston somewhat to the south (after Morris 2008, 218-20). A comparison of these findings is also recommended, although with the understanding that this animal may have been deposited for reasons other than 'ritual' (Wilson 1992).

In conclusion, it would be beneficial to compare and contrast the size data and potential 'ritual' aspects of the cattle skeleton, placing this find within the data so far compiled concerning Late Roman cattle usage within this northern part of England.

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Area	Part	N	MNE	ANP	L	R
Axial	Skull	1	1	1	Y	Y
	Mandible	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Cervical vert	1	1	7	Y	Y
	Thoracic vert	3	3	18	Y	Y
	Lumbar vert	1	1	6	Y	Y
	Caudal vert	1	1	19	Y	Y
	Indeterm. vert	18	3		Y	Y
	Rib	36	10	36	Y	Y
	Sternum	3	3	5	Y	Y
Foreleg	Scapula	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Humerus	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Radius	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Ulna	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Carpals	7	7	12	Y	Y
	Metacarpal	2	2	2	Y	Y
	1st Phalange	2	2	8		
	2nd phalange	2	2	8		
	3rd phalange	2	2	8		
Hindleg	Femur	1	1	2		Y
	Tibia	2	2	2	Y	Y
	Astragalus	1	1	2		Y
	Other tarsals	2	2	6		Y
	Metatarsus	2	2	2	Y	Y

Table 1. Distribution of cattle skeletal parts interpreted as a single individual from the fill (159); where Area is the area of the skeleton, MNE is Minimum Number of Elements, ENP is the Expected Number of Parts (thus limb bones are generally 2 while for example there are 36 ribs attached to 18 thoracic vertebrae), L is left and R is right.

Post-Excavation Assessment of the Romano-British pottery from the 2021 excavation at The Hagg, Swaledale, North Yorkshire for the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG)

Eniko Hudak, BA(Hons) MLitt
Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) was commissioned by the SWAAG to undertake the post-excavation assessment of the Romano-British pottery recovered during the 2021 community excavations of The Hagg, Swaledale (site code HFS21). The following report presents the results of the identification, quantification, and dating of the pottery assemblage.

Methodology

All fragments were fully quantified using the standard measures of sherd count, weight, and Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVEs) in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Study Group of Roman Pottery (PCRG, SGRP, MPRG 2016) and standards used by PCA specialists. All data has been recorded in a relational database based on the template used by PCA specialists, which is ultimately based on that of Museum of London Archaeology Services (Symonds 2002).

Sherds were examined by hand lens under 10x magnification and fabrics have been identified and recorded with the help of the *National Roman Fabric Reference Collection* (Tomber and Dore 1998), the fabric type series established for the Catterick pottery assemblages (Bell and Evans 2002), and the pottery report of previous seasons (ASDU 2014, Gerrard 2014, Hudak 2018a and 2018b, 2019). Forms have been recorded with the help of the Catterick type series (Bell and Evans 2002).

Fabrics

CRA PA:

Crambeck Parchment Ware – for fabric details see Tomber and Dore 1998, forms in Bell and Evans 2002 and Corder 1937

MCTR WS4:

Cantley/Catterick tradition White-Slipped Ware – for details see Leary and Hartley 2017 and Tomber and Dore 1998 (CTR WS, CAN WS, SWN WS)

SAMCG:

Central Gaulish Samian – for details see Webster 1996 and Tomber and Dore 1998

O3A and O4A: sandy oxidised fabrics – for more details see Bell and Evans 2002: 353

R1 and R1C: sandy reduced fabrics – for more details see Bell and Evans 2002: 353

R4: This fabric is the East Yorkshire Calcite Gritted ware at Catterick (Bell and Evans 2002: 354), which is the same as the Knapton and the Huntcliff types (HUN CG in Tomber and Dore 1998, and Late Gritty Wares in Gerrard 2014, and CG in Leary 2021). Subgroups of HUN CG based on firing colour and frequency of inclusions were identified in the Cataractonium type series (Leary 2021). Updated dating of forms was available from Bidwell and Croom 2010.

Assemblage composition and dating

The 2021 excavation yielded a small assemblage of Roman pottery totalling 38 fragments weighing 0.581kg and representing 0.71 EVEs. The condition of the assemblage is poor: all sherds show a degree of abrasion, and the mean sherd weight of the assemblage is relatively low at 15.29g implying redeposition. Apart from a low degree of internal wear on the mortaria, no other signs of use-wear or post-firing modifications were noted.

A restricted range of pottery fabrics were identified in the assemblage (Table 1) with a comparable but far less varied composition than the 2018 and 2019 seasons of excavations (cf. Hudak 2018b, 2019). The overall date of the assemblage falls into the 4th century AD with small amounts of broadly dated or residual material.

Fabric	Sherd Count	Weight (g)	EVEs
CRA PA	9	310	0.31
MCTR WS4	1	80	
O3A	1	2	
O4A	5	8	
R1	8	63	
R1C	1	3	0.05
R4	10	110	0.35
SAMCG	3	5	
TOTAL	38	581	0.71

Table 1 – Quantification of the assemblage by sherd count, weight (g), and EVEs per fabric

Although the assemblage is too small to allow for meaningful analysis of the proportion of different fabrics, Crambeck Parchment ware mortaria (CRA PA forms M47 and M51) and East Yorkshire Calcite Gritted ware Gillam 162 type jars (R4 form J6.3) were identified most frequently. There are fragments of a minimum of five different CRA PA mortaria in the assemblage including sherds joining to a complete profile of a Corder type 6 mortarium from context (148) dated to AD300-400+. R4 – or HUN CG – sherds are derived from a minimum of three different Gillam 162 type jars that lack the internal groove (type J6.3), which are dated to after AD360 (Bidwell and Croom 2010).

Other fabrics from a known source include one base sherd of a slag-gritted Cantley/Catterick tradition white-slipped mortarium (MCTR WS4) dated to between AD230-350 (Leary and Hartley 2017) and three small fragments of Samian ware, most likely of Central Gaulish origin, broadly dated to AD120-260 and thus possibly residual. Unsourced reduced and oxidised sand-tempered wares make up the rest of the assemblage, only one sherd being diagnostic, a rim sherd of a J12.11 type triangular-rim jar (Bell and Evans 2002).

The sum of EVEs is too low for the analysis of the functional composition of the assemblage, but the only form categories present are jars and mortaria.

Contextual analysis

The assemblage was recovered from Areas 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9. The bulk of the pottery was unstratified in Overburdens 1 and 2, and only six fragments were retrieved from individually numbered contexts (Table 2). Based on the date of the Roman pottery a 'context considered date' was established for each context, including the overburdens, to give an overall date for the features, but these are not dependent on their stratigraphic relationships. The area assemblages are detailed below.

Area	Feature	Context	Context		Weight (g)	EVEs
			Context	Considered Date		
A4	OB1	0	AD360-400+	20	228	0.34
A4	OB2	0	AD300-400+	5	205	0.22
A4	Drain?	148	AD270-400+	1	28	
A4	Posthole	154	AD230-350	4	89	
A6	OB1	0	AD40-400+	1	1	
A7	OB2	0	AD360-400+	1	12	0.1
A8	Deposit	145	AD40-400+	1	2	
A9	OB1	0	AD300-400+	5	16	0.05
TOTAL				38	581	0.71

Table 2 – Distribution of the Roman pottery per area and context with context considered date

Area 4

A total of 30 fragments of Roman pottery weighing 0.550kg were found in Area 4 features, largely in OB1 and OB2. The area assemblage includes all mortaria found on site (CRA PA and MCTR WS4), all the Samian, rims of a minimum of two R4 Huntcliff jars, and small amounts of reduced and oxidised sandy wares. The material from OB1 is dated to after AD360, and from OB2 to after AD300, but it must be noted that these deposits most likely comprise redeposited material.

Only five fragments of the area assemblage were stratified. Fill (148) of a potential drain [147] contained a single fragment of a CRA PA mortarium, which gives a *terminus post quem* of AD270 at the earliest for this deposit. Fill (154) posthole [153] contained four sherds, three small R1 fragments and the MCTR WS4 mortarium base sherd dated to between AD230-350.

Area 6

The overburden in Area 6 produced a single sherd of Roman pottery (1g) in fabric O4A, which cannot be dated any more precisely than the Roman period.

Area 7

Overburden 2 in Area 7 also contained one fragment of Roman pottery (12g), the rim of a Huntcliff type jar in fabric R4. This type is dated to after AD360, but it is likely to be a redeposited sherd in this deposit.

Area 8

A single sherd of pottery weighing 2g was recovered from the accumulated deposit (145) in Area 8, an unsourced O3A fragment, which could not be dated any more closely than to the Roman period.

Area 9

Five sherds of Roman pottery weighing 16g were recovered from OB1 of Area 9. These comprise a tiny fragment of O4A, the J12.11 jar rim fragment in R1, and three East Yorkshire Calcite-gritted ware body sherds. The latter may give a 4th century AD date for the deposit but are likely to have been redeposited.

Discussion

The 2021 excavation season produced a meagre assemblage in comparison to the previous two seasons at The Hagg. While most of the material is abraded and likely to have been redeposited, the

larger mortarium fragments give a higher-than-expected mean sherd weight to the assemblage at 15.29g. For comparison, the mean sherd weight of the 2019 assemblage was 16.11g, of the 2018 assemblage 11.35g, and 12.15 g for the 2017 assemblage.

The range of fabrics present in the 2021 assemblage is comparable to the assemblages of the previous seasons, however, detailed analysis of fabric proportions is not possible due to the small size of the assemblage. Nevertheless, the 2021 assemblage further reinforces the results of the preceding seasons: the predominantly 4th century AD date for activity with limited earlier residual material and the possibility of links to Catterick. The assemblage is significant for the site itself as well as adding to the growing dataset of late Roman rural sites in the North East of England.

Recommendations

All pottery has been examined and requires no further analysis at this stage of work. A pottery report should be included in any publication of the site. All vessels were classified with the help of typologies and corpora, which should minimize the need for illustrations.

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