

# West Hagg, Site 103 Excavations

7<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2016



Swaledale & Arkengarthdale  
**SWAAG**  
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Archaeology Group

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*Some ascribe the word Hagg to an Anglo-Saxon word meaning an 'enclosure made by a hedge.' Others say that it derives from the Old Norse word for small farmsteads, 'haga,' which in turn derives from the Old Norse 'hagi' meaning enclosure.*

## **Background**

The Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG) have been investigating site 103 for some years. The results of earlier excavations in 2012 and 2013 have been published<sup>1</sup>.

During the period 2014 - 2016, SWAAG organised and reported on “The Swaledale Big Dig” an extensive test-pitting programme in the local area<sup>2</sup>. This meant that whilst no excavation work was carried out at site 103 during this time, several opportunities arose where the findings to date were discussed with local professional archaeologists, all of who were of the opinion that further work should be carried out to fully elucidate the site as there were several unanswered questions concerning its use and occupation.

Early in 2016 a new excavation programme was envisaged and a research document (Appendix I: The Hagg - A project plan for 2016 and beyond) prepared. A series of evaluation trenches was proposed which were designed to answer very specific questions about features already seen on site with the intention of providing data to inform much larger open excavations from 2017 onwards.

This document therefore records the work carried out in October 2016 allocated the site code WHF16.

Information on the site location, land use and topography etc can be found in the Durham University Report dated 2014<sup>1</sup>.

## **Trench locations and objectives**

The complete prioritised list of trenches and their locations are shown in the Project Plan (Appendix I). It was expected that the actual number of trenches excavated would be dependent on staffing levels and the weather. In the event, 6 trenches were completed and the objectives and locations are outlined in Table 1 and Figure 1 below. Figure 1 also shows the location and extent of trenches excavated during earlier phases of work on the site. In addition a further plan of the site showing the location of key features is given at Appendix 2

The excavation and recording was carried out under the supervision of a Professional Archaeologist (Tony Liddell - Vindomora Solutions Ltd).

The trenches were all excavated by hand. Teams dedicated to an individual trench carried out all aspects of the excavation; digging, planning, context recording, leveling etc. This provided training and experience in these aspects of archaeological investigation.

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>A</b>	To assess if cobbled surface of trench 7 continues North/East
<b>B</b>	To assess platform/depression to embankment western edge
<b>C</b>	To assess lower platform wall/ track way
<b>D</b>	To assess edge of lower platform/ track way
<b>E</b>	To assess platform (this possible feature may, depending on numbers of volunteers available, be fully excavated, by extending from the Eastern edge of Trench 1)
<b>F</b>	To assess cobbled surface, buildings

Table I Trench Objectives

During an earlier phase of work (Trench 5, May 2013) a temporary benchmark had been established at the northernmost boundary of the site (266m OD). For the current programme of work this point was too remote to be easily accessed and so a new permanent site datum was established from this height to a metal stake adjacent to the north wall boundary (261.585m OD). Because of the steep sloping ground two additional temporary benchmarks were established: TBM1 258.062m OD and TBM2 256.3m OD. All trench and feature levels were determined from one of these three points. It should be noted that for future excavations a re-measurement of the site datum using a total station is planned and so a correction factor may need to be applied to the these levels before making any comparison with future recordings.

The site was surveyed using a Spectra Precision Promark I20 Professional Grade GPS/GLONASS GNSS Receiver.

Following these excavations, and in order to facilitate the interpretation and understanding of the various features and their inter-relationships it is anticipated that the site will be re-mapped and in future recorded using single context recording systems. This will result in a reduced reliance on individual trench identifiers.



Figure 1  
Trench locations

## **Trench A**

From earlier investigations a cobbled surface had been found at the northern end of trench 7 on the presumed external side of the wall observed running through trenches 4 and 7 and adjoining the rubble bank in trench 1. Should this cobbled surface continue, this would be indicative of the settlement extending further north towards the wooded area.

Trench A was marked out at 5m x 2m aligned approximately NNE/SSW with the intention of a small overlap to trench 7. The trench location was recorded by GPS and also by measurement to two fixed and identifiable points on the boundary wall to the north.

Following careful de-turfing, the topsoil [A1] was removed by trowelling to reveal a cobbled surface [A3] to the south of the trench, which was interpreted as the cobbling seen previously in trench 7. At the northern end larger stones appeared under the topsoil. Centrally across the whole of the trench a darker subsoil layer [A2] was identified.

The trench was cleaned down to the cobbles, the top of the darker subsoil layer and the larger stones in the north end and then photographed and a plan drawn (1:20).

The subsoil layer [A2] was then removed revealing the continuation of the cobbled surface northwards towards a more unorganised stone tumble, which lay adjacent to the larger stones in the north. These, larger stones stretching across the whole trench were tentatively identified [A4] as a structure, possibly another wall, running NW/SE.

Excavation, by removing the topsoil to the north of [A4], revealed the possibility of a further surface [A5] but the area uncovered was rather small, being limited by the trench sides and the large stones of structure [A4]. A decision was made not to extend the trench or remove stones from the structure because at this point, the objectives of the trench had been achieved. There is the intention to revisit these structures at a later date and so further work would therefore have been unnecessary and possibly even detrimental to future investigations. The trench was cleaned, photographed and recorded in plan and in section and levels taken before being backfilled and the turf replaced (Figs. 2-4).

## **Finds**

Within the topsoil [A1] some fragments of post medieval pottery and a horseshoe were found. In addition in this layer a burnishing or hone stone was recovered (?SF - tbc). Measuring 10.5 x 4 cm with a thickness varying from 1-2 cm the stone was identified as a fine grained sandstone and had one remarkably smooth face indicative of repeated wear.



Figure 2  
Trench A

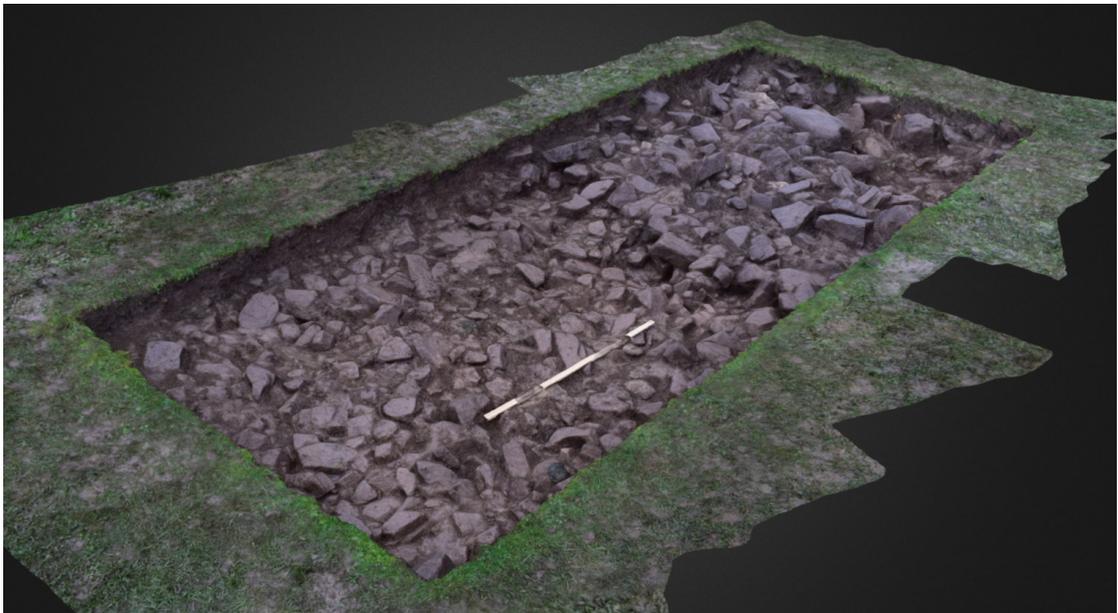


Figure 3  
Photogrammetric image Trench A

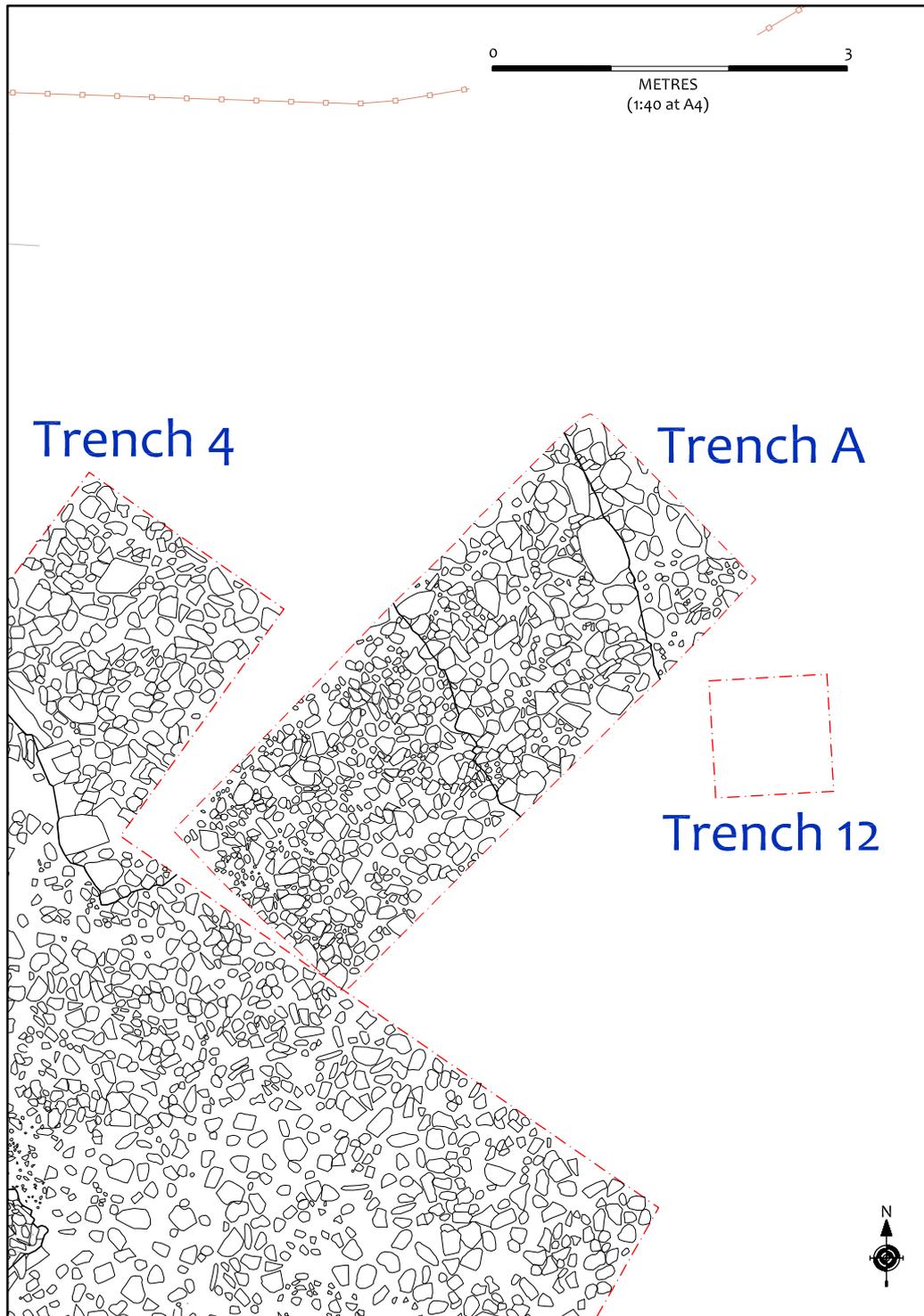


Figure 4  
Trench A with the limits of the potential NW/SE feature highlighted

## **Interpretation**

The cobbled surface seen in trench 7 appears to extend to the north until it meets a structure (possibly a wall) running NW/SE beyond which there is the suggestion of another surface, which may be a continuation of [A3].

This area of the site is generally wetter than other areas and it is thought that the darker layer [A2] was perhaps a sedimentary deposit caused by water running off the adjacent higher ground and puddling. Indeed there was a suggestion that the lower section might have been a little sandier in texture but not sufficiently so as to indicate a separate layer.

It was the intention that trench A should intersect with trench 7. Careful examination of trench A before backfilling, suggested that it had all been excavated *de novo*. This highlights the difficulty of accurately locating earlier trenches and reinforces the decision to employ a Total Station in future excavations.

## **Suggestions for future work**

Although the objectives of the trench were met it is clear that the structure running NW/SE and the possible surface beyond it to the north require further investigation to determine the extent and true nature of these features.

## **Trench B**

Evaluation trench B was sited in the northeastern area of the enclosure. Although it appeared to have no features showing on an earlier geophysical survey, it amounted to a large area within the enclosure, and the topography gave the impression of a possible platform/depression running up to the western edge of the eastern embankment wall (the wall edge found in trench 7 during the 2013 season).

Trench B was marked out at 5m x 2m aligned approximately W/E. The trench encompassed a raised mound running N/S at its western end and a slight depression at the east end, which appeared to run into the western edge of the embankment wall (see plan of trenches). The trench location was recorded with GPS and also by measuring to a fixed point on the northern stone boundary wall (details on context sheet).

Following careful removal of turf (by spade) the topsoil [B1] with a depth of 50mm west to 60mm east was removed by trowel. This revealed a slightly raised stone feature [B6] running N/S at the western end of the trench, with what appeared to be wall tumble spread across the trench, albeit with a small area of bare ground (no wall stones) to the centre area of the trench.

Further cleaning back of all of the topsoil revealed a large area of wall tumble (B6) to the western half of the trench with a change of soil colour [B2] appearing in the central area. There was then further wall tumble to the east [B5], with natural glacial rubble [B4] now exposed in the northeastern corner. This compact glacial rubble

was part of the embankment. The trench was photographed, and a simple off set plan drawn at 1:20 to capture spread of stones and bare soil area.

The central to eastern soil area of the trench [B2] a lighter brown, silty clay, fine grain texture, covering 3m x 2m, which when excavated had a depth of 200mm to 50mm north to south. During the excavation of this layer [B2] a selective removal of wall tumble [B5] exposed an area of sandstone flags [B3].

The decision was made to carefully remove the remaining wall tumble [B5] which revealed more of the flagged surface covering the whole eastern area of the trench (3m x 2m). The sandstone flags, varying in size from 90cm x 60cm to 25cm x 25cm had been well laid, abutting each other with only narrow joins in between. The flags appeared to continue up to and possibly under the embankment in the southeast corner; they appear to abut the glacial rubble in the northeast corner and the wall tumble to the west and definitely continue south beyond southern edge of the trench.

The stone tumble [B6] once cleaned back was left intact and no stones were removed to investigate deeper as it would need a larger open area excavation to fully understand [B6] and if anything lay beneath the tumble.

Trench B at this point was photographed, drawn in plan and section, levels taken from the site benchmark, backfilled and turf replaced.



Figure 5  
Photogrammetric representation of Trench B



Figure 6  
Trench B highlighting the extent of flagging

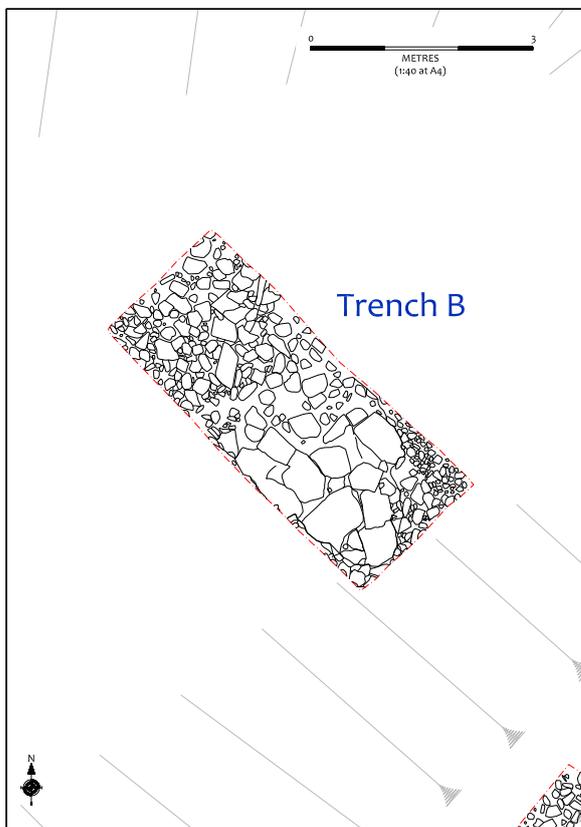


Figure 7  
Trench B plan

## **Finds**

Finds were not recovered from Trench B.

## **Interpretation**

The west half of the trench comprised wall tumble [B6] which might have originated from the embankment wall that would have run east and north of the trench, but within [B6] there appears a possible feature that is slightly raised and runs north/south. The eastern edge of this tumble appears to abut the flags rather than lay on top of them.

The east half has well laid flags which could be a house platform or a yard. On top of these flags lay the fine, silty deposit [B2] and the wall tumble [B5], which is most likely to be from the embankment eastern wall.

It is likely that after abandonment a fine silty deposit [B2] built up over the flags, probably washed down from the embankment and pooling on the flags flat surface. Walling stones [B5] falling from the east embankment and [B6] also added to the flagged surface, these too being covered with the silty deposit [B2] over time.

The raised feature and the stone rubble/tumble [B6] to the west did not have [B2] amongst the stones just a covering of topsoil. This may indicate [B6] as still being a wall when the flagged area started to be covered with [B2].

## **Suggestions for future work**

Trench B proved to be very interesting, although no pottery was found. The well laid flags which extend beyond the trench, and the hint of wall running north - south confirms this large area of the enclosure was occupied and only by further larger scale excavation can we get a better understanding of these features and what possibly lies underneath [B6].

## **Trench C**

The area of pasture immediately south and below the level of the west enclosure's southern wall, had a wall like feature, identified by geophysics, which ran parallel with this southern wall. At its eastern end it appeared to curve and head north to the trackway leading to the west enclosure identified in trench 14. With the pasture grass short the slight raised mound could be seen in more detail, and clearly took on the appearance of a boundary wall enclosing this lower southern pasture area.

With the remaining time left, and just enough diggers spare on site, it was decided to open a small test pit trench, the purpose to investigate the raised mound and possible wall.

The position for Trench C was carefully chosen to be on top of and slightly north of the mound as this would hopefully catch the wall edge and the enclosure side of the

wall. By also positioning the trench just east of the curve of the mound, it would be at the lowest point of this sloping gradient and any hill wash or pottery over the years would hopefully have been deposited there. By keeping the trench to 1m x 1m it was judged to be the right size to evaluate and have all the recording finalised within the time remaining.

Building stone was exposed as soon as the turf and thin layer of topsoil was removed, and once cleaned back, an obvious edge was found on the north of the stone. The 1m x 1m trench had been positioned well, as the southern half had the wall top and edge facing north. The northern half comprised topsoil, dark brown, smooth, firm compaction [C1] to a depth of 30cm, with occasional small rounded stones. Also within [C1] were larger stones, possible tumble and fillers from the wall [C2].

As much as can be seen in a 1m x 1m trench, it was clear the wall [C2] had a well defined northern edge, it was constructed with good straight sided walling stone, approx. 30x20cm laid as a course, with compact smaller angular stones used as fillers in the centre of the wall.

Trench C was recorded photographically, drawn in plan, GPS to trench corners, levels taken, backfilled and turf replaced.



Figure 8  
Trench C showing possible wall

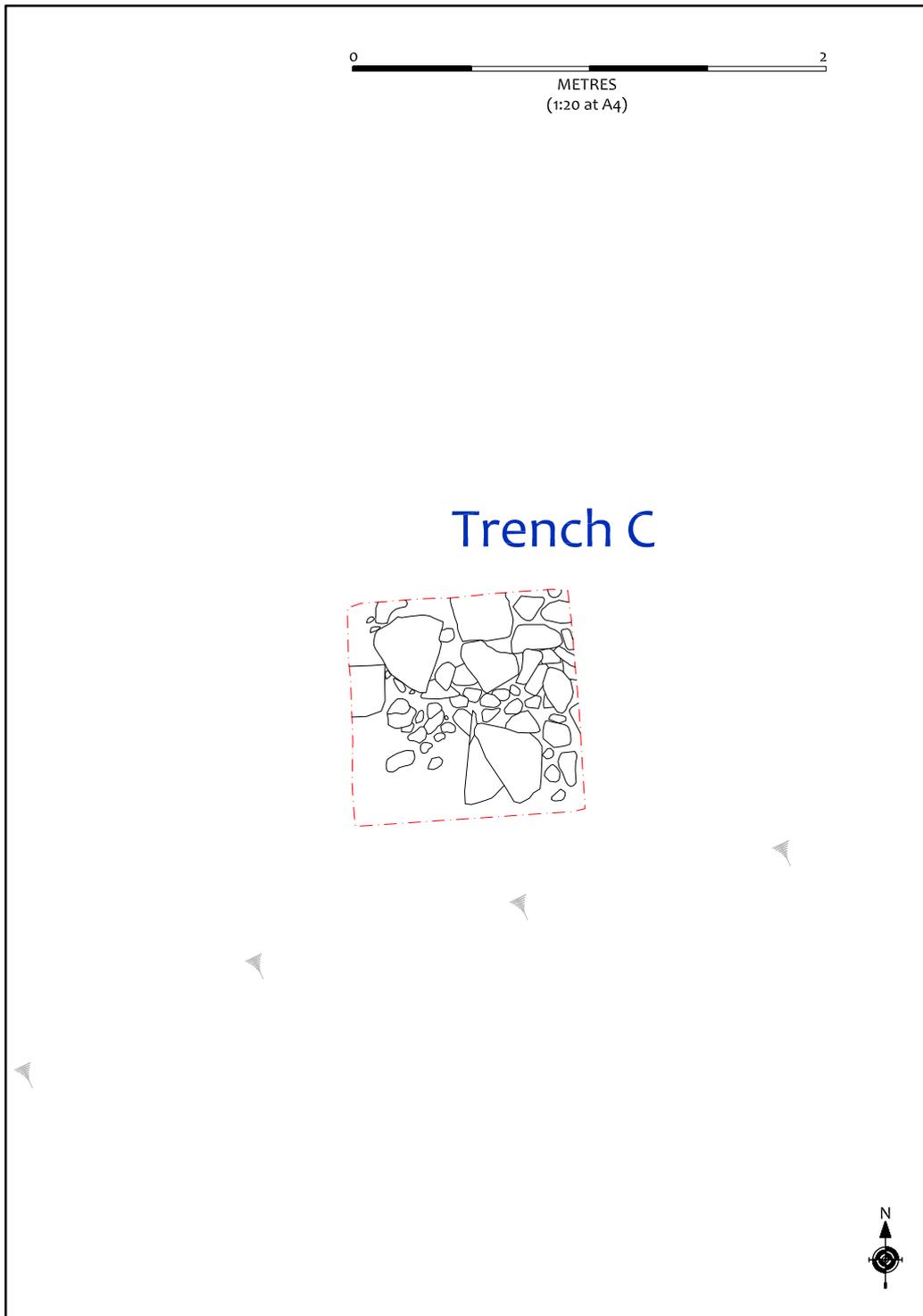


Figure 9  
Trench C plan

### Finds

Despite the small size of the trench pottery sherds were retrieved. Within the 30cm soil depth on the enclosure side of [C2] two pieces of pottery were found 1x black

native shell tempered ware, hint of a rim, 1 small rim of mortarium probably Crambeck as previously found on this site.

## **Interpretation**

The trench confirmed that the raised feature seen both on the geophysics and on the ground was a wall, with at least a 30cm wall edge still standing as seen on the northern edge. It was well constructed with evidence of a solid compacted centre. The southern edge of the wall was not exposed in trench C.

The quality of wall construction appears compatible with the 21 metres of wall edge exposed in trench 7, the enclosure wall found in the Summer dig of 2013. This area of the site has a well built wall that appears to enclose its southern boundary, it curves at its east end to head north to the trackway that leads to the upper west enclosure.

## **Trench D**

This evaluation trench position was chosen to cut across a raised feature in the pasture platform, which is immediately south of, and approximately 1.5m below the level of the western enclosure settlement southern wall.

This area of pasture, which has a gentle sloping gradient to the south, appears to have its own southern enclosure wall identified as a slight raised linear (?) mound in the turf running E/W, parallel with the main west enclosure settlements southern wall.

The purpose of this platform, or its relation to the main settlement is not known, and with the trackway discovery in trench 14 (Summer 2014), which appears to lead to or from this lower platform, it begs the question what was its use? By opening a 3x1m trench orientated N/S over the slight raised feature it was hoped this evaluation trench would indicate any signs of building/occupation, midden spread, or pasture field. It was felt a trench size of 3x1m would be suitable for the remaining time of the dig and resources available.

Once the turf had been removed, and the trench's GPS position recorded, the thin layer of topsoil was removed with a spade. The topsoil [D1] was mid brown in colour with a sticky texture, soft compaction and contained no inclusions. Below [D1] was a lighter mid brown, firmer compacted, clayey silt, identified as subsoil [D2], this was cleared with mattock and trowel, down to natural [D3] a trench depth of 40cm.

Stone inclusions removed from [D2] the subsoil, ranged in size, large and medium, angular and rounded and one very large stone approximately 50x50x14cm was left in situ at the north end of the trench laying on the natural [D3]. Alongside this stone but only partly exposed in the northern edge of the trench, lay a similar large stone. Both of these stones had good straight edges, indicating possible building stones and it was also observed that they had a weathered surface, which would suggest they

were not always underground. Two metres from the northern end of the trench lay two firmly embedded stones in the natural, aligning E/W approximately 20x20cm in size, they appear to line up with the slight raised feature in the turf, but it is too tentative to suggest these two stones represent the base of an embankment. The trench was recorded by a section drawing of the east face, and the trench then photographed, levels taken, back filled and the turf replaced.

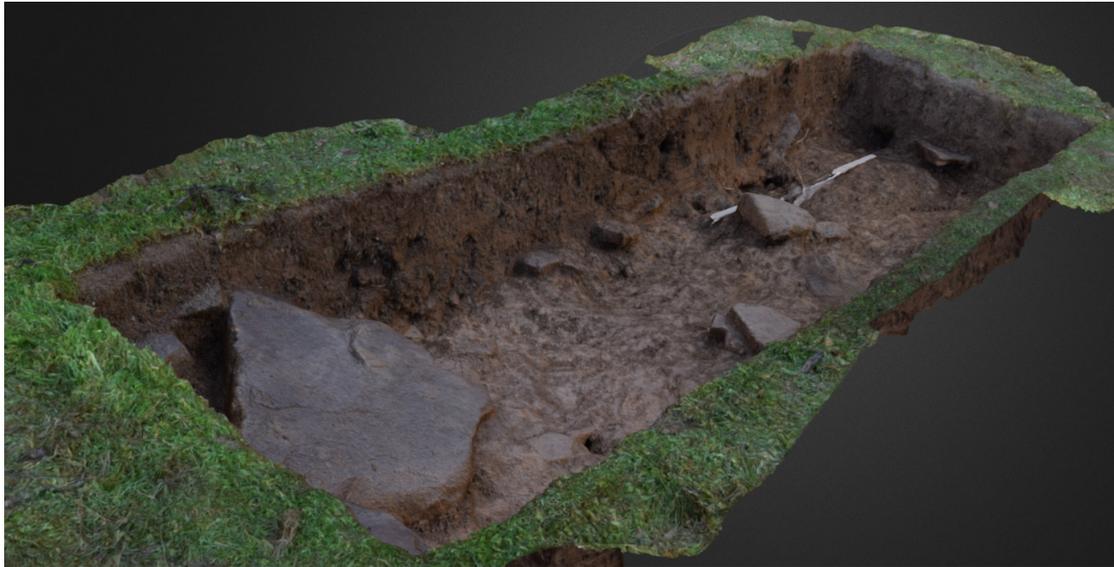


Figure 10  
Photogrammetric representation of Trench D



Figure 11  
Trench D looking N showing large weathered stones lying on natural deposits

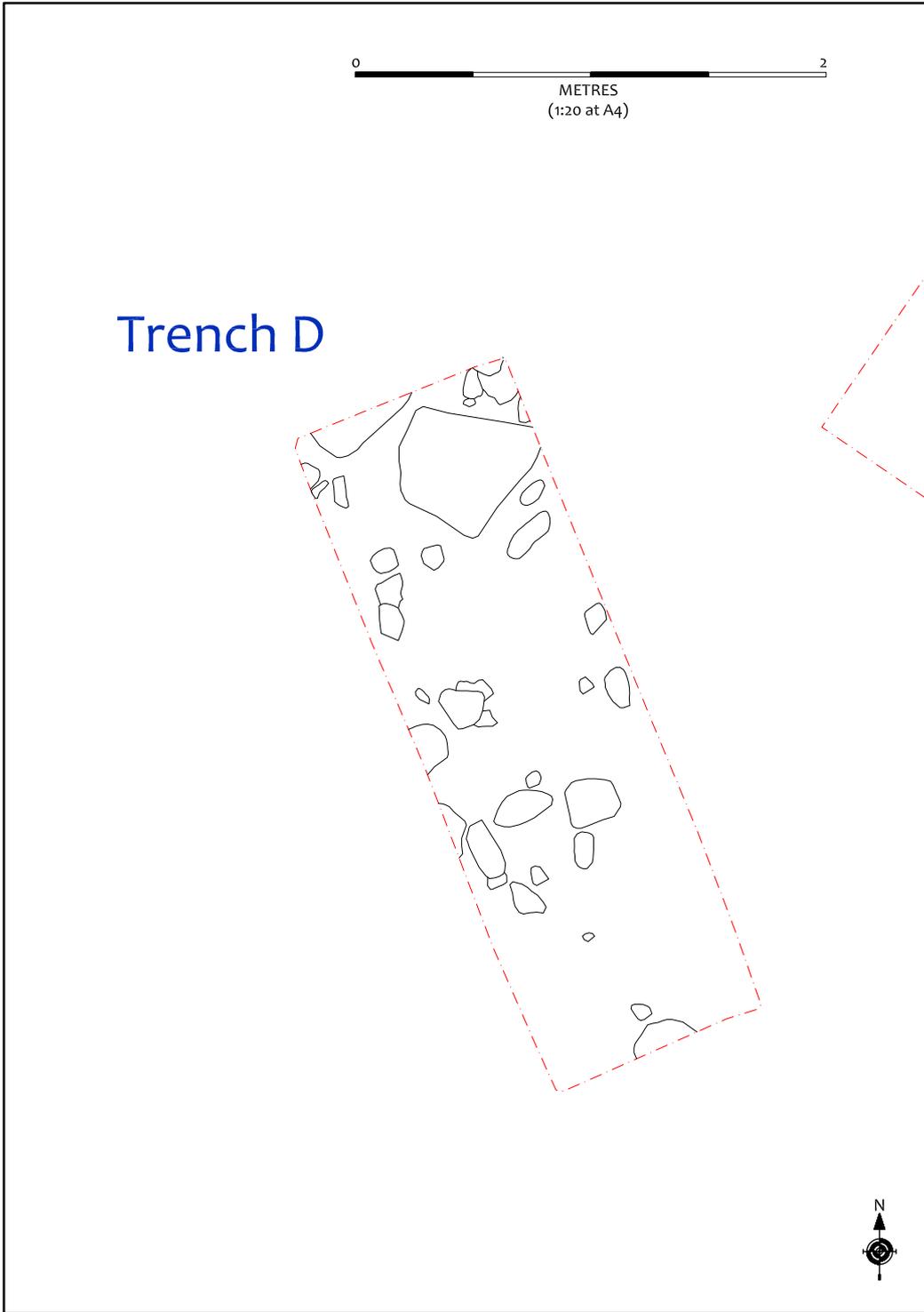


Figure 12  
Trench D plan

## **Finds**

Pottery finds in this trench came out of the subsoil [D2] context and were located at the northern end, only two small sherds but interesting, 1x fine [thin well made] grey in colour with rim, sharp edges, 1x thicker in section, well abraded edges, rounded top edge but no rim, dark brown outer surface, dark grey centre. Also from this trench, and a good observational find by the diggers, 1x small [10mm] piece of worked chert or flint.

## **Interpretation**

The very large weathered stone lying on the natural deposits at the northern end of the trench together with the similar looking stone partly exposed in the northern edge of the trench could be indicative of building stone although their origin is unclear. They may be tumble from the enclosure wall north of the trench, but these two stones are lying on the natural 40cm down from ground level and so it is more likely that they form part of an embankment wall or foundation stones of a building.

This could indicate that this pasture platform south of the main settlement may have had another use other than pasture. With the confirmation from trench C test pit [C2] that the raised linear mound which appears to enclose this platform is a wall, a wall that has a southern and eastern edge, leading to the trackway [trench 14] onwards to the settlement, which does possibly suggest this area of pasture is linked to other activity on this site.

## **Suggestions for future work**

The objectives of this trench, carefully sited across a raised feature in this unexcavated area south of the main settlement, were to find evidence of occupation or midden spread. This trench contained two sherds of pottery, which could be midden spread from the main settlement although this area with its sloping gradient would mean gradual movement of the midden to the south. It is hoped more dating evidence will be found on the north side of this platform's southern enclosure wall, as were the finds located in trench C (on the enclosure side of the wall).

With the large weathered possible building stone also exposed could there be an indication of a structure here also, together with the presence of pottery. To gain a clearer picture of how this area of the site ties in with the main enclosures, an open area excavation starting from immediately south of trench 14 extending to the raised linear mounds identified as enclosure walls south and east and extend west to trench D is needed.

## **Trench E**

Evaluation trench E was chosen to investigate an interesting feature, a roundhouse type platform, which has a raised wall edge with stonework visible through the turf. When the pasture grass was short it appeared circular, approximately 7m in diameter, while on a LIDAR image it appears squarer with rounded corners.

Its position outside and east of the main western settlement area and immediately south of, but outside the eastern enclosure area, marks it out as an unusual solitary platform. From the initial surface observation the northern and eastern edges appear to be built into the eastern enclosure embankment, while the western and southern edges appear to have been built up.

A trench size of 5m x 2m was set out, aligned N/S starting at the approximate centre of the feature and then radiating due south for 5m. This hopefully would expose any possible floor, plus the inside and outside detail of the southern wall.

Following the removal of the turf [by spade] the trench position was recorded by GPS. The exposed topsoil [E1] was removed by trowel, but because of the depth of soil in the northern section of the trench (i.e. the centre of feature) spades were also carefully used, and trowelling only on the exposed stonework/rubble/wall [E3] south of the trench.

The northernmost 3m section of the trench had the deepest quantity of topsoil 24cm running to 10cm over the stone wall [E3]. Within this topsoil [E1] two sherds of pottery were found. The topsoil had a dark brown clayey silt texture with only the occasional small rounded stones, below this lay a slightly lighter subsoil deposit [E2] again deepest at the north end of the trench at 37cm but this time extending only as far as the northern edge of the south wall tumble/rubble [E3]. This too had a clayey silt texture, lighter brown with a yellowish hue, inclusions larger, possible walling stones, although some irregular/angular in shape. The [E2] subsoil, slightly more compacted, was carefully excavated with trowel and spade, mainly from the north end of the trench first, and from this northern end, as the subsoil was removed appeared flat stones/floor, and the broken remains of a pot base with some sides pieces all with crisp edges.

Once [E2] subsoil layer had been removed, a clear area of flagged floor/surface [E5] was exposed, this was made up of sandstone slabs, one large approx. 40x30cm, but mainly smaller in size 30x20cm, very irregular in shape These were not that well laid to each other with smaller flat stones filling gaps between larger stones. The larger of the flagstones were at the most northern end of the trench and appeared to dip towards the northwest corner. As the flags extend south they become smaller and not as well laid. The area covered by [E5] extends 1.5m south [from north end of trench] and fully across the trench width (2m). The flags appear in colour as oranges/yellow/browns when wet, with a distinct hint of a red tinge to the most southern edge flags. The flags appear to continue east with stone rubble [E3]? laying on top and they also appear to extend west, slightly dipping below horizontal with clear stone free [E2] above. Interestingly the flagged area does not extend the full length of the trench, the total length from the north end of trench is 1.5m where it stops. The next 1.5m (middle area of the trench) running up to the northern edge of the southern wall/rubble [E3] appears as a compacted surface [E7] grey/brown with dark yellow hue, which had also a thin covering of a ash like layer/deposit [E6] which was grey in colour with a fine/smooth texture.

The western edge of this middle area [E6] and [E7] appears to be a compacted section of a rough cobbled surface [E4] 70x60cm, set in to the compacted surface [E7]. It appears to run up to and possibly under the south wall rubble [E3] although

this is difficult to determine and would need a trench extension west to reach any firm conclusion.

The most southerly 2m end of the trench is made up of what would have been a sturdy embankment wall identified as [E3] with compacted rubble/tumble of the centre section of the wall, with the outer edge clearly defined and comprised of very large boulders [E8] packed in position firmly with two courses clearly visible, and the slight curve defining a circular structure. The trench would have to be extended south, east and west to truly determine that these are the foundation stones of a wall edge. The only unclear edge is the inner portion of the wall, it could be still within the rubble [E3], or it could also have been robbed out and only by extending the trench could this be determined with any certainty.

A discussion was had as to whether we should extend this trench to help make sense of contexts [E3] to [E8], but on reflection the evaluation of this round feature had been achieved, the excavation had exposed a flagged surface and sturdy enclosure wall. Only by returning to this feature and reopening as a larger area excavation will the structure be clearly seen and its relationship to the site determined.

With the trench now cleaned back, it was photographed, recorded in plan at 1:20 but not drawn in section, levels taken, before being backfilled and the turf replaced.

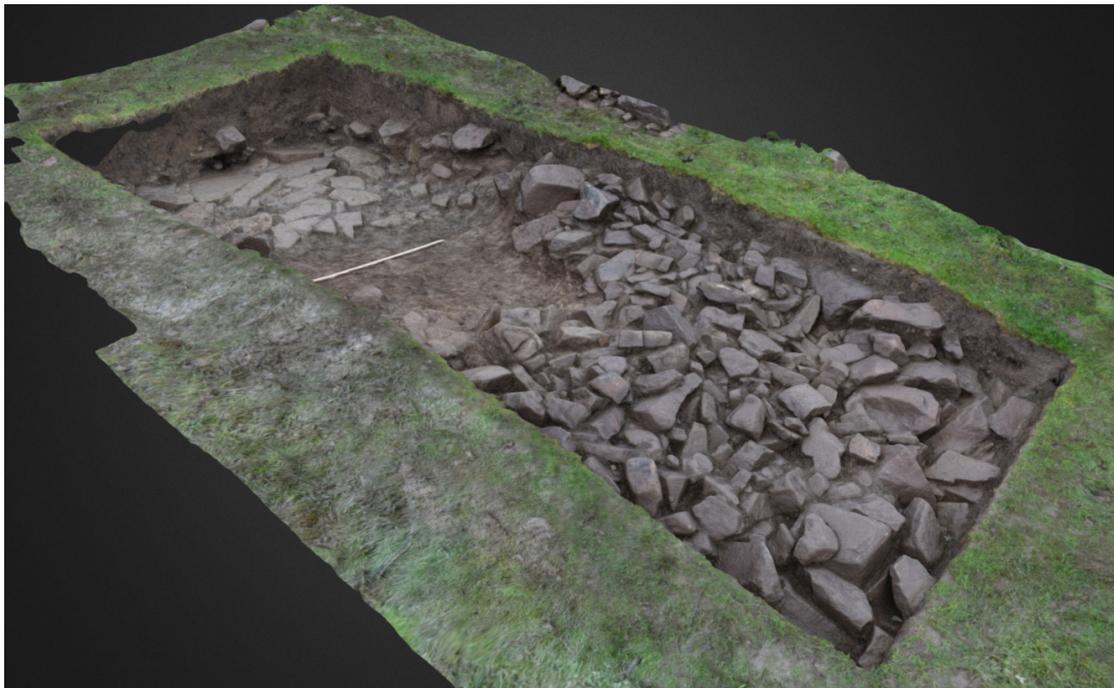


Figure 13  
Photogrammetric representation of Trench E



Figure 14  
Southern aspect of Trench E showing possible wall and tumble



Figure 15  
Northern aspect of Trench E showing of floor flagging

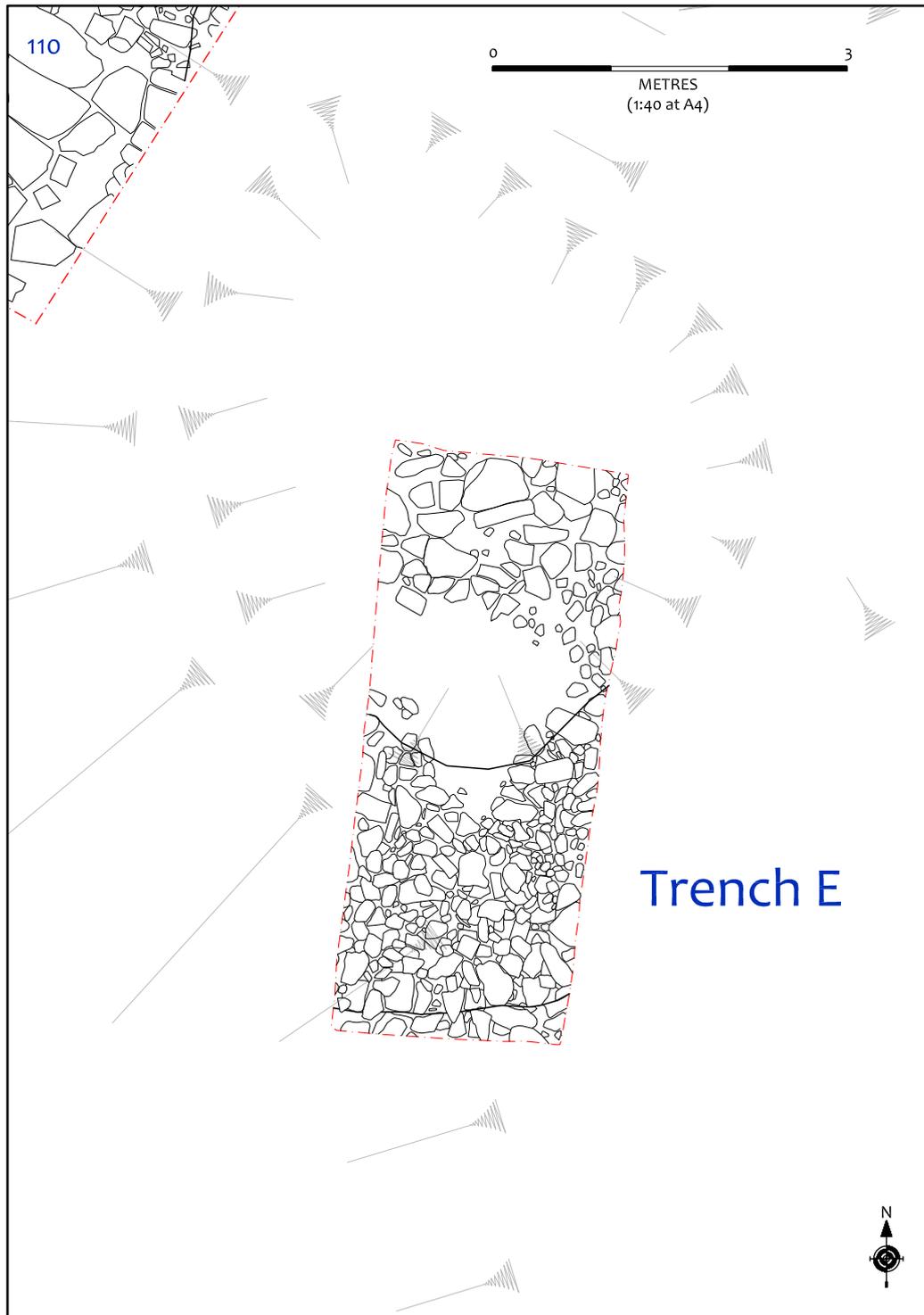


Figure 16  
Trench E plan

## **Interpretation**

It was hoped we would expose a floor of some type, and so we were not disappointed, but the cleaned back trench base created a few questions. The exposed flagged floor suggests a working platform of some sort, although the flags of this feature are not as well laid and are smaller in size to the ones exposed in trench B, and for that matter, represent the poorest ones seen to date compared to all of the past trenches on this site. It was interesting to note how the flags did not fully cover the trench base but stopped short by 1.5m leaving a compacted subsoil floor area that abutted what is possibly the inner edge of the southern wall.

There is a suggestion of a stone surface within this compacted subsoil floor which could be a rough cobbled surface, or part of a structure, but because it is closely aligned with the inner edge of the south wall tumble and west edge of the trench, its purpose is unclear.

What is clear however, is the well built sturdy foundation stones that define the outer edge of the south/south west curving wall. These are large boulders packed in place to form the base of what would have been the outer wall of this circular feature, well engineered to be built up from the sloping gradient to form a level platform.

This circular feature continues to intrigue, its position is seemingly outside of the large enclosure, but on closer investigation of the surface features it appears to have its northern edge built into the bank of the enclosure. The deep subsoil removed from the northern two thirds of this trench, could be explained as gradual landslip fill where the southern wall acted as a dam creating the build up or because of the quantity of large stones removed from within this layer of subsoil, and the lack of any good walling stone amongst the south wall which is mainly compacted rubble [E3] possibly wall fillers. Had this feature fallen out of use, the good walling stones removed, the platform then backfilled with subsoil and poor walling stone, followed by the final covering of top soil over time.

## **Suggestion for future work**

Larger open area excavation needed to fully explain this structure, but this open area must also overlap the southern edge of the neighbouring northern enclosure, as this will hopefully explain how and possibly when it evolved.

## **Trench F**

Trench F was chosen to investigate the area immediately west of Trench 14 opened in the summer of 2014. This is in the southeastern corner of the western enclosure and this particular area had a strong response from the geophysics survey. This was not unexpected as this was the possible southern and eastern corners of the enclosure wall and tumble would have been expected. However, the geophysics response indicated a dense spread of stone work that possibly indicated a building.

As the report of 2014 concluded, within trench 14 there was no obvious building as such but a clear line of the southeastern outer edge curve of the enclosure wall was exposed. This headed north but had no clear wall terminus and running parallel with this eastern enclosure wall was another sturdily built wall running N/S and in-between the 2m wide track. At the northern end of both these walls lay a compact cobbled surface heading north and west.

With trench 14 exposing an interesting trackway, wall and cobbling it was decided to open a 5m x 2m trench with the starting point a 1m overlap of the western edge of trench 14 and then running west for 4m, parallel with the enclosure southern wall. By keeping the trench north of the southern wall top to hit the inner area of the enclosure, by overlapping and therefore opening up the west edge of trench 14, it was hoped to expose the eastern wall edge [I407] of the enclosure.

Following the de-turfing by spade, and the recording of the trench corners by GPS, removal of the topsoil [F1] was by trowel and spade. Working first from the east end of the trench heading west, clearing the known backfill of trench 14, this extended to 1.5m in length by the full 2m width of the trench and exposed the enclosure wall edge foundation stones [I407]. This was confirmed by reference to the trench 14 plan drawing and overhead photograph. Once west of the trench overlap and these stones the trench topsoil [F1] was managed more carefully, using a trowel and at the western end of the trench a spade and trowel.

This remaining length of the trench (3.5m) had a topsoil covering ranging in depth from 30cm at the west to 20cm in the east, dark brown, firm, clayey silt. As this was gradually cleared large walling stones [F2] with good straight edges 30-40cm in size, started to be exposed, although they exhibited no defined features but appeared as just tumble with infill rubble. Once cleared of topsoil this appeared more as a possible enclosure wall tumble and spread, filling the majority of the 2m central area of the trench. It was well compacted at the southern edge of the trench (this being the edge nearest the enclosure wall) with looser smaller stones near the northern edge of the trench. The most westerly end of the trench and the remaining 1.5 metres had fewer large walling stones and a deeper topsoil layer. This area of the trench was not fully excavated through the remaining topsoil, which was estimated to be deeper by another 10cm. Within this area several pieces of pottery were found representing a mix of different types, all though appear to be Romano British in period. It was decided not to continue this specific area further as the continuing soil depth, pottery, reduced building stone suggested an underlying feature but this coupled with the continuing poor weather, slippery conditions, and time constraints proved limiting factors.

One final area of the trench that also revealed a tantalising hint of something else that would now have to wait until another time, was evidence of a flagged floor/pavement [F3]. These 6 or possibly 8 flags ranging from 30cm to 50cm were found under the loose stones (part of [F2]) mentioned previously, at the northern edge and central area of the trench. Once these smaller loose stones were removed the flag stones lay underneath close to and continuing north under the trench edge, the area exposed being 1.5m along the trench edge by 0.5m. The flags did not appear to be that well laid, but the area seen was really too small to judge and it was uncertain as to whether it might be a pathway, yard, or house platform.

In view of the time remaining and weather conditions it was decided to only make a photographic record together with levels taken in all corners and on one foundation stone of the enclosure wall [1407].

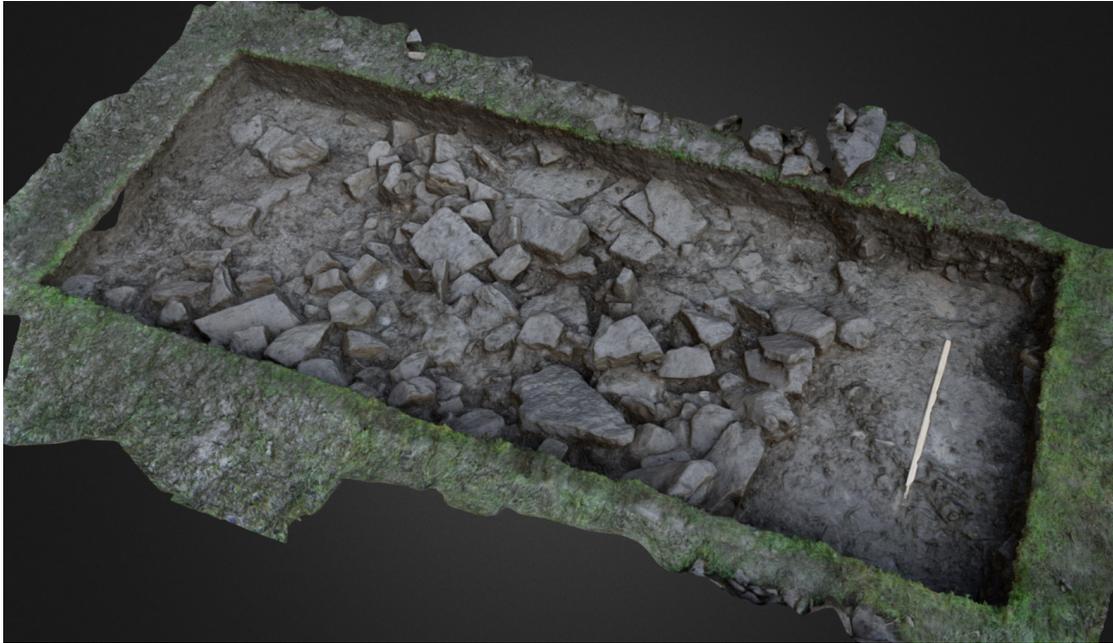


Figure 17  
Photogrammetric representation of Trench F

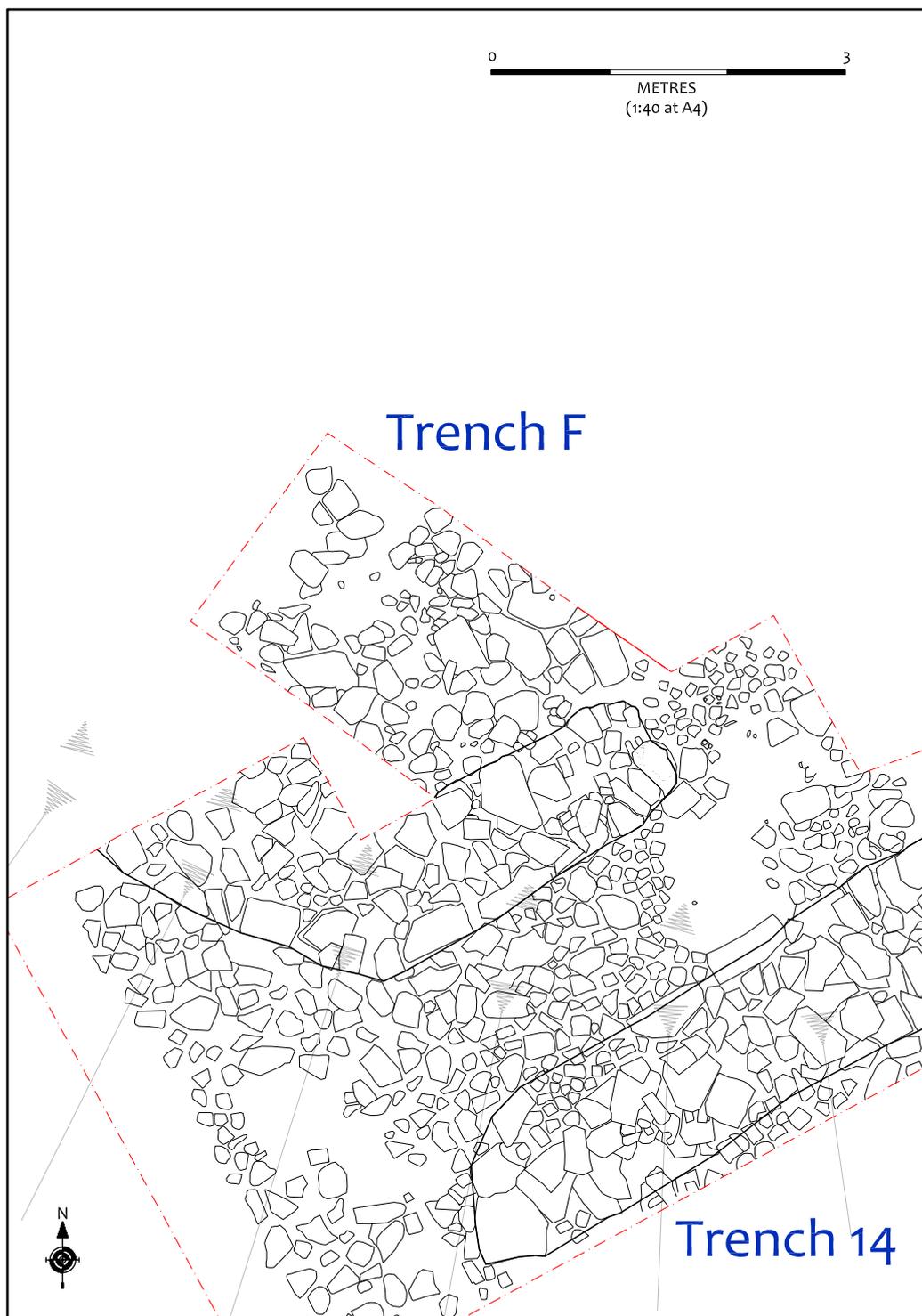


Figure 18  
Trench F plan – including the overlap into Trench 14 and highlighting the extent of the trackway (see also Appendix 2)

## **Interpretation**

The geophysics had identified an area of stone spread but whether that stone spread is all wall tumble from the southern enclosure wall, or tumble from a building inside the enclosure remains unclear. The walling stones appear to be compacted mainly in the central two metres of the trench, and a flagstone surface also being exposed hints toward other structures. No obvious end or inner edge of the enclosure wall was seen and to achieve that detail the trench would need to be larger, extending both north and south to expose the wall tumble in relation to its base, and confirm the function of the flag stones. The deeper top soil and fewer stones noticed in the west of the trench hints at a possible surface underneath and only by extending further west can this be determined.

## **Suggestions for future work**

This evaluation trench, along with the geophysics has identified an area west of trench 14 that has possible structures, other than tumble from the southern enclosure wall although it still is not clear how this ties in with the trackway/entrance found in trench 14. Only an open area trench exposing this entire southeastern corner can help to fully understand how the site has developed.

## **Levelling Data**

The ground level and depth at the corners of all trenches was determined by reference to the site datum. In addition the height of specific features within certain trenches was also determined and referenced to the trench plans.

It is acknowledged that certain difficulties are encountered when discussing this data. By themselves the relative heights above sea level of the trench corners does not necessarily add to our understanding of the site at this stage and in addition there may be discrepancies when making comparisons with recordings from earlier excavations.

The program of works outlined for 2017<sup>3</sup> proposes an open area excavation to investigate further the interrelationships of features previously encountered in individual trenches. These features will be leveled against a re-measured site datum to provide a more meaningful interpretation of the exposed archaeology.

The data from the trenches reported here is however retained in the site archive.

## Pottery Analysis

A brief, initial pottery assessment is given in table 2.

Context	Description	Date
[D2]	Black burnished ware dog dish	After 120 AD
[D2]	Poppy head beaker rim	Roman period
[C]	Mortarium ?Crambeck/Nene Valley	Late 4 <sup>th</sup> C
[C]	Shell tempered ware	4 <sup>th</sup> C
[E1]	Flanged bowl BB imitation	After 250 AD
[E2]	Shell tempered ware	Roman Period
[F1]	Flanged bowl BB imitation	After 120AD

Table 2 Pottery types and dates

This small assemblage is essentially similar in type and date range to the pottery previously recovered from the site and for the purposes of this report does not warrant further examination at this time.

Should more pottery be recovered during the 2017 excavations then a more comprehensive pottery report will be commissioned which will include the above sherds.

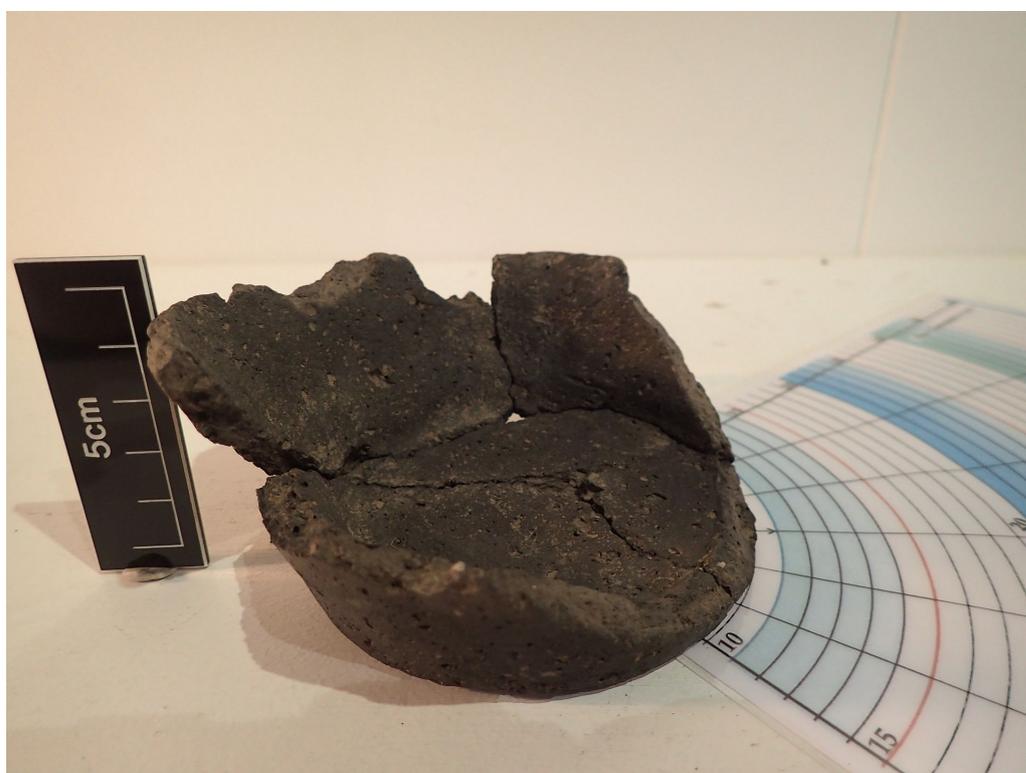
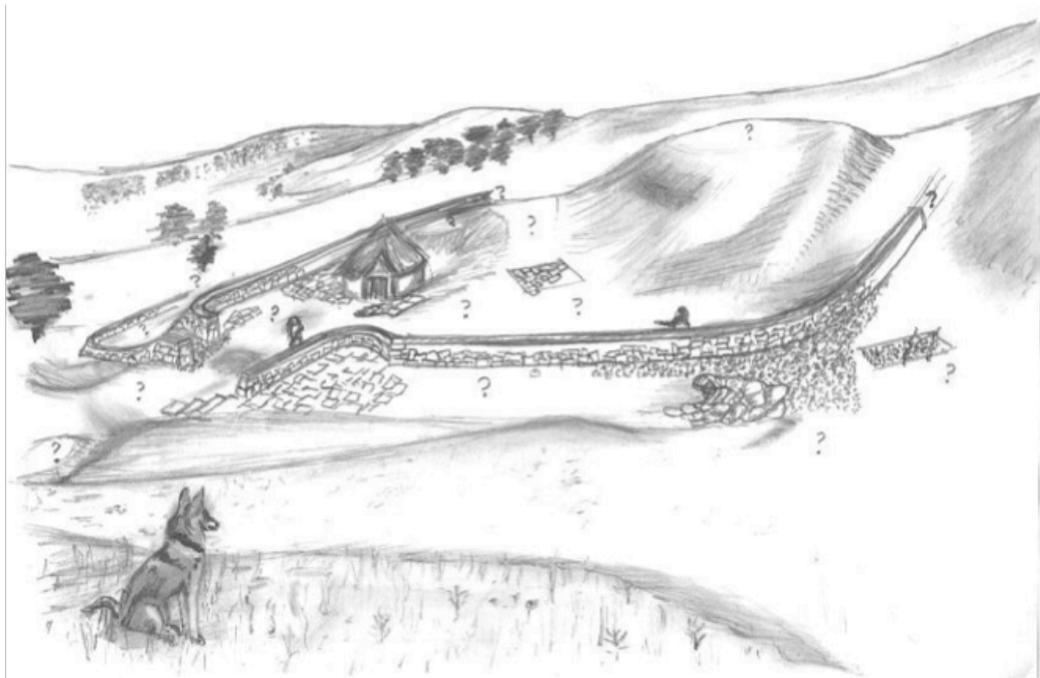


Figure 19  
Reconstructed shell tempered vessel from Trench E



Figure 20  
Mortarium rim from Trench C

## Now and then - an artist's perspective



## **Appendix I**

### **The Hagg - A Project Plan for 2016 and beyond**

#### **1. Introduction and Background**

SWAAG has been working at the Hagg site since 2009. It has undertaken topographic and geophysical surveys and has excavated several areas. Reports of the work carried out are on the SWAAG web site at [swaag.org](http://swaag.org).

There has not been any onsite activity since 2014 although work has progressed to draw together the results of previous year's excavations with the aim of developing a unified interpretation as a basis for further work.

SWAAG has also discussed site 103 and the excavation data with several archaeologists with experience of working in the Dales. Although there is no common view, there are several common themes:

- site 103 is Romano-British, and was probably abandoned towards the end of the 4th century AD;
- it is not clear whether the site is a settlement or a site for animal husbandry;
- there would appear to be evidence of settlement/human activity in adjacent fields and perhaps site 103 is only a relatively small part of a much larger complex;
- Historical protocols determined that excavation should not extend beyond the abandonment phase; those protocols should be examined in the next phase of work;
- SWAAG is recommended to return and continue investigations to try and further elucidate the nature and functions of the site.

Bearing those comments in mind, in 2016 SWAAG proposes to revisit site 103 and the surrounding areas, to survey them and to carry out excavations with a view to using the information so gained to inform a more widespread and extensive programme of work in 2017.

This Project Plan, describes the details of the 2016 proposed activities (the "Project") and has been approved by the SWAAG Trustees.

#### **2. Research Questions and Objectives**

The activities to be undertaken in 2016 will be directed towards providing information to answer the following questions. Although, it is recognised that as the 2016 work will be largely exploratory, it may not do other than provide

information which may be useful in formulating and directing a much larger effort in 2017 to answer these same questions:

- What was the purpose/function of site 103: a settlement, a site for animal husbandry, an industrial complex, some combination of all of those or something else entirely?
- Settlements are often associated with middens, can a midden(s) be identified on site 103 or elsewhere in the surrounding area.
- Was site 103 the focus of activities in the area or was it part of a much more extensive and widely spread complex?
- Is there any evidence of earlier settlements, (e.g. pre Romano-British) on the site and if so, how did they evolve to what was found at the abandonment phase.
- If exploratory work suggests settlement or other human activity in the surrounding area, would more extensive investigations be able to confirm those findings and also show how they relate to site 103.

The primary purpose of the project is to answer archaeological research questions. However, we must recognise that SWAAG is a voluntary, community, archaeology group and that members have varying levels of archaeological skills. Accordingly the Project will also strive to meet the following objectives and to provide SWAAG members with:

- training and experience in archaeological excavation methods and techniques, including digging, planning, recording, context recording and management, finds handling and management, etc;
- training and experience in geophysical and topographical surveying techniques.

### **3. Excavations, and Finds**

All excavations and the retrieval and processing of any finds will be carried out in accordance with standard archaeological procedures under the direction and supervision of a Site Archaeologist (the "SA").

This Project Plan incorporates a degree of flexibility to take account of factors such as ongoing results, the numbers of volunteers available and the weather. Because of those factors the planned evaluation trenches must be considered as tentative.

The approximate locations of the planned evaluation trenches are illustrated in Appendix 2 in relation to the previous excavations which have been carried out at site 103. Appendix 3 is a key to the evaluations trenches, in order of priority, and sets out the objective(s) of each trench.

The initial size of the evaluation trenches is unlikely to exceed 5 metres x 2 metres. A final decision on the size of each trench will be taken following an on-site inspection.

In the event that, for whatever reason, it is not possible to open all of the evaluation trenches, the unopened remainder will be incorporated into the project plan for the 2017 excavations.

The evaluation trenches will be excavated by hand either to the top of the archaeological deposits, or the natural substrate, whichever is observed first. Trenches will be subsequently cleaned and all features investigated and recorded as deemed appropriate by the SA.

During fieldwork the following percentages of features will normally be excavated:

- stake-holes: 100%
- post-holes: 50%
- pits up to 1.5metre diameter: 50%
- pits over 1.5metre: 25% but with full profile excavated
- linear features up to 5metre in length: 20%
- linear features over 5metres in length: up to10%,
- linear features: all intersections and terminus areas to be investigated
- human burials: 100%

Guidance must be sought from the SA before excavating such features.

During fieldwork, turf, soil and stone will be stored in separate piles adjacent to the trenches but not impinging on the areas to be excavated. Upon completion of fieldwork, trenches will be backfilled and the ground surface reinstated as close as reasonably possible to its original profile.

All excavated contexts will be recorded in plan and section and recorded on stratigraphic matrices. Plans and sections will be drawn at appropriate scales (generally 1:10 or 1:20). The excavations will be accurately tied into the OS national grid and accurately levelled relative to OS datum, using traditional survey techniques.

A comprehensive digital photographic record of the excavation will be made. The record will include 'people shots' of excavations in progress as well as

standard shots. All images will be retained in the site archive, with an appropriate selection included within the project report.

A comprehensive daily diary will be maintained for the overall site as well as for each excavation site. In addition to site and excavation details the diaries will include details of personnel present each day and the different tasks undertaken each day by each volunteer. The SA shall be responsible for appointing people on a daily basis to complete the diary entries.

All finds will be retained and recorded by context. The SA will undertake any necessary emergency first aid to finds; if further conservation is required this will be done according to the recommendations of appropriate specialists. No finds will be discarded prior to post-excavation assessment.

During and after the excavation, all recovered artefacts will be stored in appropriate conditions to ensure minimal deterioration and loss of information.

Any material from secure contexts deemed potentially suitable for scientific analysis will be recovered and stored in appropriate conditions. Advice regarding scientific analysis will be sought from appropriate experts.

It is thought most unlikely that human remains will be encountered at this site. However, should bones of any type be encountered, all excavations in the vicinity should stop and guidance sought from the SA.

#### **4. Surveying**

Geophysical (resistivity and magnetometry) and topographic (e.g. GPS) surveys will be carried out as appropriate. The sites to be surveyed will be identified following walkovers of the areas but are expected to include the field to the northwest of site 103 and the wood to the north of site 103. The surveying may be carried out at times other than those reserved for the excavation work.

#### **5. Post Excavation, Archiving and Report Production**

The fieldwork programme will be followed by an assessment of finds and samples under the guidance of the SA. All finds and samples will be assessed for their potential for further analysis and conservation/storage requirements. Finds deemed not worthy of retention will be discarded at this point. All retained finds will be cleaned, marked, photographed and/or drawn, and bagged for long-term storage.

Specialists may be called on, as necessary, to examine, process and assess excavated finds and samples.

All finds belong to the land owner. Following assessment of the finds, and subject to the agreement of the landowner the finds will be stored locally.

Following completion of the excavation and any analyses, the excavation work together with the results of the finds analysis and sample analyses, if any, will be promptly written up in a comprehensive report. Copies of the report will be lodged with OASIS, archived at the Swaledale Museum, Reeth and placed on the SWAAG web site.

The matter of an archive for any finds from this 2016 excavation will be considered as part of the project plan for the more extensive 2017 excavation. Possible local archives are, the Swaledale Museum, Reeth; the Yorkshire Museum, Richmond; and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Museum, Hawes.

## **6. Supervision and Management of the Project.**

The excavations, surveying, and all activities associated with them will at all times be under the guidance and direction of the Supervising Archaeologist (“SA”). Changes to the scope of an excavation or any procedure must not be made without first securing the agreement of the SA.

Members of a SWAAG Steering Committee will be responsible for all support activities:

- Project Manager and liaison with land owner - Phillip Bastow
- Logistics - Rob Nicholson/Rod Flint
- Surveying - Mike Walton
- Finds - Rob Nicholson
- Staffing, Communications and H&S - Andrea Dixon
- Project Plan - David Brooks
- Budget - Mike Keenan

## **7. Health and Safety**

H&S safety on the site is paramount and it is the responsibility of everyone on the site to work in a safe manner and to look out for the safety of their co-workers.

A risk assessment has been carried out and will be circulated to all who will work on the site. In addition a comprehensive health and safety induction will be given by the SA to all persons on the site at project start up. Further safety briefings will be given by the SA to anyone who missed the initial briefing, as they arrive on site.

The SWAAG Safety Policy (see the SWAAG web site) will be followed. The policy will be freely available on the site and all persons working on the site must, before they begin work, sign a declaration stating that they have read and understand the SWAAG Safety Policy.

SWAAG maintains comprehensive insurance through Insignia Underwriting. The policy covers all of the activities in the Project Plan and all people, working on site, whether SWAAG members or not. A copy of the Policy Schedule, is attached Appendix 1.

The SA will be covered by his/her own insurance.

Anyone refusing to comply with the Safety Policy or this Project Plan will be asked to leave the site.

## **8. Training**

SWAAG is a community archaeology group made up entirely of volunteers. Some members of the group have rudimentary knowledge and experience of archaeological techniques, other members have none. Members of the public may also participate in the dig and it is assumed, until proven otherwise, that they have little or no knowledge and experience of archaeological techniques.

It is important that all participants in the dig are offered training and experience in the archaeological techniques appropriate to this dig, in order that they may participate fully and effectively. Also the training and the skills acquired by participants can be regarded as an important part of the heritage of the project.

The training will be offered on site during the dig and will be provided by the SA as part of his/her scope of work.

To supplement the on site training all participants will, before the start of the dig, be provided with:

- An electronic copy of this Project Plan; and
- An electronic copy of a booklet called “Archaeological Recording Practices: guidelines for archaeological excavation and recording techniques” published by the Northumberland National Park.

Participants are also encouraged to visit the following web site:

[www.jigsawcambs.org](http://www.jigsawcambs.org)

where, under the tab resources/downloads, there are additional user guides which participants may find useful.

## **9. Site “rules”**

The site will be open to members of SWAAG.

Visitors may, subject to the agreement of the Project Manager and SA, participate in the activities. Visitors are not required to pay a fee but will be encouraged to make a donation to SWAAG; the suggested donation is £5/day

Children 18 years of age and under are welcome on the site and to participate in the activities providing they are at all times accompanied by a responsible adult. The SWAAG policy regarding minors is on the SWAAG web site, will be available on site and must be signed by the responsible adult.

The site will be open from 7th to 16th October and the normal working hours will be from 9.30am to 4pm, daily.

All participants and visitors to the site must sign in on arrival and notify the SA of their presence, and sign out on departure.

Alcohol and non-medicinal/recreational drugs are not permitted on the site.

Dogs may only be on site with the prior approval of the Project Manager and must be restrained at all times.

## **10. Supervising Archaeologist - terms of reference**

The Supervising Archaeologist ("SA") will be an experienced archaeologist but may not be the same person each day. He/she will have the following responsibilities:

- There will be an SA on site each day between the hours of 9.30am to 4pm.
- In the event that the SA cannot be on site, he/she must make arrangements to enable the site to contact him/her for advice if needed.
- The SA will supervise and control all of the archaeological activities envisaged in this Project Plan.
- The SA must agree with the Project Manager (or his nominated deputy) any variations to the activities as set out in this Plan.
- As the site workers are expected largely to be volunteers with little or no previous experience of archaeology, the SA will be required to provide training and guidance as needed.
- The SA will provide support and advice to the post excavation finds management.

- The SA will provide input and editorial support to the writing of the excavation report.

## **11. Ownership and Permissions**

The land at the Hagg is owned and farmed by the Clarke family of Fremington, in Swaledale. The landowner has given specific permission for the work contemplated in the Project Plan to go ahead. The landowner has advised us that there are no requirements to approach any other authorities for permission to excavate.

The site is not a scheduled monument.

Finds from the site are owned by the land owner.

This Project Plan has been lodged with the Senior Historic Environment Officer of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

## **12. Budget and Financial Authorities**

The SWAAG trustees have allocated a budget for the project of £2500, before any costs for finds conservation and analyses, and any samples analyses. Funds to carry out those activities must be the subject of separate applications to the Trustees.

Control of the budget has been delegated to the Project Manager, who may, at his discretion, delegate further but only to members of the SWAAG Steering Committee for this Project.

All expenditures should be supported by receipts and presented promptly to the SWAAG Treasurer.

All donations, or any other income, shall be counted and recorded on a daily basis by two SWAAG members and promptly passed to the SWAAG Treasurer.

At the close of the project, the Project Manager shall provide the SWAAG Treasurer with a statement of the Project's expenditure and income.

DB15September2016

## Appendix 1. Insurance Policy Schedule

### Policy Schedule



Insurance for Charitable, Commercial and Voluntary Heritage/Archaeological Businesses

Policy Number: **318432**  
Date: **23 June 2016**

Name of Insured: **Swaledale & Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group**  
Risk Address: **2 Hetton Garth, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 5HP**  
Renewal Date: **6<sup>th</sup> July**  
Period of Insurance: **6<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

Premium: £ **629.00**  
Insurance Premium Tax: £ **59.76**  
Total Premium: £ **688.76**

	Property			Buildings	Liabilities			Money	FG	BI	PA
	A1	A2	A3	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Own Equipment	Other Property	Hired in Plant	Buildings	Employers	Public & Products	Charity & Charity Trustees	Money	Fidelity Guarantee	Business Interruption	Personal Accident
<b>Excess</b>	£100	£250	£250	Nil*	Nil	Nil*	Nil	£100	£100	Nil	Nil
<b>Sum Insured</b>	£5,057	£29,281	Not Insured	Not Insured	£10 million	£5 million	£250,000	Not Insured	Not Insured	Not Insured	Not Insured

#### Notes and Endorsements

##### Code A1 – Own Equipment

- Epson Digital Projector & Screen - £270;
- Panasonic Toughbook CF52 Mk5 - £2,274;
- Fujitsu Lifebook & Software - £1,596;
- Snapsan SV600 Scanner - £488;
- HP 250 G4 Laptop & Case - £429.

##### Code A2 – Other Property

- GPS Promark 120 Kit - £4,434;
- Bartington Gradiometer GRAD601-2 Dual Sensor - £13,719;
- Geoscan Research RM85 Advanced Resistance Meter - £11,128.

#### Claims

Cross Keys House, 22 Queen Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 1EY  
+44 (0) 1722 597980 Email: [admin@insigniaunderwriting.co.uk](mailto:admin@insigniaunderwriting.co.uk)

#### Nature of Business

- Archaeology, Landscape & Geophysical Surveying, Geological & Local Botany Study.

#### Warranties

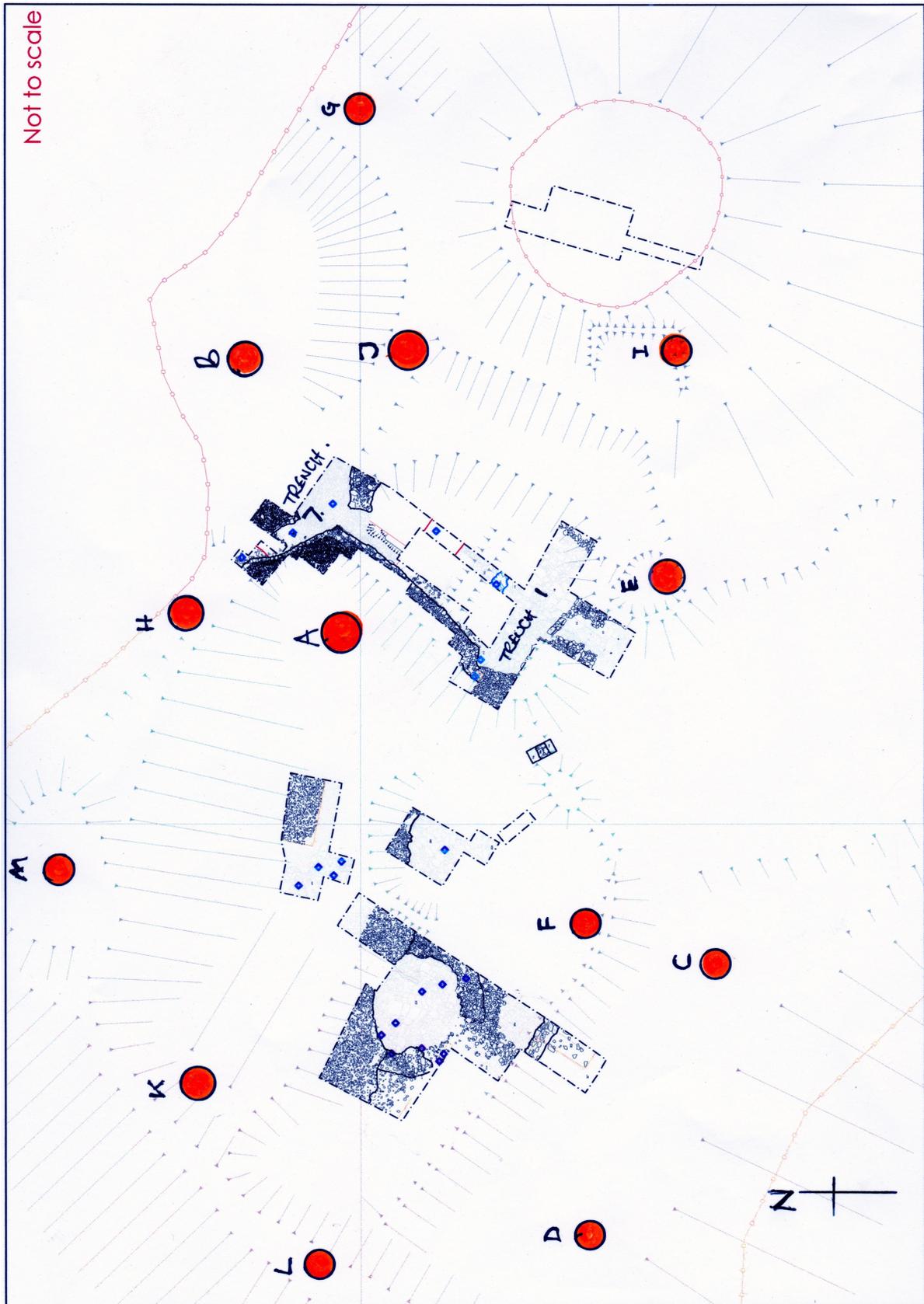
- the maximum trench depth to be no more than 2 metres;
- the maximum working height to be no more than 3 metres.

**Geographical Limits** – Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man and any Country endorsed above.

Insignia Underwriting is a trading name of Barbarus Ltd registered in England & Wales under Company number 08693210 who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority under firm reference number 617848.

Schedule V 0.01

## Appendix 2. Site Plan showing the location of the Evaluation Trenches



Please note trench labels A and B are transposed in the above

### Appendix 3. Key to the Evaluation Trenches

Trench Label	Trench Objectives
B	to assess platform/depression to embankment western edge
A	to assess if cobbled surface of trench 7 continues North/East
C	to assess lower platform wall/ track way
D	to assess edge of lower platform/ track way
E	to assess platform [this possible feature may, depending on numbers of volunteers available, be fully excavated, by extending from the Eastern edge of Trench 1]
F	to assess cobbled surface, buildings
G	to assess if a track way exists
H	to assess direction of previous discovered enclosure wall and track way
I	to assess feature /earthwork. Is it linked to the settlement
J	to assess if it is a track way/cobbled area as seen in trench 7
K	to assess outer bank wall /entrance /track way
L	to assess outer bank wall/ construction
M	to assess if platform to settlement or natural.



## **References**

1. West Hagg Site 103 Swaledale, North Yorkshire archaeological excavation, Durham University 2014
2. Swaledale Big Dig (2014 - 2015) Final Report May 2016. Available to read at SWAAG.org
3. The Hagg – A Project Plan for 2017. Available to read at SWAAG.org

## **Acknowledgements**

SWAAG continue to be grateful to David Clarke and his family for allowing us access to their land and their continued support for the Hagg project.

Miles Johnson, Senior Heritage Officer at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and his predecessor Robert White have been constant wise counsel and sounding boards over the years.

Eniko Hudak Roman Pottery Specialist from Pre-Construct Archaeology kindly provided the pottery assessment.

Our supervising Archaeologist Tony Liddell has impressed us all with his knowledge and patience when dealing with a bunch of amateur archaeologists in the Northern Dales. Tony also produced the photogrammetric 3D trench images.

Finally, thanks are due to all the members of SWAAG and visitors who took part in the meetings, planning, excavation, surveying, interpretation debates and writing up - it wouldn't have happened without you.

