

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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WINDY HILL QUARRY EXTENSION, EGGLESTON, BARNARD CASTLE, CO DURHAM

prepared for

F & R Jackson

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WINDY HILL QUARRY EXTENSION, EGGLESTON, BARNARD CASTLE, CO. DURHAM ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by NAA during April 2021, on land to the southeast of Windy Hill Quarry, County Durham. The evaluation comprised 12 strip trenches and was undertaken in response to a proposed extension of the existing quarry.

An earlier landscape survey of the area directly to the south as part of a community initiative (NAA 2016) and desk-based research carried out prior to the evaluation (NAA 2021) had highlighted the possibility for the survival of archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. However, an evaluation for an earlier extension of the quarry had highlighted only a post-medieval lynchet (NAA 2017).

The results of the current evaluation showed that archaeological remains were limited to the southern half of the proposed development area, in Trenches 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. They revealed the course of an east-to-west field boundary that was made up of sections of ditch and potential trackway. The boundary delineated a southern field that contained a regimen of east-to-west furrows that appeared to continue into the adjacent field to the east, where they remained visible as earthworks. No dating evidence was recovered from the boundary or from the furrows, but their absence from the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1859 indicates that they were no longer in use by that point.

A section of a later north-to-south stone track was also recorded in Trench 7, appearing to respect the later eastern field boundary that would have superseded that running from east to west., defining northern and southern fields This trackway in turn was covered by a mound of soil that survived as an earthwork and over which the extant drystone wall running along the eastern edge of the field was constructed.

The only finds recorded during the evaluation related to a deliberate dump of stony material at the western edge of the proposed development area, visible in Trench 11. The deposit contained a substantial quantity of late post-medieval pottery sherds and glass, which had potentially been brought in from elsewhere with the stone to form a rough surface overlying the field.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation consisting of excavation of 12 trial trenches on land proposed for an extension to Windy Hill Quarry, Eggleston, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham (NGR: NZ 0228 2157; Fig. 1). The works were planned to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the development area.
- 1.2 The report has been produced by Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd on behalf of F & R Jackson Ltd. It is to be submitted to Durham County Council Archaeology Section (DCCAS).

2.0 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Location and topography

2.1 Windy Hill Quarry is located approximately 6km north of Barnard Castle, to the north of the B6278, that leads north-westwards from Barnard Castle to Eggleston (Fig. 1). The proposed development area (PDA) lies to the south-east of the existing quarry (Fig. 2). The extension area is an irregularly shaped field of c.1.4ha, bounded to the south-west by the B6278, to the east and north by drystone walls, and is currently under pasture. The quarry stands on a plateau at approximately 302m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), the land slopes downwards to the north-east

Geology and soils

2.2 The solid geology of the quarry comprises Carboniferous sandstone of the Stainmore Formation; sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 313 to 326 million years ago (BGS 2021); there are no superficial deposits recorded in the area (*ibid*.). The soils in the vicinity are mapped as well-drained loams of the Rivington 2 association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983; Jarvis *et al.* 1984, 262–5), with slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged loams of the Brickfield 3 association alongside the road to the south (*ibid.*, 123–6).

3.0 SUMMARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 No heritage assets (archaeological sites or findspots) have been documented previously within the PDA or within a 1km radius of the site. The following archaeological background is taken from a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted prior to the current evaluation (NAA 2021).

Early prehistoric

- 3.2 In the wider context of upper Teesdale, Palaeolithic and Mesolithic activity is indicated by findspots of artefacts. A site at Towler Hill, Lartington, close to the River Tees near Barnard Castle, c.4km south of Windy Hill, produced an assemblage of Palaeolithic and early Mesolithic lithic material; more early Mesolithic material has been found further up the dale at Staple Crag near Middleton-in-Teesdale (Coggins *et al.* 1989). Findspots and sites of a later Mesolithic character are more numerous. Closest to Windy Hill, Mesolithic flint has been found on the summit of Knott Hill, and at Blacton Beck, respectively c.2.5km south and c.4km north of the current site.
- 3.3 Neolithic lithics and a quartzite mace head were recovered at Blacton Beck. However, apart from examples of rock art (Brown and Brown 2008), no other indisputably Neolithic sites have been identified in the area (Coggins 1984, 16; Petts and Gerrard 2006, fig. 13).
- 3.4 A considerable number of carved rocks sites have been recorded within middle Teesdale. Those closest to Windy Hill include examples at Cotherstone, c.1.5km to the south-west, and Hawkesley Hill c.1.75km to the south-east, which were the subject of a community survey and excavation in 2015 (NAA 2016; Robinson 2016).
- 3.5 Bronze Age sites are more common within upper Teesdale, especially on open moorland where later farming has not had an impacted on the upstanding remains of round barrows, burnt mounds, field systems and settlements. Sites surviving on moorland at Bracken Heads and Lindon Edge, respectively c.1.75km north and c.4km north-east of Windy Hill, suggest wider utilisation of the area during this period. A cluster of cup-and-ring marked stones and clearance cairns was recorded at Bracken Heads (Brown and Brown 2008, fig. 70); a cairnfield, wall remnants, a burial cist and rock art were identified at Lindon Edge (*ibid*.).

Iron Age and Roman

3.6 Few sites attributable to the Iron Age have been recorded in middle and upper Teesdale (Petts and Gerrard 2006, fig. 19). It is likely, however, that the largely undated upstanding remains of fields, settlement enclosures and structures recorded within the well-preserved landscapes of upper Teesdale include at least some remains of this period (*ibid.*, 37). The earthworks of a promontory fort of possible Bronze Age and/or Iron Age date lie 2km to the south of Windy Hill, overlooking the River Tees opposite Cotherstone (Challis and Harding 1975). This site is a scheduled monument (National Heritage List No.1021113).

Roman

- 3.7 The nearest Roman period site is a native settlement at Knott Hill 3km to the south-east (incorrectly marked on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps as a deserted medieval village), which is a scheduled monument (National Heritage List No.1016612). A Roman road is thought to have run along Teesdale linking the Roman forts at Bowes and Binchester following the route of what is now the A67, and crossing the Tees at Barnard Castle where finds of Roman coins and pottery have been made.
- 3.8 Away from the road and the river crossing, few Roman period remains had previously been recorded close to Barnard Castle. However, in upper Teesdale the evidence suggests that by the Roman period, arable farming was more widespread and settlement sites were at lower altitudes than those of an earlier date (Coggins 1984, 92–3).

Medieval

- 3.9 It is likely that there was a late Anglo-Saxon settlement at Startforth, south of Barnard Castle, because the Manor of Startforth was establish by the late 10th century when it was part of the See of Durham lands pledged to the Earl of Northumberland (Page 1914). The Durham County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) for Marwood medieval village notes that the documented pre-Norman settlement was possibly located within the area now occupied by Barnard Castle, rather than at Knott Hill as recorded by the OS (see above). It is thought there are Anglo-Saxon farms yet to be identified in upper Teesdale (Coggins 1984, 94); however, at Simy Folds, to the west of Middleton-in-Teesdale, farmers in the 8th century seemed to have continued in much the same way as their predecessors of the previous 2000 years (*ibid*.).
- 3.10 In the later part of the medieval period, Windy Hill formed part of the farmland within the township of Marwood in the Parish of Gainford, and some elements of the medieval landscape survive. These include earthworks of broad medieval ridge-and-furrow agriculture including in fields around Knott Hill and also recorded during the recent survey work at Hawkesley Hill c.1.75km to the south-east of Windy Hill (NAA 2016).

Post-medieval and modern

3.11 The landscape within the area of the Windy Hill site has changed very little from that portrayed on the earliest detailed plans of the mid-19th century. These plans showed a predominately post-medieval enclosure landscape with a network of isolated farms, and the River Tees flanked by wooded banks as it is today. The land around Barnard Castle was enclosed during the mid-18th century. A large number of quarries or former quarries were depicted in the area on the First Edition OS map of 1859, including the current Windy Hill site which was marked as a slate quarry.

Previous investigation

3.12 Four trial trenches were excavated in 2017 in advance of the first stage of the quarry expansion, immediately to the north-west of the current PDA (NAA 2017). The only archaeological remains identified was a lynchet, with a shallow slot at its foot suggesting that it had built up behind a field boundary wall. The field boundary was recorded on the First Edition OS map of 1859 but had been removed prior to the Third Edition of 1924.

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Based on the results of the evaluation of the previous quarry extension (NAA 2017), the potential for significant archaeological remains to be present in the new area was deemed low. However, the desk-based research (NAA 2021) and localised landscape survey (NAA 2016) highlighted the possibility for unrecorded heritage assets of prehistoric to post-medieval date to be present within the PDA.
- 4.2 The key purpose of this evaluation was to provide a detailed record stating the presence or absence of any archaeological remains that would be adversely impacted and otherwise lost by the proposed quarry extension. The main objectives were to:
 - provide a detailed record of any archaeological remains present within the area of the development via pro-forma context sheets and digital photography;
 - recover and assess any associated structural, artefactual and environmental evidence in accordance with established methodologies (English Heritage 1995 and 2011, Watkinson and Neal 2001);
 - present the results of the archaeological works via an illustrated report and, if appropriate, to undertake further analysis and publish the results in a local, regional or national journal;

- deposit the results of the work with the DCC HER, the County Durham Archaeological Archives (CoDAA) and the Archaeology Data Service; and
- undertake a scheme of work that meets national and regional standards (Historic England 2015a; South Yorkshire Archaeology Service 2018).

5.0 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 A total of 12 evaluation trenches, each measuring 2m by 30m, were set out with GPS across the area of the PDA. The initial excavation of the trenches was conducted by a tracked excavator with spoil being stored in separate bunds 1m from the edge of each trench.
- 5.2 The trenches were excavated by machine to the natural geology or to a level at which archaeological features were encountered. Further excavation was conducted by hand.
- 5.3 The only archaeological features encountered during the evaluation were linear, and in each instance a 1m slot was excavated that represented around a 50% sample within the trench. The exception was a suite of post-medieval furrows, recorded in Trenches 8–11 at the southern edge of the PDA. These were recorded in plan within each trench and a sample slot excavated through two of the furrows in Trench 8 (Plate 3).
- 5.4 All evaluation trenches and archaeological features were recorded using digital photography and hand-drawn plans and sections to scale.
- 5.5 A paper record was created using pro-forma context sheets to document each evaluation trench and all archaeological features encountered.
- 5.6 A small representative assemblage of post-medieval pottery was collected and photographed, but not retained.
- 5.7 No environmental samples were collected.

6.0 **RESULTS**

6.1 Trenches 1–6 in the northern half of the PDA and Trench 12 along the southern boundary contained no archaeological features. All revealed a topsoil horizon (01) of 0.3–0.4m thick that had accumulated directly above the natural yellowish-brown stony clay (02). Outcrops of the underlying laminar sandstone bedrock were visible in places.

The trenches were photographed, but no further recording was deemed necessary. Their locations are plotted on Figure 2.

6.2 Trenches 7–11 contained archaeological features that are discussed individually below.

- 6.3 The trench was orientated north-west to south-east, its south-eastern end in proximity to the eastern field boundary of the PDA (Figs 2 and 3).
- 6.4 The topsoil horizon (**01**) had a maximum depth of 0.5m and in the majority of the trench had accumulated directly above the natural yellowish-brown stony clay (**02**). At the south-eastern end, however, the topsoil had accumulated above a 0.2m-thick subsoil horizon (**08**) that formed a visible, roughly circular, earthwork that could be seen continuing into the adjacent field. The existing drystone wall that defined the eastern field boundary had been constructed on top of this mound.
- 6.5 Two archaeological features that appeared to represent elements of post-medieval field boundaries were recorded beneath subsoil **08**.
- 6.6 One of these features was a north-to-south orientated trackway (06) and its surface comprised flat slabs of laminar sandstone up to 0.4m in length (Plate 1). The stone surface had been established on a 0.1m-high bank of mid-brownish-grey silty clay (07). From the limited expanse of the trackway visible in Trench 7, it appeared to be orientated along a similar alignment to the extant drystone wall, some 2m to the east and it probably represents an earlier definition of the same boundary.



Plate 1: Trench 7. Stone surface of north-to-south trackway.

6.7 Approximately 3m to the north-west of trackway 06 was an east-to-west orientated ditch (05) that was 1.8m wide and 0.4m deep (Plate 2). Its southern edge followed a moderate slope to the flat base, whereas the northern edge displayed a shallow ledge that shelved vertically to adjoin the base. Ditch 05 was initially filled by a 0.15m-thick primary colluvial deposit of yellow silty clay, that contained lenses of soft, bluish-grey silt (23). Above primary fill 23, a series of large sub-angular stone fragments had been deliberately placed along the northern, vertical edge of ditch 05 and the remainder of the feature infilled with a compact, greyish-brown clay (04).



Plate 2: Trench 7. Mid-excavation of ditch **05** showing large stones placed along the northern edge.

- 6.8 The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and was located in the south-eastern corner of the PDA (Fig. 2).
- 6.9 The topsoil horizon (**01**) was 0.2-0.3m thick and, when removed, revealed a regimen of east to west furrows (**24**), cutting the natural mixed yellowish-grey stony clay (**02**).
- 6.10 Four furrows were visible within the trench (Plate 3) with an average interval between them of 5m. Each had a wide, shallow profile, of up to 4m in width and an average depth of 0.3m. They were all filled by a dark, reddish-brown sandy clay that contained frequent stony inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks but no finds (**25**).



Plate 3: Trench 8. Regimen of east-to-west furrows (24), looking north-east.

- 6.11 Trench 9 was also orientated north-east to south-west and was located approximately30m north-west of Trench 8 (Fig. 2).
- 6.12 The topsoil horizon was up to 0.4m thick and when removed, revealed a series of four east-to-west furrows (24) belonging to the same regimen recorded in Trench 8 (Plate 4). Here too the furrows measured up to 4m in width, with a maximum depth of 0.3m, separated by an average interval of 5m. They also contained a comparable, sterile fill of dark reddish-brown sandy clay (25).

6.13 The furrows were again cut into the natural clay (**02**), which within Trench 9 was inconsistent, transitioning from yellowish-brown stony clay at the southern end to a dark greyish-brown boulder clay to the north.



Plate 4: Trench 9. Regimen of east-to-west furrows (24), looking south-west.

- 6.14 Trench 10 was orientated roughly north to south and located to the north-west of Trench9 (Figs 2 and 4).
- 6.15 Removal of the 0.25m-thick topsoil horizon revealed two east-to-west furrows belonging to regimen **24** and a post-medieval field drain, orientated north-east to south-west. The northern-most furrow (**11**) measured 2.2m in width and 0.34m in depth with

a shallow-sided profile comparable to those recorded in the previous trenches. It was infilled by a compact, dark reddish-brown silty clay (12) that contained stones and charcoal flecks and which was similar to the fills of the other furrows (25) within regimen 24.

6.16 Excavation of a 1m slot across furrow **11** revealed that it had been cut along the alignment of an earlier ditch (**13**), of which only the northern edge was visible. The northern edge followed a moderate slope to a rounded base and, from the available section, it can be extrapolated that ditch **13** would have been more than 1.3m wide and 0.5m deep. It had been filled by a single, colluvial deposit of mottled yellow and bluish grey silty clay (**14**) that contained small stones and flecks of charcoal but no finds.



Plate 5: Trench 10. East-facing section of furrow **11** and underlying ditch **13**.

- 6.17 Trench 11 was orientated north-east to south-west and was located north-west of Trench10, approximately 13m from the western limit of the PDA (Figs 2 and 4).
- 6.18 A 0.3m-thick topsoil horizon (**01**) had accumulated above the natural yellowish-brown stony clay at the south-western end of Trench 11, but to the north-west the topsoil

overlay a 0.15m-thick dark brown stony horizon (**22**) that was visible for approximately 15m and continued beyond the north-eastern end of the trench. As well as a substantial quantity of stone fragments, deposit **22** contained a large assemblage of post-medieval pottery.

6.19 Located centrally within Trench 11 and below deposit **22** was a series of intercutting, potentially linear, features that all appeared to follow the same east-to-west alignment (Plate 6).



Plate 6: Trench 11. West-facing section through intercutting features 9, 15, 18, 20.

6.20 The earliest of these features appeared to be a ditch (**09**) and a potential trackway (**18**). The northern edge was all that remained visible of ditch **09** and displayed a moderately sloping profile 0.5m in depth with vestiges of a rounded base. It was filled by a deposit of yellowish-brown clay with grey mottling (**10**). Conversely, it was the southern edge of potential trackway **18** that remained, which had a shallow, shelving profile that descended to a rounded base at a depth of 0.34m. Along the shelving edge and base of trackway **18** were laid a series of fragments of laminated sandstone to form a rough surface (Plate 7), on top of which had accumulated a compact mid-greyish-brown

deposit of stony, silty clay (**19**). The relationship between ditch **09** and potential trackway **18** is unclear due to later truncation by further cut features, but it is possible they are contemporary and outlined an early east-to-west field boundary defined by a parallel ditch and trackway.



Plate 7: Trench 11. East-facing section showing laminated sandstone fragments along the base of cut **18**.

- 6.21 Ditch 09 was subsequently recut by later ditch 15, of which the majority of the profile survived. The northern edge of ditch 15 was steep, while the southern edge followed a gradual slope ending in a narrow, rounded base. The primary fill of ditch 15 comprised a mottled deposit of yellowish-brown clay and grey silt (16), 0.15m thick, that contained small to medium-sized sub-angular stones and occasional charcoal flecks. Primary fill 16 was superseded by a loose, stony deposit of mid-bluish-grey silty clay (17), notable within which was a large, roughly triangular stone that had seemingly been deliberately placed along the northern edge of ditch 15.
- 6.22 The latest feature within the group was a second potential trackway (20). The form of 20 appeared to mirror that of 18, with a shallow, shelving southern edge, 0.8m wide,

that descended to a flat base along which stone had been set. The northern edge followed a moderately sloping profile, the overall dimensions of **20** being 1.7m in width and 0.3m maximum depth. The cut had been infilled primarily by flat and sub-angular fragments of sandstone within a loose matrix of dark brownish-grey silty clay (**21**). The area overlying the intercutting ditches and trackways was subsequently sealed by deposit **22** (see para. 6.18).

7.0 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The archaeological features encountered during the evaluation were concentrated at the southern end of the PDA, within Trenches 7–11. They all appeared to relate to a now defunct field boundary and internal scheme of east-to-west furrows (**24**).
- 7.2 The continuation of the furrows in regimen **24** can be seen in the adjacent field to the east of the PDA, where they survive as earthworks. The corresponding field boundary is documented on the First Edition OS map of 1859; however, it did not extend into the area of the PDA, suggesting the boundaries had been redefined by this period.
- 7.3 Aside from stone track **06** in Trench 7, which was orientated north to south, the remaining linear features encountered in Trenches 7, 10 and 11 were all orientated from east to west and can be seen to follow the same alignment across the PDA. It is also clear that no east-to-west furrows were encountered to the north of these features, supporting their interpretation as a field boundary.
- 7.4 The vestiges of the earlier ditches (**9** in Trench 11 and **13** in Trench 10) have comparable northern-edge profiles and similar mottled, colluvial fills that could indicate they were both sections of the same, initial boundary ditch delineating the southern field. This could extend to ditch **05** in Trench 7, which also displayed a primary colluvial fill of redeposited natural clay and grey silt (**23**).
- 7.5 The large stones deposited along the northern edges of ditches 5 in Trench 7 and 15 in Trench 11 are also likely to be related, and could have belonged to a kerb for a later trackway, overlying the earlier boundary ditch. The deliberate infill of ditch 5 with a firm clay (4) could have formed a trackway surface, or could represent the backfilling of the boundary to put it out of use.

- 7.6 The extent of the potential trackway features (**18**, **20**) seen in Trench 11 is unclear, as there is no evidence of any comparable features in any of the evaluation trenches to the east.
- 7.7 The alignment of the furrows encountered in the PDA (**24**) with those still visible in the adjacent field to the east provides strong evidence that they were originally part of the same field system and that the boundary defined on the 1859 OS map once also extended across the PDA. This would provide a *terminus ante quem* for the east-to-west boundary features recorded in the PDA of pre-1855 when the survey was conducted. Unfortunately, no finds were recovered from any of the features to provide further dating evidence.
- 7.8 It is likely that trackway **06** in Trench 7 is therefore later than the east-to-west boundary, as it looks to respect a later north-to-south boundary dividing the southern field, and which is now reflected in the extant eastern boundary of the PDA.
- 7.9 Post-dating the usage of the east-to-west boundary and of trackway **06**, were two distinct dumps of material within the area of the PDA.
- 7.10 To the east, overlying the eastern end of Trench 7, was a mound of subsoil-like material (**08**) that sealed both ditch **05** and trackway **06** and could be seen to continue into the adjacent field as a roughly circular earthwork. It is unclear what this deposit represents, but it predates the extant north–south boundary wall, which has been constructed on top of the mound. At this point, the eastern boundary bows outwards to the east, a trait that is also shown on the same boundary from the 1859 map. It is plausible that this irregularity was a result of this mound of material, meaning that it would have been deposited prior to 1855.
- 7.11 To the west, overlying the northern end of Trench 11, was a thick stony horizon (22) that sealed the east-to-west boundary features and continued for at least 15m to the north, beyond the trench. Deposit 22 contained a substantial quantity of post-medieval pottery sherds, the majority of which appeared to be 19th century in date. The paucity of finds from across the rest of the PDA implies that this material was brought in from elsewhere, the amount of stone present suggesting it originated from the nearby quarry, but the purpose of its deposition on agricultural land remains unclear.

7.12 Although more extensive archaeological remains were encountered during the current evaluation than the previous phase (NAA 2017), it possibly all relates to the same scheme of post-medieval field systems, which can still be seen on the ground in the adjacent field to the east, where the furrows from regimen **24** continue as earthworks. The evaluation has served to inform the means by which that field system was delineated, by a series of intercutting ditches and potential trackways, and has provided evidence for the continuation of the boundary, seen on the 1859 OS mapping, to the west, across the area of the PDA.

8.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

8.1 The full archive from the archaeological investigations, including paperwork, drawings, photographs, digital data and the finds assemblage, is to be deposited with DCC HER, the County Durham Archaeological Archives (CoDAA) and online via the Archaeology Data Service.

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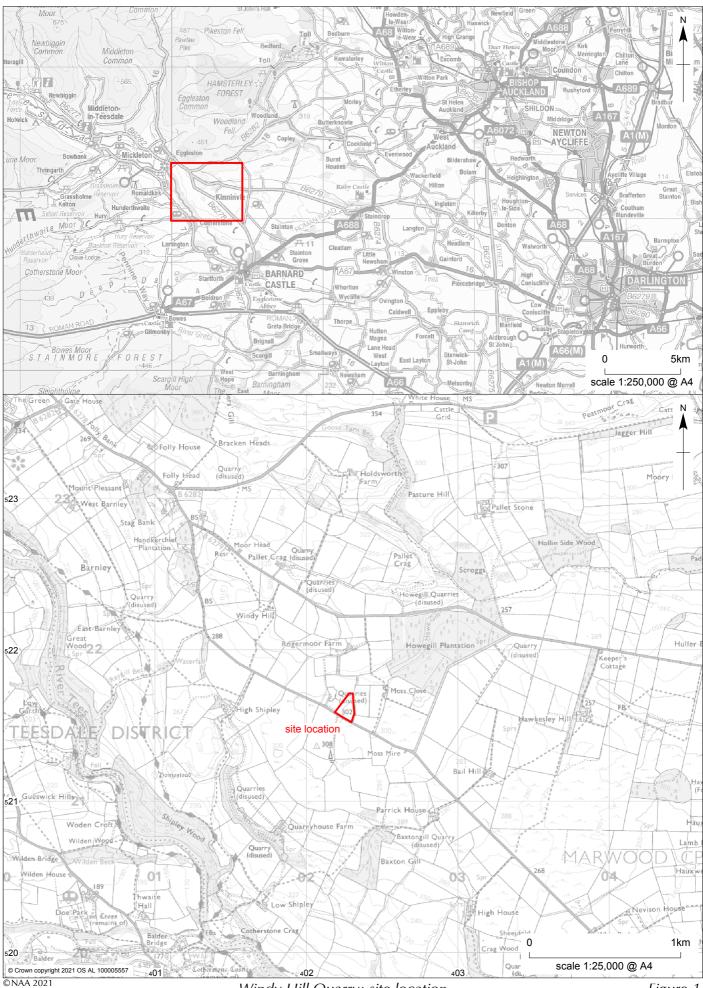
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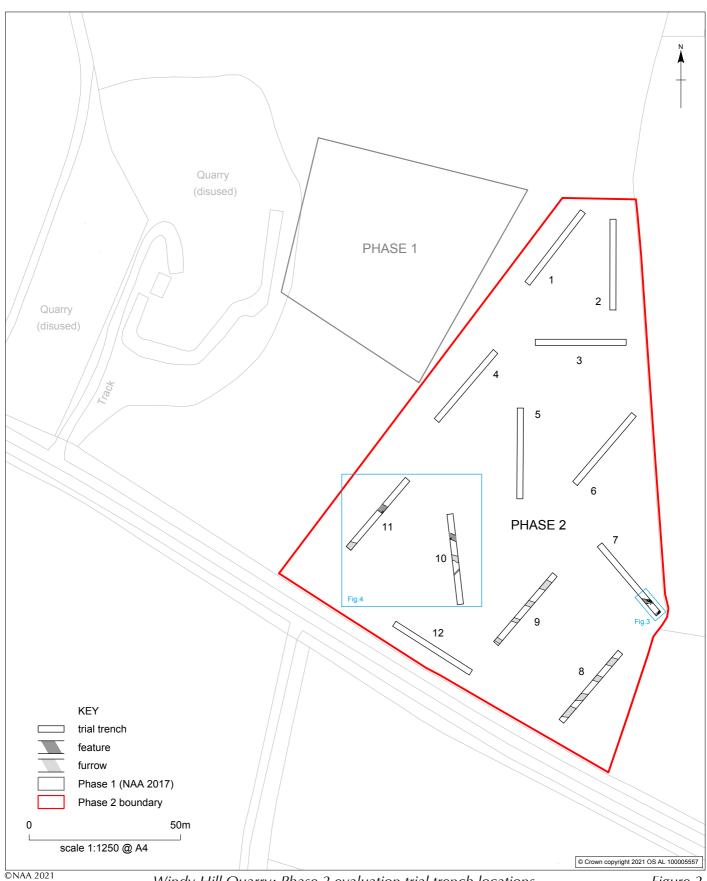
APPENDIX A

CONTEXT CATALOGUE

Context Number	Interpretive Description	Trench
01	Topsoil	All
02	Natural Clay	All
03	Patch of burnt clay	Trench 3
04	Upper fill of ditch 05	Trench 7
05	Cut of ditch	Trench 7
06	Stone track	Trench 7
07	Earth bank under 06	Trench 7
08	Subsoil over 05 and 06	Trench 7
09	Cut of ditch	Trench 11
10	Fill of ditch 09	Trench 11
11	Cut of furrow/ditch	Trench 10
12	Fill of furrow/ditch 11	Trench 10
13	Cut of earlier ditch	Trench 10
14	Fill of ditch 13	Trench 10
15	Ditch cutting 09	Trench 11
16	Lower fill of ditch 15	Trench 11
17	Upper fill of ditch 15	Trench 11
18	Cut of trackway	Trench 11
19	Fill of trackway 18	Trench 11
20	Cut of later trackway	Trench 11
21	Fill of trackway 20	Trench 11
22	Stony deposit	Trench 11
23	Lower fill of ditch 05	Trench 7
24	Group number for furrows	Trenches 8–11
25	Group number for fills of 24	Trenches 8–11



Windy Hill Quarry: site location



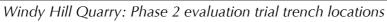
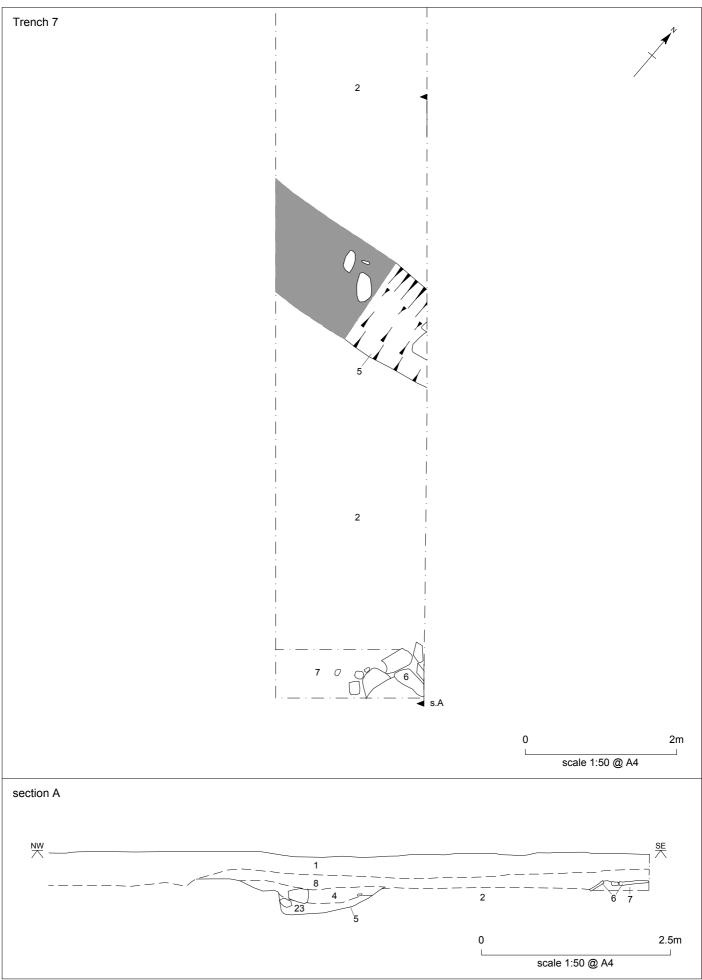
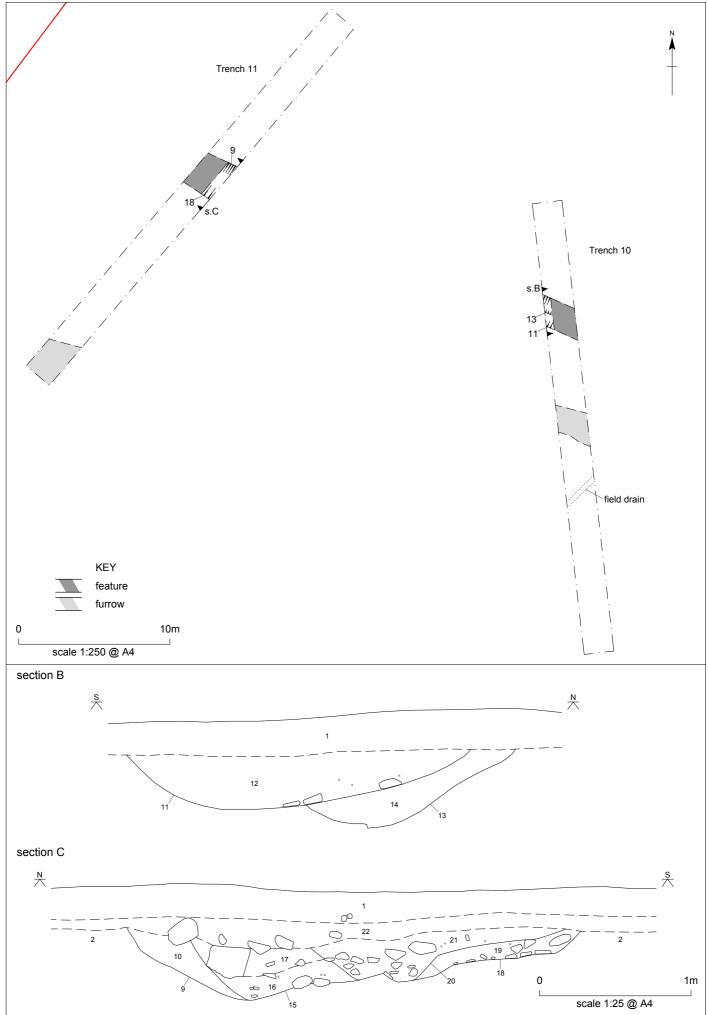


Figure 2



Windy Hill Quarry: Trench 7, plan and section

Figure 3





Windy Hill Quarry: Trenches 10 and 11, plans and sections

Figure 4