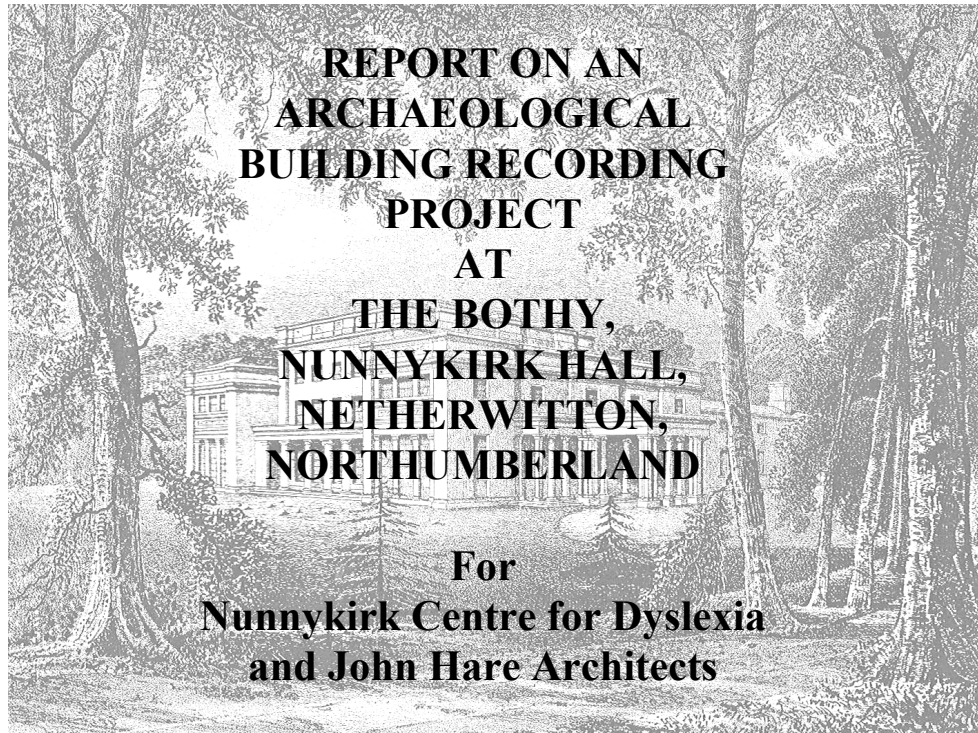

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SUMMARY

In December 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia and John Hare Architects to undertake an archaeological building recording project of The Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall, Netherwitton, Northumberland (NZ 0811 9270), prior to the demolition of the south wall to allow for the erection of a new classroom block, and the refurbishment of the building (Planning Application Ref: A/2003/361). The Bothy is a listed building sited within the historic curtilage of Nunnykirk Hall, itself a Grade I listed building.

A rapid desk-based assessment was undertaken to place the property and site of Nunnykirk Hall into its historical context. The assessment involved the consultation of historical mapping at Northumberland Archives, Woodhorn, Ashington, as well as the consultation of published and unpublished material to provide an insight into the history and occupiers of Nunnykirk Hall.

The rapid desk-based assessment revealed that there is some evidence for early medieval use of the site at Nunnykirk Hall from the discovery of an 8th/9th century cross shaft built into a cottage wall, although the original provenance is not known. Documentary sources suggest that there was an ecclesiastical site at Nunnykirk during the medieval period, hence its name, although nothing remains of such a site. A 'tower' is mentioned in documents from the 17th century, although there is also no evidence for this on the site now. The present hall was constructed in the 1820s by leading architect John Dobson for William Orde, and was a remodelling of an earlier manor house. Gardens are known to have surrounded this earlier house; however the present landscape around Nunnykirk Hall is believed to be a rare example of Dobson's work. Cartographic sources do not show a building on the site of The Bothy until the 1860s when it was much longer and is shown to have had glasshouses against the south elevation.

The building recording project revealed that The Bothy is a masonry built structure, with the unusual feature of having a brick-built south elevation, possibly constructed in the middle of the 19th century. The brick wall may have had a practical function in allowing for the retention and radiation of heat for glasshouses located against it. Further evidence for the possible presence of a heating system to provide warmth for vulnerable plants in the glasshouses was observed in the form of a possible 'coal hole' in the north elevation, blackening of some stone and brickwork in the south-west internal corner of the building, and the presence of a chimney on the south elevation. Surviving low stone walls, or footings, and holes at the top of the south elevation, provided evidence for a building against the south elevation of The Bothy. The remains of walls and cartographic evidence indicate that a further building or buildings originally extended from the west elevation and glasshouses occupied the south side of these buildings up until at least the 1920s.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank John Hare Architects and Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia for commissioning the project and for their assistance during the fieldwork.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Karen Derham and Liz Williams of Northumberland County Council Conservation Team.

The building survey was undertaken by Fiona Wooler and Tony Liddell. The report was written by Fiona Wooler. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In December 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Limited were commissioned by John Hare Architects and Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia to undertake an archaeological building recording project of the Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall, Netherwitton, Northumberland (NZ 0811 9270), prior to the demolition of the south wall of the Bothy to allow for the erection of a new classroom block, and refurbishment of the building (Planning Ref: A/2003/361). The proposed development will have an impact on the fabric of The Bothy, a listed building and recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER 17256), which is sited within the historic curtilage of Nunnykirk Hall, itself a Grade I listed building. The southern elevation of The Bothy is constructed of brick and stone banding, a technique which could relate the Bothy to the original phase of the estate and would therefore make this a building of some significance.
- 1.1.2 As a consequence, Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT) advised that, should permission be granted, a condition should be attached to the permission requiring a programme of building recording in the form of a Level 3 survey as described by English Heritage (2006), prior to any demolition or alterations to the fabric of the building, due to the historic nature of the structure (Derham 2008).
- 1.1.3 The building recording project was undertaken by Fiona Wooler and Tony Liddell on the 8th January 2009.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

- 1.2.1 The village of Netherwitton is located approximately 14 kilometres to the north-west of Morpeth, and c.8km to the south-west of Longhorsley, on the River Font which flows southwards into the River Wansbeck at Mitford (Figure 1).
- 1.2.2 Nunnykirk Hall is situated approximately 2km to the north-west of Netherwitton, accessed from a single-lane track from the Netherwitton to Forestburn Gate road. The site is located on the east bank of the River Font which flows north to south past the property towards Netherwitton. Nunnykirk Hall is situated in a secluded part of the valley, hidden from the main road. Nunnykirk Farm is located immediately to the east of the Hall, and the area to the north and west is wooded.
- 1.2.3 The Bothy, which is the subject of the present survey, is located to the north of Nunnykirk Hall, at a height of c.128m above mean sea level (Figure 2).

2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 RAPID DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 2.1.1 Prior to the commencement of archaeological works at Nunnykirk Hall, a rapid desk-based assessment was undertaken in order to establish the buildings historic context and to the provide details, where known, on the building's architects, builders, patron and owners.
- 2.1.2 The rapid desk-based assessment involved the consultation of historical maps, unpublished material and published sources, in particular the journal *Archaeologia Aeliana*, housed at Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the County Historic Environment Record at Morpeth.
- 2.1.3 The rapid desk-based assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (IfA 2001a).

2.2 BUILDING RECORDING

- 2.2.1 A Level 3 building survey of The Bothy at Nunnykirk Hall was undertaken, according to the standards and guidance set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2001b) and English Heritage (2006). A Level 3 survey is fully analytical and comprises an introductory written description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record includes an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined. It also includes visual records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support a historical analysis. The information contained in the record will be for the most part obtained via an examination of the building itself, without extensive use of other sources.
- 2.2.2 The survey includes:
- a written description of the building, including its plan, form, function, age, development sequence and construction material. A description of the building's landscape and historic context will also be considered.
 - a photographic record of the building, and its relationship with other structures and the surrounding landscape, using 35mm colour slide and monochrome film. A digital photographic record was also made for illustrative purposes within this report.
 - a ground plan of the building noting the location of structural features of historic significance.
- 2.2.3 In addition, a measured survey was undertaken of the south elevation of The Bothy. The survey was conducted in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (2003) and a nominal scale of 1:20 was adopted for the survey. This scale is considered most appropriate for showing structural detail clearly and accurately. The elevation was

surveyed in three dimensions from the primary survey stations using a Trimble 360 Reflectorless Total Station. The principal plan components of the structure were established by Reflectorless measurement.

- 2.2.4 Fixed targets were also used to create a series of control points on the elevation. These were surveyed using the Trimble 3605 Reflectorless Total Station to form a framework for rectifying digital photographs of the elevation. The image rectification was undertaken using Monobild Software. The resulting digital photographs were then digitised in a CAD environment to produce an accurate drawing of the southern elevation.

2.3 PROJECT ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 An archive will be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2007). Arrangements will be made for its long-term storage and deposition with an appropriate repository.
- 2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) Project. The overall aim of this project is to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. Details of the building recording project will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd as a part of this national project under the unique identifier **northpen-53698**.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

- 3.1.1 The County Historic Environment Record at Morpeth was consulted to provide information on known archaeological and historical sites within a 1km radius of Nunnykirk Hall. The HER records 28 sites within a 1km radius, a full list of these are provided in Appendix 1. There are, however, several records which relate to Nunnykirk Hall and its immediate environs and these will be referred to here:
- 3.1.2 **HER No. 10821:** refers to a Chapel and Grange of Newminster Abbey and a Tower at Nunnykirk. An ecclesiastical house is believed to have existed at Nunnykirk from soon after the founding of Newminster Abbey in 1138 until the dissolution of the monasteries. This may have been the site of the nunnery of ‘*vetadun*’ mentioned in Bede’s Ecclesiastical History. A letter patent described Nunnykirk in 1610 as a tower and other buildings when the Crown granted it to Sir Ralph Grey. No evidence of the monastic site or the tower is now visible.
- 3.1.3 **HER No. 10822:** cross-shaft found c.1850-60 within the walls of an old cottage during demolition, located 140m to the east of Nunnykirk Hall. Possible 8th or early 9th century in date. Now in the Museum of Antiquities in Newcastle.
- 3.1.4 **HER No. 10835:** ‘*Possible site of deserted medieval village at Nunnykirk*’.
- 3.1.5 **HER No. 10841:** ‘*Nunnykirk Hall, grade I listed building. Country House, now a school. By John Dobson in 1825 for William Orde in Greek Revival style. One of the finest of Dobson’s early houses, exceptional ashlar masonry. It is the remodelling of an earlier house – a Queen Anne house was refronted creating a five-bay garden frontage*’.
- 3.1.6 **HER No. 14676:** ‘*The landscape grounds at Nunnykirk are a rare example of a probable John Dobson landscape, surviving in its original form and as a setting to one of the leading examples of his architecture. The gardens were altered to the present form during Dobson’s improvement to the Hall in the 1820s. The changes to the landscape can be traced from late 18th and early 19th century mapping.*’
- 3.1.7 **HER No. 17256:** described as a large single rectangular building shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1866. Part of this building survives as The Bothy, which is the subject of the present survey.
- 3.1.8 **HER No. 17268:** squared area shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1866 to the east of Nunnykirk Hall, and interpreted as a walled garden [may actually be a square pond as shown on Figure 5 to the east of the farm buildings].

3.2 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- 3.2.1 The earliest map consulted during the rapid desk-based assessment was Speed’s Map of Northumberland 1610. The extract reproduced in Figure 3 clearly annotates a significant house at ‘*Nunnikirk*’, located on the east side of the River Font.

- 3.2.2 Within the archives at Woodhorn is an undated map entitled '*Plan of the Township of Healy and Comhill in the Chapelry of Netherwitton and County of Northumberland*' by Thomas Bell, Surveyor (Ref: ZHE 56/5). This map, which is not reproduced within this report, shows a small building to the west of Nunnykirk Hall, close to the river bank, however there is no indication that this represents The Bothy. The layout of the garden and the walled garden are not shown on this map, although this does not mean they had not been laid out when this map was created.
- 3.2.3 A further undated plan, which may date to the end of the 18th or the early 19th century (prior to Dobson's alterations of Nunnykirk Hall) is reproduced as Figure 4. This map clearly shows the buildings of the hall as totally different in form to those shown on later Ordnance Survey mapping (see Figure 5), and the gardens, roads and footpaths are shown to the east and north of the Hall, with some buildings to the east which may have included the cottage noted to have been demolished in the 1850s. The 'barrel' shaped garden to the north of the hall appears to survive as the walled garden. This map does not show The Bothy as being in existence at this date.
- 3.2.4 The Tithe Map for Nunnykirk Township dates to 1848 and is housed at the Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn. This map, which is not reproduced here, shows the buildings at Nunnykirk as the same layout as those shown on Figure 4, which is odd considering John Dobson is known to have undertaken large-scale alterations in the 1820s. There is no detail given of the gardens and The Bothy is not shown. The Award which accompanies the Tithe Map lists Charles William Orde Esq. as landowner and occupier of Nunnykirk Township, with a total of 111 acres of land (32 acres of arable, 49 acres of meadow or pasture and 30 acres of woodland).
- 3.2.5 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1865 is the earliest map consulted to show a large rectangular building to the north of Nunnykirk Hall in the location of the Bothy, although the building shown on this map is longer. Glasshouses are shown against the south elevation of this building, and a small structure is located on the opposite side of the road to the north-east of the Bothy (shown within the red rectangle on Figure 5). To the north of this rectangular building is a quarry, and the farm buildings (complete with circular gin-gang) are clearly visible to the east of Nunnykirk Hall (Figure 5).
- 3.2.6 By the publication of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map in 1897, very little has changed in the form of the buildings at Nunnykirk Hall, or in the layout of the gardens. A further glasshouse, or greenhouse, has been constructed against the wall to the east side of the walled garden, and a smaller version to the west, also within the barrel-shaped walled garden. To the west of the Hall, a rectangular feature may represent a tennis court (Figure 6).
- 3.2.7 In 1922 the long, rectangular building which contains the structure now known as The Bothy, still retains the glasshouses against its south elevation (Figure 7). By this date the quarry to the north of Nunnykirk Hall is now annotated as 'old'.

3.3 PUBLICATIONS

- 3.3.1 The discovery of a '*Pre-conquest cross shaft at Nunnykirk*' was described in 1898 by Phillips. At that date the occupier Mrs Orde noted that the stone had been found whilst

demolishing an old cottage ‘*about 40 years ago and the stone was built visibly in the outside corner. It was even assumed to be connected with the nunnery, but not much interest appears to have been taken in it, and it was left lying where I found it 18 months ago when we returned here to live, i.e. in a corner of the stack yard, perhaps 50 yards from the site of the cottage*’ (Phillips 1898, 194). The cross shaft measured 4ft 6” and would originally have had the arms and head of a cross surmounted, all traces of which have been lost. The shaft was carved on all four sides, the designs of which have been suggested to date to the 8th century, and to be an example of the Hexham school of design (*Ibid*, 193) (Plate 1). The reason for the presence of such a cross shaft at Nunnykirk is open to conjecture; it could have been brought onto the site at any time as a curiosity although its visible siting in the corner of an old cottage suggests it lost its significance at some point. Phillips suggested that it may relate to the ecclesiastical house which is believed to have existed on the site, and that the name ‘Nunnykirk’ could be taken literally as referring to a nunnery and church (Phillips 1897-98, 86).

- 3.3.2 Writing for his ‘History of Northumberland’ in the 1820s, Hodgson noted when referring to Nunnykirk that ‘*This place was comprised in Ranulph de Merlay’s grant of Ritton to Newminster; the abbot of which house, with the love for seclusion and taste for sweet river-side scenery which were common to his order, built a chapel, tower, and other edifices here, all traces of which are now entirely gone, and of which no book or record I have seen has left a description*’. Hodgson refers to the remains of buildings and human bones having been ‘*dug up lately in sinking for new foundations*’ (Hodgson 1827, 329-330); this may refer to the alterations undertaken to the Hall in the 1820s, although no further details are given.
- 3.3.3 Following the dissolution of the monasteries, Nunnykirk was granted in 1610 to Ralph Grey by the Crown (Long 1967, 143). Ralph Grey was described by Hodgson as ‘*one of the able men of the middle marches in 1542*’. In 1592, an inventory of the goods of Ralph Fenwick of *Nunnykirke* mentions Margaret his widow, and Thomas and Roger his brothers. In 1610 Nunnykirk is noted to have been ‘*lately holden by Roger Fenwick, as tenant at will under the crown*’. William Fenwick of *Nunnykirke* was one of the freeholders of the county summoned to sit upon juries in 1628. In 1662, Thomas Pye turned over his mortgage upon it to Thomas Fenwicke who, in 1663, is returned as proprietor of it; and in 1673 conveyed it to his son William (Hodgson 1827, 328). Thomas Fenwick is listed as proprietor of *Nunna Kirk* in the 1663 list of Rentals and Rates for Northumberland (Hodgson 1820, 285).
- 3.3.4 Nunnykirk then passed back to descendents of Ralph Grey, and in 1716 the estate was sold to Edward Ward of Morpeth, and then, by inheritance, it passed to the Orde family who, in 1827 were described as ‘*beautifying it with large additions to the old mansion-house, in a style of great elegance and simplicity, from designs, and under the direction of Mr Dobson of Newcastle, architect*’ (Hodgson 1827, 330). In 1828, Nunnykirk was described as ‘*the property and seat of William Ord Esq. whose hall is an elegant modern stone building situated in a romantic vale, embowered in wood, and enlivened by the meandering steams of the Font. Mr Ord is now erecting two circular fronted wings which project from the centre of the hall, and are to be united by a beautiful portico. These chaste and costly additions have been several years in*

progress' (Parson and White 1828, 544). Pevsner describes Nunnykirk Hall as the finest of all Dobson's early houses (Pevsner and Richmond 1979, 271).

- 3.3.5 In 1879 Nunnykirk is described as the seat of William Orde, Esq. who was owner of the township and lord of the manor (Kelly 1879, 653). Writing in 1888, Tomlinson noted that Nunnykirk Hall was the residence of Captain Noble (Tomlinson 1888, 276). Bulmer's Directory of 1887 lists the following residents at Nunnykirk: John Armstrong, farm steward; William Baird, farmer, Folly House and coal owner, Nether Witton Colliery; John Dickinson, gamekeeper; Jonathan Douglas, mason, East Lodge; Chas Lawson, gardener; Captain Andrew Noble, Nunnykirk Hall (Bulmer 1887, 611). By the early 20th century, however, the Orde family appear to have returned to the Hall, as William Orde, J.P. is listed there in 1902 (Kelly 1902, 197). This is also confirmed by the description of the cross shaft found at Nunnykirk by Phillips writing in 1898 when Mrs Orde mentioned the return of the family to the Hall '*about 18 months ago*' (see 3.3.1 above).
- 3.3.6 In the mid-19th century, horse racing was an interest of both William Orde and Charles William Orde. William Orde appears to have been more interested in racing horses, in particular those named Dr Syntax and Beeswing, whereas Charles was more interested in breeding. The Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn hold records of the Orde family dating to the mid-19th century relating to the training, health and breeding of horses at Nunnykirk, with reference to Beeswing, Johnny Boy, Queen Bee and other horses in the stable (Ref: NRO 1356/D/1, 10, 11). The area of land immediately to the south of the Hall is still known as 'Beeswing Gallop' (*pers. comm.*. Carol Hodgson, head teacher).
- 3.3.7 The Orde family were still in residence at Nunnykirk Hall in 1959 when they were the subject of a newspaper article in the Newcastle Journal (Ref: NRO 1356/M/120).



Plate 1 – The cross shaft discovered at Nunnykirk in the mid-19th century (Source: Phillips 1898)

4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 According to the English Dictionary a ‘bothy’ is a hut or barracks used as farm servant’s quarters, or as a shelter for climbers on mountains (English Dictionary 1997).
- 4.1.2 The Bothy is located approximately 100m to the north of Nunnykirk Hall and *c.* 15m to the north of the walled garden (Figure 2 and Plate 2). The building is orientated east-west, and the brick-built wall which defines the western side of the track towards the Bothy and heading north, terminates against the eastern elevation (Plate 3). The land to the west of The Bothy is relatively flat before descending to the River Font, whilst the ground to the east rises steeply and consists of rocky, wooded outcrops.
- 4.1.3 The Bothy measures approximately 15.43m in length by 3.73m in width (Figure 8), and is constructed of coursed, squared blocks of masonry, apart from the south elevation which is constructed from bricks laid generally in stretcher bond, with string courses of thin rectangular blocks of masonry. The hipped roof is laid in Welsh slate with ceramic ridge tiles.

4.2 THE BOTHY EXTERIOR

- 4.2.1 The east elevation of The Bothy faces the track which skirts around this side of the building and heads north (Plate 3). In this elevation there is a window at ground level, and a further window above at first floor level. The lintels and sills of both of these windows are of regular blocks of masonry, although the sill of the upper window projects slightly outwards presumably to deflect rainwater from the window below (Plate 4). The surviving frame in the ground floor window is relatively modern. The lower part of the north corner of this elevation has had the sharp corner of the quoins carved to create a curved edge; this is a common feature on agricultural buildings, or structures close to a roadside, which prevents animals and carts from catching on the sharp corner of a building (Plate 5).
- 4.2.2 The south side of the east elevation projects slightly beyond the present south elevation, and has at its top coping stones defining a sloped edge; this suggests that there was at one time another structure to the south of The Bothy (Plate 4). At the base of this elevation the partly masonry wall which defines the eastern side of the gardens terminates and a blocked-up doorway with well dressed masonry blocks making up the jambs and lintel is clearly visible (Plate 6). One of the masonry blocks in the upper half of the east elevation has an inscribed ‘F’, the meaning of which is unknown (Plate 7).
- 4.2.3 The north elevation of The Bothy faces the track which heads northwards away from the site, although from the north the building cannot be easily seen due to the steep rocky outcrops to the east and the trees to the west which line the River Font (Plate 8). In this elevation there are three windows and a doorway at ground level, and four windows at first floor level (Plate 9). All the windows have nicely tooled blocks of

masonry making up the lintels, jambs and sills, which also project slightly outwards at first floor level (Plate 10). The doorway has a single block of rectangular masonry as a lintel but does not have the same tooled jambs as the windows.

- 4.2.4 At the western end of this elevation, located halfway up the wall, there are three cast iron ventilation grilles (Plate 11). The presence of these grilles may suggest that some form of heating was taking place internally within this part of the building. At the base of the wall, beneath these ventilation grilles, is a small aperture which may have been used as a coal hole, or for some other form of fuel, to be moved into the building (Plate 12).
- 4.2.5 The west elevation is partly obscured by a timber shelter at the lower level (Plate 13). It was possible, however, to observe the scarring of a former gabled roof for a single-storey building which presumably projected westwards from this elevation. There is also evidence of a further building in the form of an incised line from the apex of the gabled scarring. At the top of this there is the remains of a brick chimney; running diagonally downwards from this chimney blackened masonry (suggesting some form of burning or heat) may betray the former presence of another building although there is no scarring in the wall to confirm this. At the base of this elevation is a large doorway which may be a recent insertion (Plate 14).
- 4.2.6 Projecting from the west elevation are low stone walls and a paved ground surface which appear to be remains of a former building (Plate 15). An area of undergrowth and masonry to the west of The Bothy suggests that a building formerly extended westwards from the extant building (Plate 16), this is confirmed on the early Ordnance Survey mapping (see Figure 5 for example).
- 4.2.7 The south elevation of The Bothy is perhaps the most interesting due to it being constructed from hand-made bricks rather than the coursed masonry noted on the other elevations (Figure 9). This elevation consists of bricks which measure 22cm long, 6cm high and 6cm in width, laid in stretcher bond (i.e. the long edge of the brick), and a single course of header bond, with four courses of thin, rectangular masonry blocks acting as string courses set between the brickwork, possibly used to ensure the brick work remains straight and provide some strength to the elevation (Plates 17 and 18). Stretcher bond (where each course consists of the long side of the brick) came into general use in the later 19th century and is now widely used for cavity walling rather than solid walls due to the lack of bonding bricks (Brunskill 1990, 92). Brunskill notes the monotonous nature of this particular form of bonding (*ibid*, 53), and this may be the reason why the masonry string courses were introduced, to provide architectural detail to an otherwise seemingly boring elevation. The use of stretcher bond as a cavity wall in this instance is confirmed at the western side of the elevation where a crack in the wall between the masonry and brickwork has appeared (Plate 19). Here it was possible to note that the outer side of this wall was of the brickwork, whilst internally the wall is of masonry, leaving a gap, or cavity, between the two. One possible reason for the brick outer skin with cavity between it and the inner masonry wall is that the brickwork was intended to retain heat obtained from a fire or flue within the building, to provide warmth for a glasshouse or orangery. When referring to orangeries (the precursor to the greenhouse and conservatory), Sanecki notes that these were spacious buildings roofed like a house with large windows, with heating provided by wood or

coal fires, the warmth from which was contained in the back wall or in underground flues (Sanecki 1987, 12).

- 4.2.8 Located towards the eastern side of the south elevation, three short lengths of timber set within iron fittings remain *in-situ*, as well as an area of white-wash (Plate 20). The timbers presumably relate to the structure formerly located against this elevation. The white-wash may have been used to reflect light. At the top of this elevation are regularly spaced holes with protruding iron rods, located beneath a masonry wall plate, and set within brickwork which is set back slightly from the main elevation (Plate 21). These may relate to the pitched roof of a former glasshouse located against this wall.
- 4.2.9 To the south side of The Bothy there are several courses of good quality masonry blocks remaining *in-situ* which may have formed the footings for a glasshouse, or some other structure (Plate 22). A short vertical section of cast-iron pipe projects from the ground at the west side of this elevation; this may have related to a heating system located within the glasshouse.
- 4.2.10 Some fairly modern bricks which have the stamp 'Pegswood' have been used to form a section of chimney on the south elevation (Plate 23). Pegswood is a village located just to the north-east of Morpeth. A consultation of early Ordnance Survey mapping for the village reveals that the brickworks appear to have been in operation in the early 20th century but are described as 'disused' by the 1920s. The presence of Pegswood bricks in a section of chimney suggests that some form of heating was still being used in the early part of the 20th century to maintain warmth in the glasshouses; as these are still shown as being extant on the Ordnance Survey map of 1922 (see Figure 7).

4.3 THE BOTHY INTERIOR

- 4.3.1 The interior of The Bothy, at the time of survey, was accessed via the large doorway in the west elevation; however there is a further doorway in the north elevation (Plates 9 and 14). The Bothy is presently in use as a workshop and storage for go-carts used by the school. There was no access to the first floor of The Bothy consequently it was not possible to photograph or note any features of interest at first floor level.
- 4.3.2 The interior of The Bothy is presently open along its length with no divisions apart from the remains of a brick cross-wall (Plate 24). At the western end of the building a modern metal grille covers a floor level of c.50-60cm below the rest of the building, although there is some debris which now hides the true depth (Plate 25). This area is in line with the aperture noted on the north elevation which was interpreted as a possible coal hole (see Plate 12). In the south-west corner of the interior is a hole in the masonry wall which reveals the inner face of the brickwork of the south elevation, and displays evidence of heat or burning in the form of blackened stone and brick (Plate 26). It appears that some form of fire or heater was located in this area (which is directly below the chimneys noted above), which may have generated heat for the glasshouses, and that the lower ground level below the grille may have been used to house a boiler or flue.
- 4.3.3 All of the windows in The Bothy were boarded over at the time of the survey; however one at ground level still retains the horizontal-sliding Yorkshire sash window frame (Plate 27). Yorkshire sash windows, as the name suggests, were first used in the 18th

century in Yorkshire, however during the 19th century they were made throughout the country (Laws 2003, 121). The presence of such a window in this building does suggest that it was intended for human habitation, or occupation, rather than for animals, providing evidence that it was originally constructed as a bothy or ancillary building relating to the gardens.

- 4.3.4 Although there was no access to the first floor, it was possible to observe through a hole in the ceiling, where presumably a wooden staircase or ladder was originally located, that the ceiling of the first floor is boarded over suggesting that it was intended as sleeping or living quarters for workers on the estate, as it unlikely that space used simply for storage would have had the roof space covered over in such a way (Plate 28).

4.4 ANCILLARY BUILDING

- 4.4.1 Although this building does not form part of the present survey it will be referred to here as possibly being contemporary with The Bothy. This small building is located on the opposite side of the track to The Bothy and is also shown on Ordnance Survey mapping from c.1865 (see Figure 5). The building is constructed of coursed, well-dressed masonry similar to that used for The Bothy, and has a flat roof (Plates 29 and 30). It has been built against the rock face of the ground to the east. There is only one door (no windows), located in the north facing elevation, which is protected from landslides by a retaining wall constructed from the same form of masonry. The function of this building is unclear; however it is possible that it was used as a fuel store for the heating system located in The Bothy or as a tool store.



Plate 2 – View looking north towards The Bothy from the north side of the Hall showing the building obscured by the walled garden and trees



Plate 3 – View looking north-west showing the brick wall of the walled garden and track. The brick wall terminates against the east elevation of The Bothy



Plate 4 – East elevation of The Bothy (Scale = 2m)



Plate 5 – North-east corner of The Bothy showing the curved edge to prevent animals and carts from catching on the otherwise sharp edge (Scale = 2m)



Plate 6 – Blocked doorway in garden wall, which terminates against the east elevation of The Bothy (Scale = 2m)



Plate 7 – Inscribed 'F', east elevation of The Bothy



Plate 8 – View looking south from the track to the north of The Bothy showing the steep wooded outcrops to the left and the tree-lined embankment of the River Font to the right



Plate 9 – North elevation of The Bothy (Scale = 2m)



Plate 10 – Detail of first floor window, north elevation of The Bothy



Plate 11 – Detail of one of the ventilation grilles in the north elevation



Plate 12 – Small aperture at base of north elevation of The Bothy (Each red and white section of ranging pole = 20cm)



Plate 13 – West elevation of The Bothy showing the timber shelter and scarring of roof for a former single-storey building (Scale = 2m)



Plate 14 – Large doorway, west elevation of The Bothy (Scale = 2m)



Plate 15 – View looking west from the doorway in the west elevation showing paved surface and stone footings for a former building



Plate 16 – View looking east towards The Bothy showing area of rubble and undergrowth providing evidence of a former building



Plate 17 – View looking north-east of the south elevation (Scale = 2m)



Plate 18 – Detail of brickwork and masonry string course, south elevation



Plate 19 – West side of south elevation showing join between masonry and brickwork (Scale is in 20cm graduations)



Plate 20 – Detail of one of the lengths of timber fixed to the wall with an iron fitting, south elevation of The Bothy



Plate 21 – Detail of holes at top of south elevation which may relate to the pitched roof of a glasshouse



Plate 22 – View looking west showing the surviving masonry to the south side of The Bothy
(Scale = 2m)



Plate 23 – Detail of 'Pegswood' bricks in south elevation of The Bothy



Plate 24 – View looking east of the interior of The Bothy, note the stonework of the south wall (right side of photograph) compared to the outer brickwork



Plate 25 – Detail of lower ground level beneath modern grille, west end of The Bothy



Plate 26 – Hole in south internal wall, possible location of a former fire or heater as shown by blackened masonry and brickwork



Plate 27 – Yorkshire sash window, north elevation of The Bothy (Scale is in 20cm graduations)



Plate 28 – View of the first floor ceiling showing skylight and boarding



Plate 29 – View looking north-west showing The Bothy and small building on opposite side of the track



Plate 30 – View looking south-east showing the small building on opposite side of the track to The Bothy (Scale = 2m)

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The rapid desk-based assessment revealed that the earliest evidence for occupation of the site at Nunnykirk Hall dates to the 8th or early 9th century in the form of an Anglo-Saxon cross shaft found during the demolition of a cottage to the east of Nunnykirk Hall in the mid-19th century. What is not known, however, is whether the cross shaft originated on the site or was brought in at some point prior to the 19th century. There is some documentary and place-name evidence that an ecclesiastical site was located at Nunnykirk in the medieval period, although there are no remains visible which confirm this and no previous archaeological work has been undertaken on the site. It was reported by Hodgson that foundations and human bones were revealed during building work, possibly when the Hall was remodelled in the 1820s, although no further information regarding these discoveries is known. Documentary evidence also suggests that there was a ‘tower’ on the site in the early 17th century although as with the monastic site, no evidence of this tower remains.
- 5.2 The Hall which stood on the site prior to the remodelling by architect John Dobson for William Orde in the 1820s, was described as of the Queen Anne style (HER 10841). This earlier house appears to have gardens associated with it as shown by the plan dating to the late 18th/early 19th century (Figure 4), however the gardens that survive today are believed to be a rare example designed by John Dobson and are therefore contemporary with the present hall built in 1825 (HER 14676).
- 5.3 The Bothy does not appear on historical mapping until the 1860s when it is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1865, along with glasshouses to its southern side and extending westwards towards the river (Figure 5). The archaeological evidence does suggest that The Bothy and the glasshouses were contemporary as shown by the slight extension of the east elevation to the south, as if it was originally supporting or incorporating another structure. If this is the case, then it is possible that The Bothy dates to the mid-19th century when glass and cast-iron became commonly available as building materials. Although framed glass lean-to structures for ‘forcing’ fruit had been known in England since the 18th century, it was not until the end of that century that glasshouses became common. Until the repeal of the glass-tax in the 1840s small panes were cheaper than large ones and were often used in glasshouses, slotted into closely-spaced glazing bars (Taigel and Williamson 1993, 116).
- 5.4 The archaeological evidence for the former presence of glasshouses against the south wall of The Bothy is provided in several ways. Firstly this elevation is constructed of brick laid in stretcher bond, which is indicative of a cavity wall, suggesting that heat was to be radiated behind and retained in the brickwork to provide warmth for the vulnerable plants. The presence of a heating system of some form is suggested by the ‘coal hole’ in the north elevation; the possible below floor-level boiler or flue space within the interior of The Bothy; the hole in the south internal wall with blackened stone and brickwork; and the chimney on the south elevation. Heating spaces such as glasshouses became easier after the advent of cast-iron water pipes which provided an even distribution of heat as well as a fume-free atmosphere (Sanecki 1987, 14). The presence of a short section of cast iron pipe projecting from the ground to the south

side of The Bothy may suggest that such pipes were in use for heating the glasshouses at Nunnykirk Hall.

- 5.5 Externally, there are the holes at the top of the south elevation which provide evidence of a former pitched roof, and the surviving courses of masonry of a former building to the south of The Bothy. Glasshouses were generally built against the south side of a wall or building so as they could receive maximum sunlight and white-wash was often applied to the rear wall to reflect the light (Taigel and Williamson 1993, 115). The scarring of a gabled roof and remains of masonry to the west of The Bothy also indicates that there was a further building or buildings to the west. This is confirmed by the early Ordnance Survey mapping (see Figure 5 for example).
- 5.6 If The Bothy had been used for accommodation for the gardener, and/or servants then the only form of heating noted within the building was that located in the south-west corner where a small fire or boiler appears to have been located. There was no access to the first floor to note if a fireplace was located at this level.
- 5.7 It is interesting to note that The Bothy cannot be easily seen from the Hall, as it is partly hidden by the walled garden and trees (see Plate 2). Although the masonry used in the construction of The Bothy is of good quality and is well-dressed and laid, there is very little in the form of architectural detail suggesting that this was a building designed simply to serve a purpose and not necessarily to be admired by visitors. The survival of The Bothy is an interesting reminder of developments in gardens and garden design with the advent of materials which enabled glasshouses to be more easily and cheaply constructed, allowing the Victorian country house to grow exotic plants and fruits.

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Maps

Speed's Map of Northumberland 1610

Undated Map entitled 'Plan of the Township of Healy and Combhill in the Chapelry of Netherwitton and County of Northumberland', Thomas Bell, Surveyor, Woodhorn Ref: ZHE 56/5

Undated Map (late 18th/early 19th century?) 'A Plan of Alterations intended at Nunnykirk in the County of Northumberland belonging to William Orde Esq.', Woodhorn Ref: ZHE 56/19

Tithes in the Township of Nunnykirk in the Parish of Netherwitton 1848, Woodhorn Ref: DT 362 S

First Edition Ordnance Survey c.1865, 25" to 1 mile scale, Sheet LIII.16

Second Edition Ordnance Survey 1897, 25" to 1 mile scale, Sheet LIII.16

Third Edition Ordnance Survey 1922, 25" to 1 mile scale, Sheet LIX.5

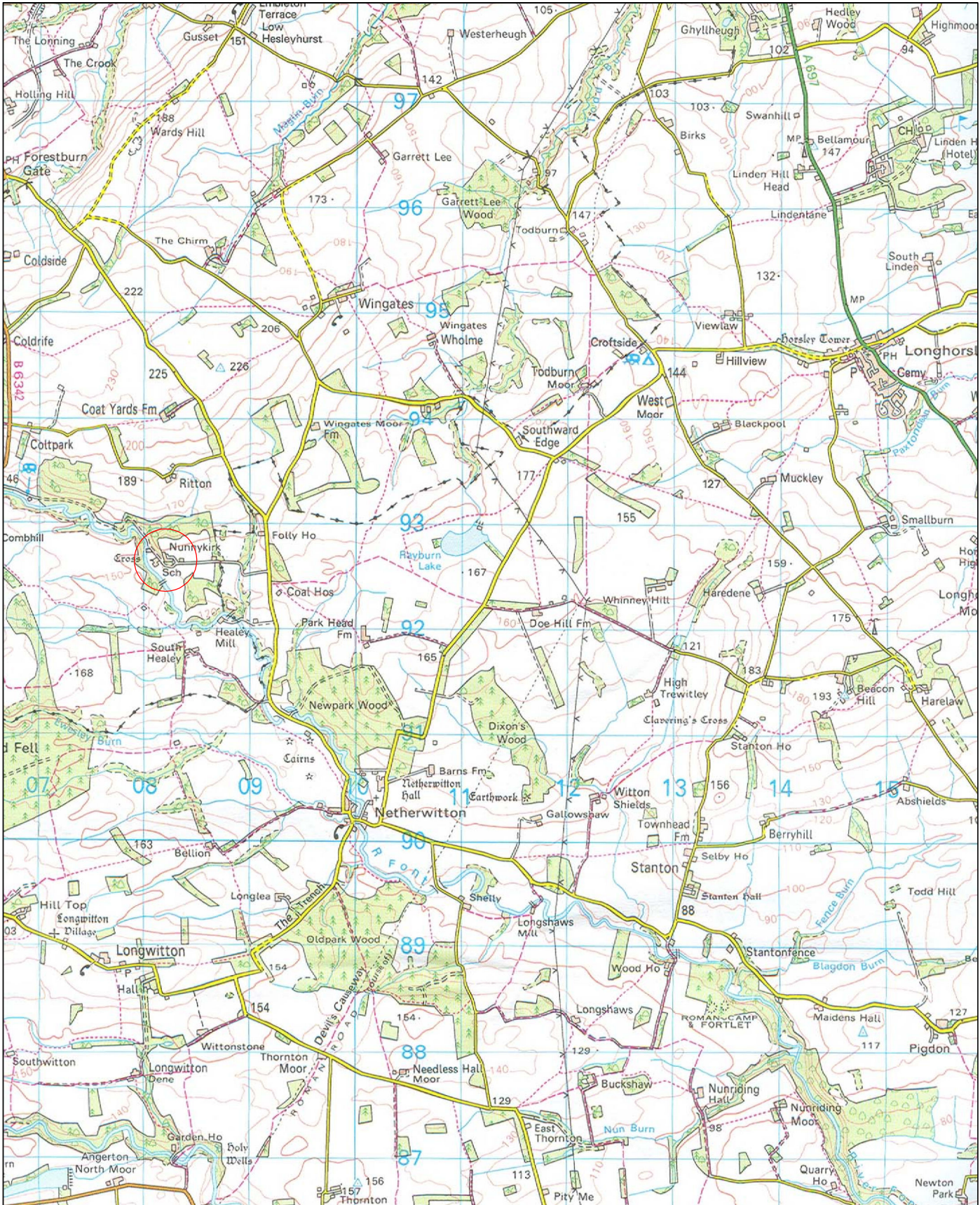
APPENDIX 1: HER RECORDS

List of HER entries within a 1km radius of Nunnykirk Hall:

HER No.	Site Name	Grid Ref	Brief Description	General Period
10820	East Ritton	NZ 083 934	Supposed Grange of Newminster Abbey. No traces known and no local knowledge of site	Medieval (AD 1066 to 1540)
10821	Tower of the Grange of Newminster, Nunnykirk	NZ 08 92	Chapel and Grange of Newminster Abbey and a Tower connected with same at Nunnykirk	Medieval (AD 1066 to 1540)
10822	Nunnykirk Cross	NZ 0808 9262	Early medieval cross shaft found in fabric of old cottag during its demolition c.1850, 140m east of Nunnykirk Hall	Early Medieval (AD 410 to 1066)
10831	South Healey Farmhouse	NZ 0847 9178	Remains of a bastle incorporated in the farmhouse	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
10834	Ritton, deserted medieval village	NZ 083 934	Deserted medieval village	Medieval (AD 1066 to 1540)
10835	Nunnykirk, deserted medieval village	NZ 083 926	Deserted medieval village	Medieval (AD 1066 to 1540)
10840	Healey ruined bastle	NZ 0852 9197	Ruins of a bastle house	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
10841	Nunnykirk Hall	NZ 0811 9261	Grade I listed building, country house now school. By John Dobson in 1825 for William Orde. Greek Revival style. Remodelling of an earlier house	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
14676	Nunnykirk Park and Gardens	NZ 08070 92675	The landscape grounds around Nunnykirk are a rare example of a probable John Dobson lands cape, surviving in its original form and as a setting to one of the leading examples of his architecture. Gardens altered to present form in 1820s	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17242	Well at Ritton	NZ 08261 93445	Well noted on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17253	Footbridge across the burn	NZ 07963 92936	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17254	Footbridge across the burn	NZ 08045 92957	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17255	Ford across the burn	NZ 08012 92766	Ford shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)

HER No.	Site Name	Grid Ref	Brief Description	General Period
17256	Building	NZ 08047 92729	Large single rectangular building shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17266	Footbridge	NZ 08919 92585	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17267	Series of fishponds	NZ 08682 92358	Three regularly-shaped fishponds shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17268	Walled garden area?	NZ 08386 92621	Squared area shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17269	Footbridge	NZ 08192 92413	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17274	North Healey Buildings	NZ 07999 92165	Site of buildings titled as 'North Healey' on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17275	Ford across the burn	NZ 08182 91985	Ford shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17276	Footbridge across the burn	NZ 08296 92052	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17277	Weir across burn	NZ 08463 92054	Weir shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17278	Well near Green Healey	NZ 08629 92004	Well shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17279	Mill race for the Healy Mill	NZ 08475 92034	Mill race shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17280	Healey Mill	NZ 08720 92072	Two separate rectangular buildings titled as 'Heugh Mill' on First Edition OS map 1866. The mill race appears to end some distance from the mill – undershot wheel?	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17281	Ford across the Font	NZ 07817 92132	Ford shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17282	Footbridge	NZ 08843 92108	Footbridge shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)
17283	Ford	NZ 08907 92054	Ford shown on First Edition OS map 1866	Post Medieval (AD 1541 to 1900)

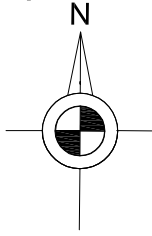
APPENDIX 2: FIGURES



North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2009

PROJECT: The Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall
SCALE: 1:50 000 at A4
REPORT No: CP 847/08
CLIENT Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia and John Hare Architects
DRAWN BY: FW
DATE: January 2009

LOCATION:

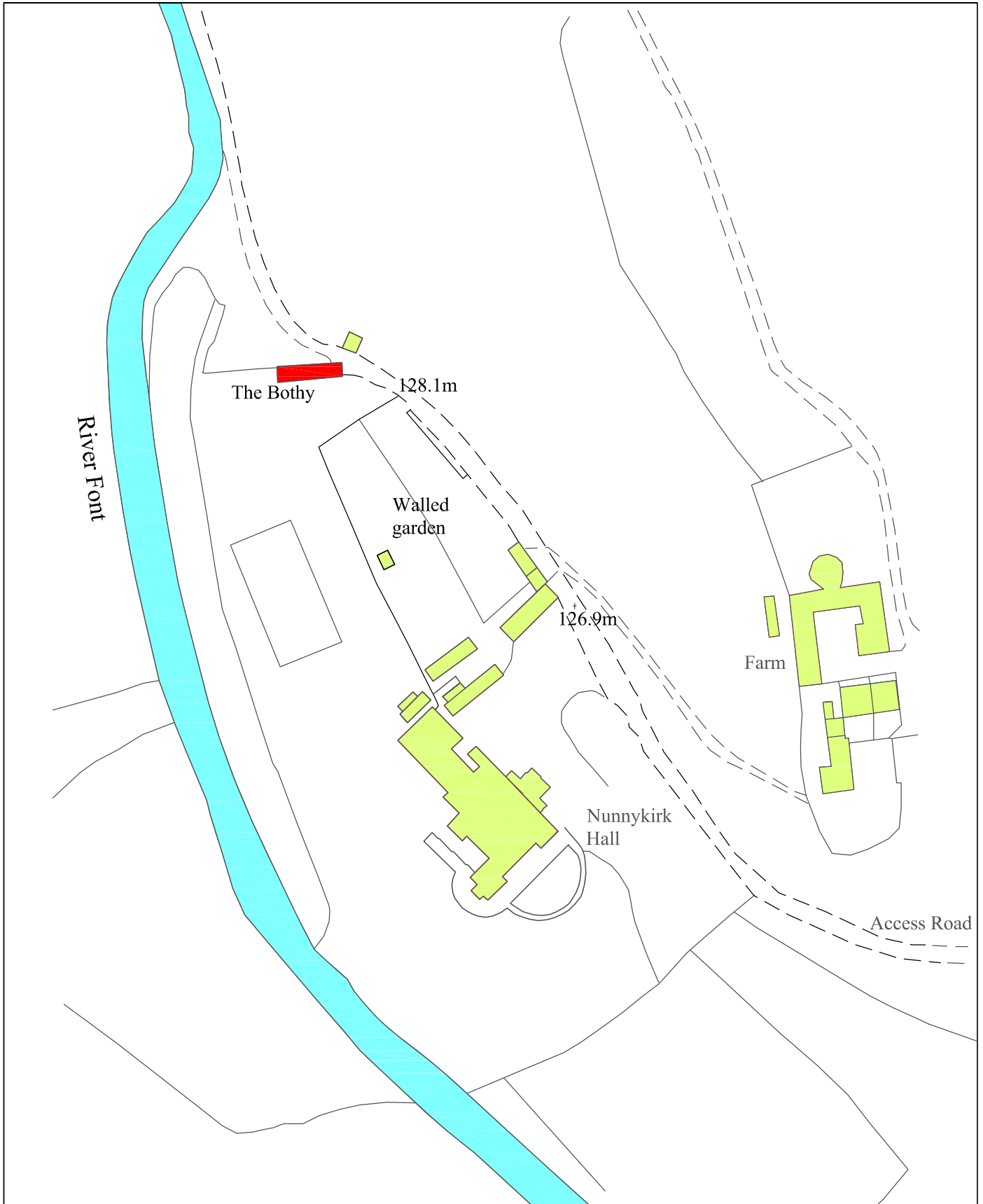


KEY:

 Site Location

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Figure 1 : Site Location




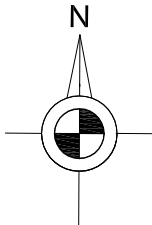

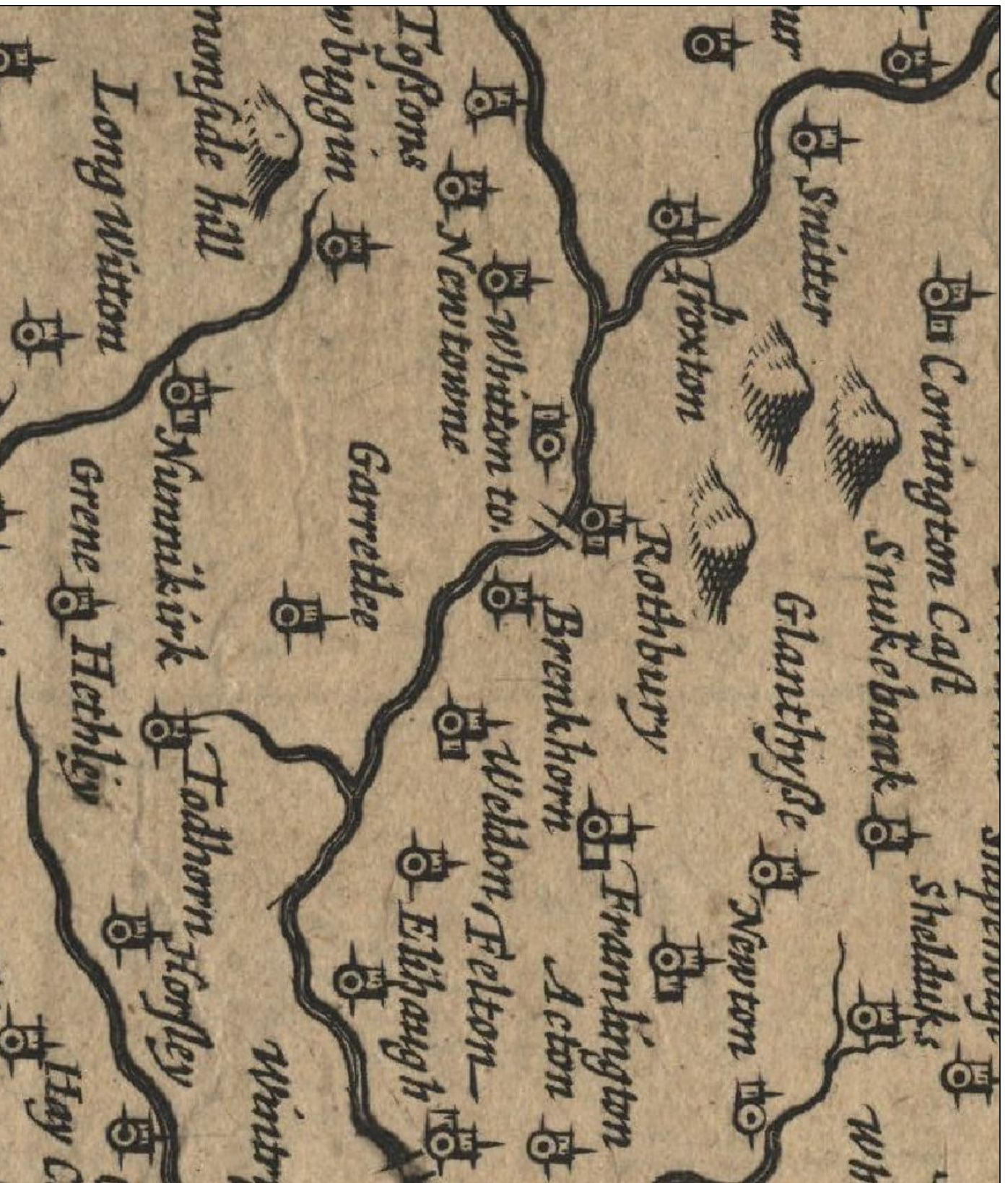
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Figure 2 : Site Plan



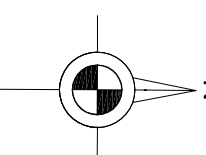
North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2009
The Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall

Scale Not to Scale

DRAWN BY: FW
DATE: January 2008

LOCATION:

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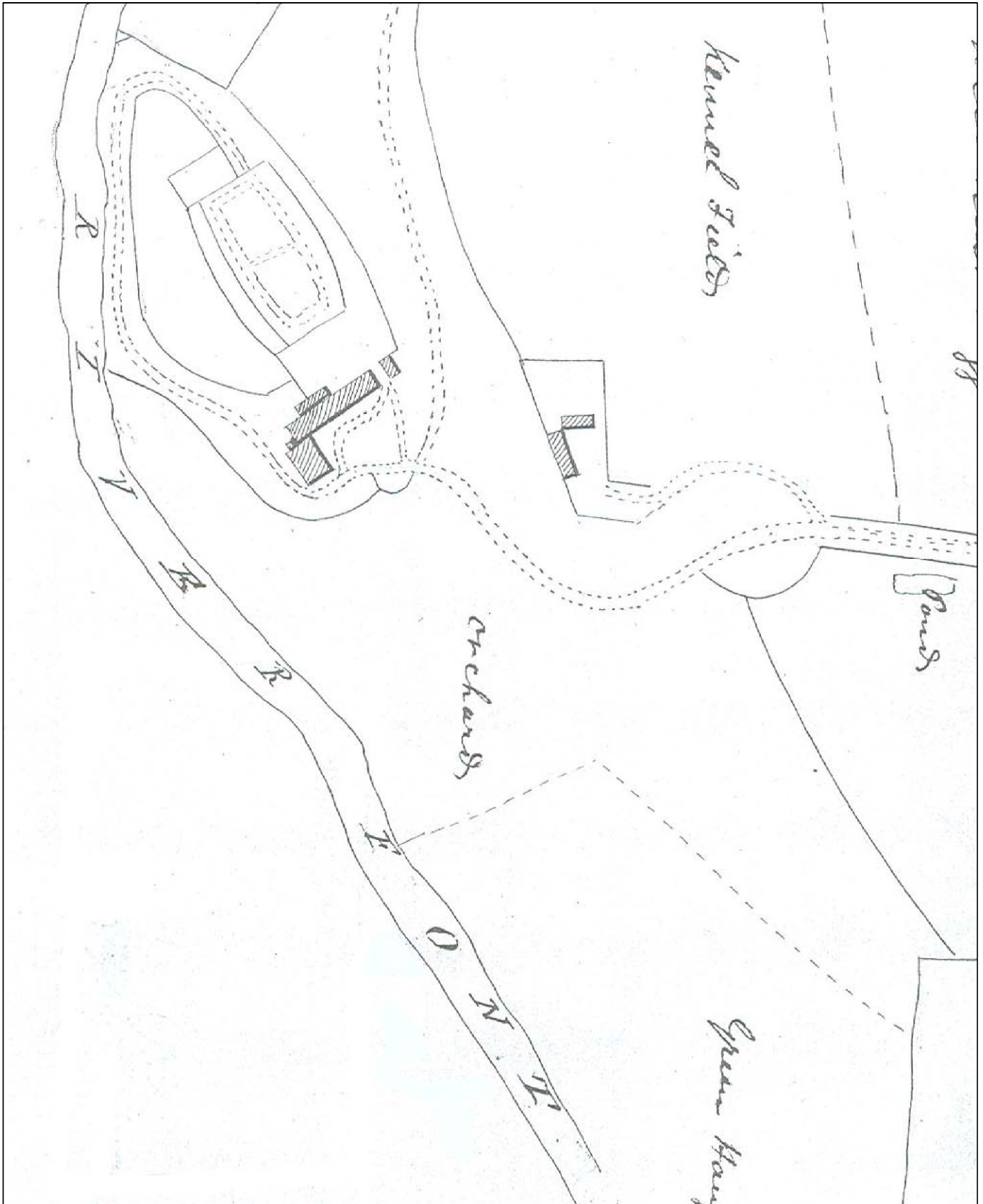


REPORT NO:

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John Hare Architects

Figure 3 : Extract from Speed's Map of Northumberland 1610




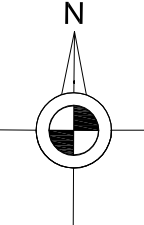
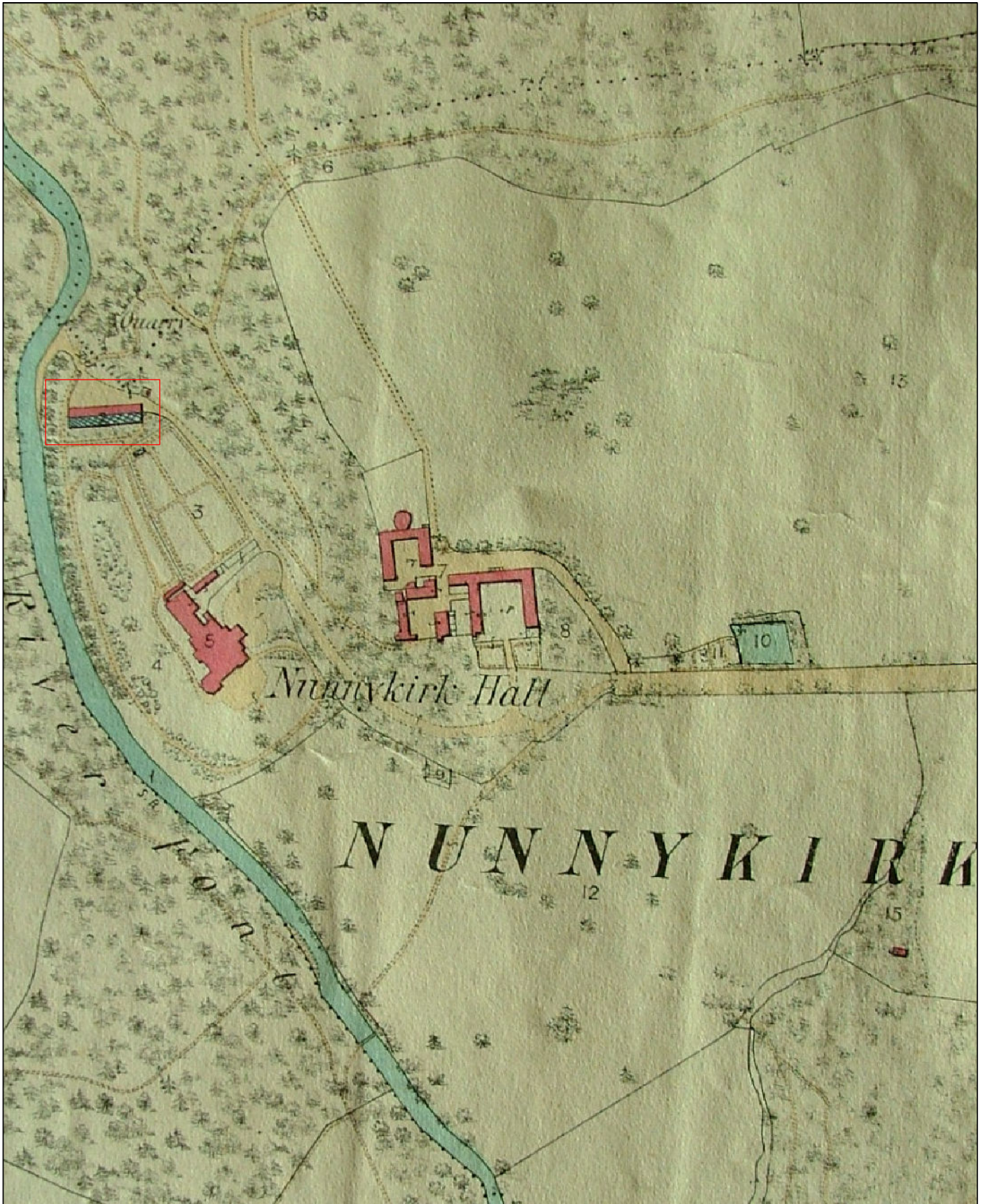
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Figure 4 : Undated Plan (late 18th/early 19th century) of Nunnykirk Hall (Ref: ZHE 56/19)




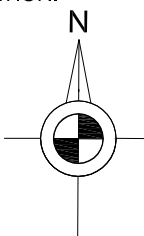

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Figure 5 : Extract from the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map c.1865




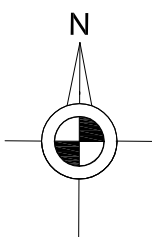

 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2009</p>	<p>PROJECT: The Bothy, Nunnycirk Hall</p> <p>SCALE: Not to Scale</p> <p>REPORT No: CP 847/08</p> <p>CLIENT Nunnycirk Centre for Dyslexia and John Hare Architects</p> <p>DRAWN BY: FW</p> <p>DATE: January 2009</p>	<p>LOCATION:</p> 	<p>KEY:</p>  <p>Location of The Bothy</p> <p><small>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732</small></p>
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Figure 6 : Extract from the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1897



NORTH PENNINES
ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

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2009

PROJECT: The Bothy, Nunnycirk Hall
SCALE: Not to Scale
REPORT No: CP 847/08
CLIENT Nunnycirk Centre for Dyslexia and John Hare Architects
DRAWN BY: FW
DATE: January 2009

LOCATION:

KEY:

Location of The Bothy

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Figure 7 : Extract from the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1922



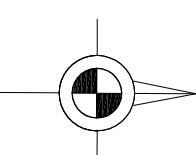
North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2009
The Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall

Scale 1:100 at A4

DRAWN BY: FW

DATE: January 2009

ORIENTATION: N



KEY:

-  Brick
-  Masonry

REPORT No:

CP 847/08

COMMISSIONED BY:
Nunnykirk Centre for Dyslexia and
John Hare Architects

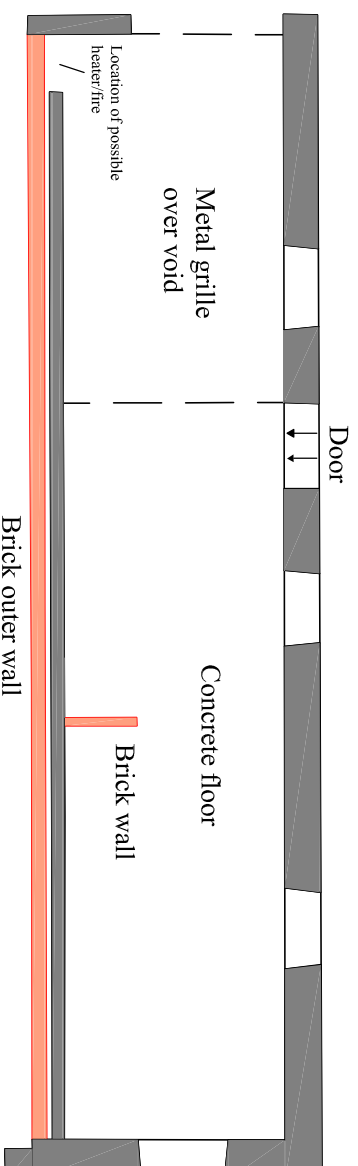


Figure 8 : Ground Plan of The Bothy

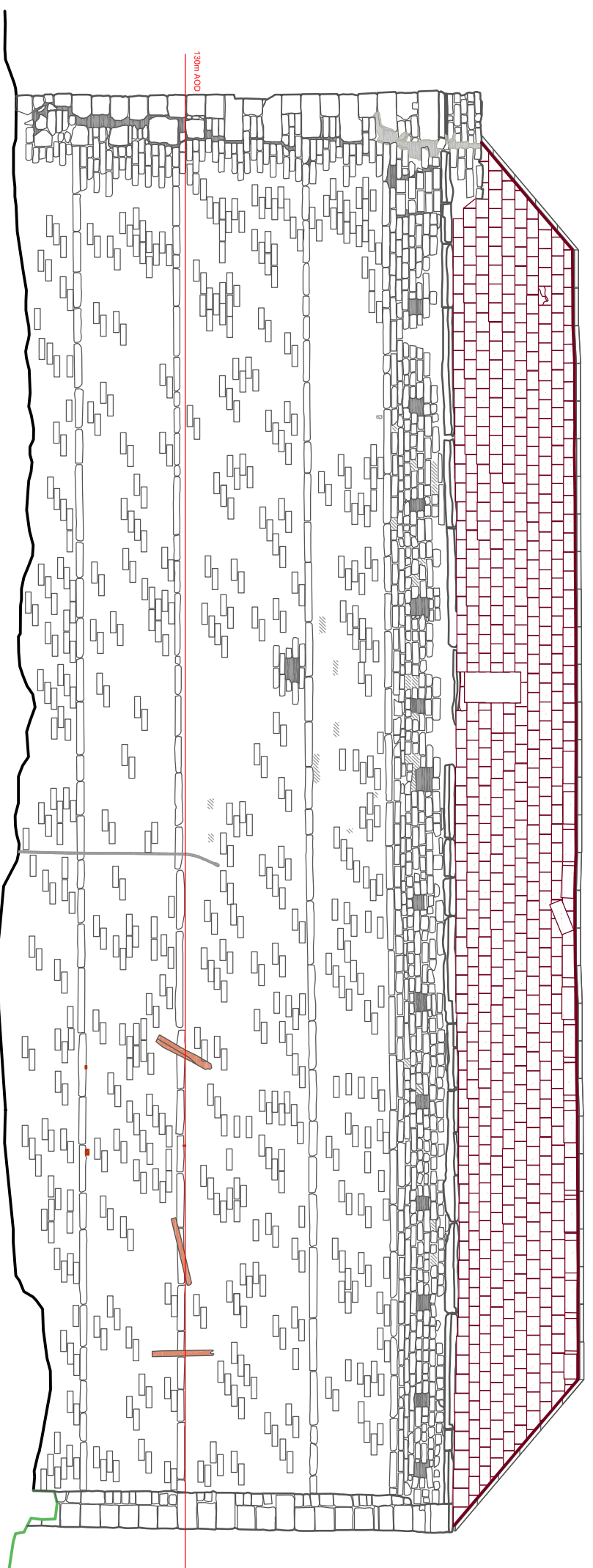


North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2009
The Bothy, Nunnykirk Hall




Scale 1:60 (at A3)

DRAWN BY: TL

DATE: January 2009



KEY

-  Cement
-  Brick
-  Timber section

 130m AOD

REPORT No:

CP 847/08

COMMISSIONED BY:

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Figure 9 : South Elevation of The Bothy