

OVENSTONE GRASSLEES NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

March 2008



Prepared for: <i>NNPA</i>	By: <i>The Archaeological Practice Ltd.</i>
------------------------------	--

<i>Project code:</i> AP07/03	<i>Stage:</i> Final	<i>Compiled by:</i> RJC	<i>Control:</i> AR	<i>Completion date:</i> 08/03/08
---------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------------

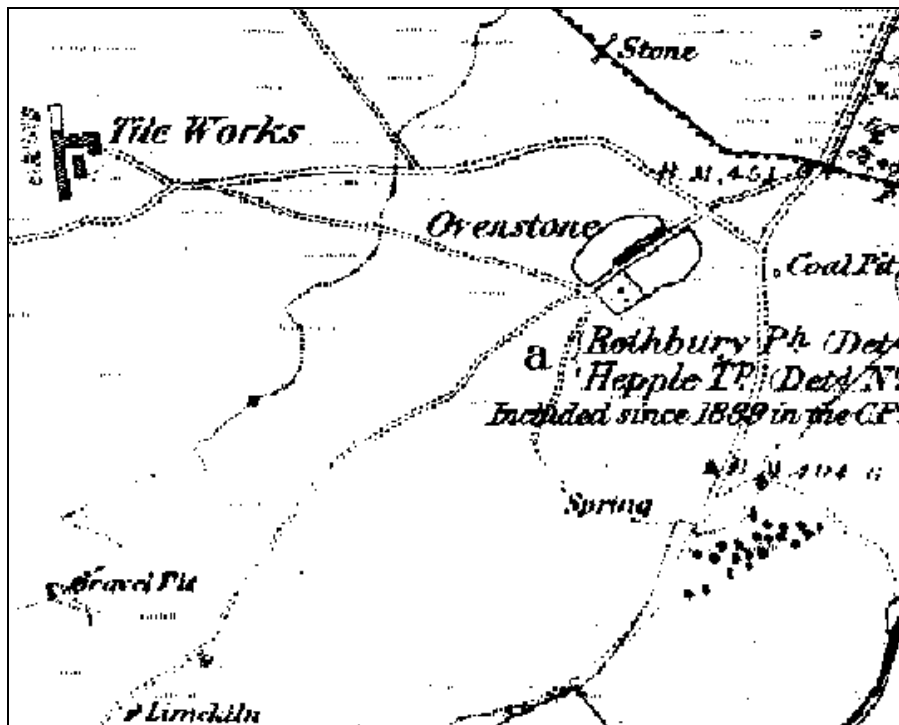
Registered Office: 34G Clayton Street West, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DZ
Telephone: 0191 2730777; FAX: 0191 2731777; E-mail: r.j.carlton@ncl.ac.uk
Registered Company no. 4549772

FIELDWORK AT OVENSTONE GRASSLEES NORTHUMBERLAND

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 18TH JUNE AND 2ND JULY 2007

for

UPPER COQUETDALE COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT
by
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRACTICE LTD.



Frontispiece: Detail from the first edition Ordnance Survey plan showing the settlement of Ovenstone.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. EVALUATION PROGRAMME
3. RESULTS
4. CONCLUSIONS
5. REFERENCES

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

APPENDIX 2: EXCAVATIONS AT OVENSTONE, FEB 2ND – 4TH 2007
By Dr Rob Young

APPENDIX 3: OVENSTONE BEFORE 1841
By David Jones (UCCAP)

APPENDIX 4: OVENSTONE CENSUS 1851-81
By Dr Ian Roberts

APPENDIX 5: KNOWN SITES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPORTANCE IN THE VICINITY
OF OVENSTONE (DATA FROM NCC HER RECORD)

APPENDIX 6: POTTERY REPORT
By Jenny Vaughan (NCAS)

APPENDIX 7: BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

ILLUSTRATIONS

Front Cover: View of the excavated site at Ovenstone during survey work.

Frontispiece: Detail from the first edition Ordnance Survey plan showing the settlement of Ovenstone.

Illus. 01: The Location of Ovenstone (circled) in the Coquet Valley.

Illus. 02: Site Location plan

Illus. 03: Aerial photograph of the Ovenstone site (© Tim Gates) - detail of the cottage block and enclosure below.

Illus. 04: Extract from Armstrong's map of Northumberland, showing 'Shield' (circled).

Illus. 05: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey plan (surveyed c.1855)

Illus. 06: Extract from the second edition Ordnance Survey plan (c.1898)

Illus. 07: Known cultural heritage sites in the vicinity of Ovenstone.

Illus. 08: Trench location plan based on plane-table survey carried out in 2007 and additional survey data (see below) from 2008 (base-line shown in blue); Summer 2008 trenches highlighted red, February 2007 trenches highlighted green.

Illus. 09: Plan of TRENCH 1.

Illus. 10: TRENCH 1 - Section drawing of the external (NNW) face of the north wall of the excavated cottage block.

Illus. 11: TRENCH 1 - elevation of fireplace in the east wall of House 2.

Illus. 12 & 13: TRENCH 1 - plans of the West House, phases I & II.

Illus. 14: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase III.

Illus. 15: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase IV.

Illus. 16: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase V.

Illus. 17 & 18: Plan and East Facing Section of Trench 2.

Illus. 19 & 20: Plan and south-east Facing Section of Trench 3.

Illus. 21: Plan of Trench 4.

Illus. 22: View of the Grasslees limekiln.

Illus. 23: View from the west side of the Grasslees limekiln.

Illus. 24: A flooded bell pit at Ovenstone

Illus. 25: View of the excavations soon after turf stripping.

Illus. 26: View of the north-east corner of Trench 1 soon after turf stripping, showing the original appearance of the remains, with the upper walls just visible.

Illus. 27: View of trench 1 from the south-east during an open day.

Illus. 28: View of trench 1 from the east during an open day.

Illus. 29: View of House 1 from the south.

Illus. 30: View of the part of the north wall of House 1 (right) at its junction with House 2 (left)

Illus. 31: View of Houses 1 (foreground) and 2 from the west.

Illus. 32: View from the west of the trackway and 'platform' feature in front of House 2

Illus. 33: View from the east of the trackway in front of House 2

Illus. 34: View of the doorway at the south-west corner of House 2, leading onto a trackway (both sides of kerb visible)

Illus. 35: View of cobbled footpath and trackway in front of the south wall of House 2, east end.

Illus. 36: View from the south-west of 'platform' features outside the south wall of House 2, with the trackway beyond.

Illus. 37: View from the south-west of 'platform' features outside the south wall of House 2.

Illus. 38: View of House 2 interior from the east.

Illus. 39: View of the flagged floor of House 2, looking southwards towards the interior south wall with fireplace to left of view.

Illus. 40: View of the secondary internal fireplace in House 2.

Illus. 41: Flags removed from the floor of House 2 to reveal clay and bedrock immediately below.

Illus. 42: Fireplace in the east wall of House 2, viewed from the north-west.

Illus. 43: Fireplace in the east wall of House 2

Illus. 44: Trench 2 viewed from the north.

Illus. 45: Trench 2 viewed from the east

Illus. 46: Trench 2 viewed from NNW

Illus. 47: Trench 3 viewed from the west.

Illus. 48: Trench 4 viewed from the south.

Illus. 49: View from the south-west of 'masonry remains in a bank on the north side of the central trackway.

Illus. 50: View of masonry remains west of the cottage block (suggested as the possible site of earlier occupation)

Illus. 51: Backfilling in progress.

Illus. 52: Backfilling in progress, showing the method to protect the surviving masonry remains.

SUMMARY

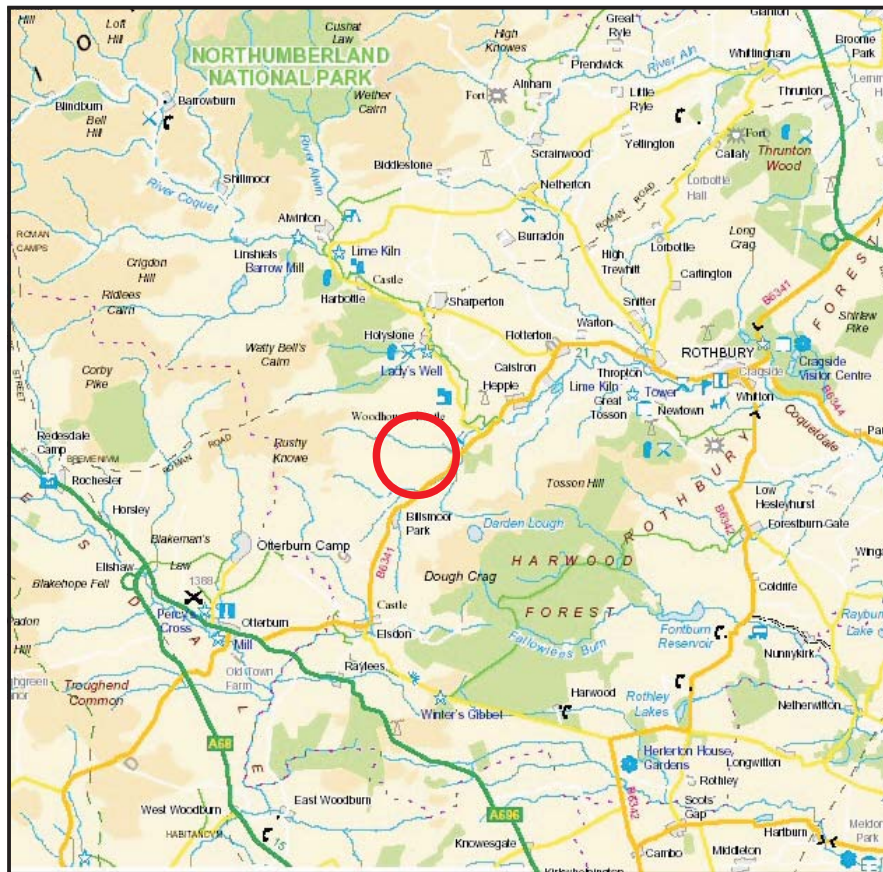
This document reports on an archaeological excavation carried out at Ovenstone, on the Grasslees Estate in the Parish of Elsdon, Northumberland where previous documentary work had provided contextual information regarding the archaeological and historical development of a 19th century settlement surrounded by bell pits and in the vicinity of a contemporary tile-works and lime kiln.

The excavations carried out in June and July 2007 explored some of the main features of the site visible as earthworks and built remains, namely the cottage block, a surrounding earthwork enclosure and ephemeral traces of a sub-surface enclosure to the west. In addition, further documentary work was carried out which added social and economic context to the physical remains.

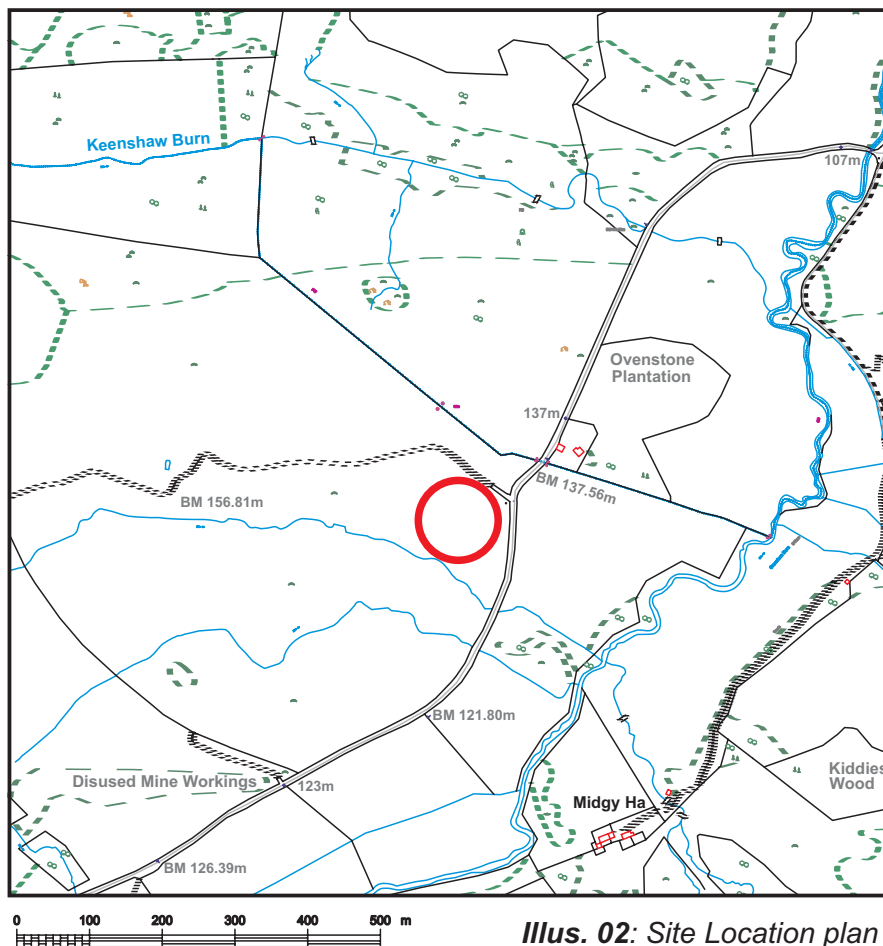
The exploration of the cottage block revealed that it was of two distinct periods, the more substantial earlier part to the west showing evidence of successive phases of use, probably beginning in the later 18th century. Houses 2 and 3 were built onto the east end of House 1 around 1830, when mining through the use of bell pits began in earnest on the site, followed soon after by the development of a tile works on an elevated site to the north. It is now thought that the most likely position of any earlier structural remains is west of House 1 in the area where masonry remains appear in the bank north of the trackway which extends from the west side of the present cottage remains.

The archaeological evidence indicates that the main focus of social activity outside the houses was on a narrow pathway and trackway south of the cottages, between the house frontages and large communal midden. The area north of the cottages is likely to have been used as a paddock for domestic stock, perhaps with some use for gardening.

Miners continued to be recorded in the census returns of 1851, 1861 and 1871, but in the census return of 1881 Ovenstone is not mentioned, suggesting that with the closure of the mining and tile-making concerns the settlement had been abandoned as a site of residence. Local tradition that the cottages continued in use as a shelter for shepherds and tinkers is attested archaeologically by several remains, including those of a hearth made from loose stones in the centre of House 2, and by two platform-like features outside House 2, thought to have been built as buttresses to shore up the creaking walls of the cottages during or just after its final phase of human occupation.



Illus. 01: The Location of Ovenstones (circled) in the Coquet Valley.



Illus. 02: Site Location plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The following is a report on a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching carried out on the site of a late post-medieval and early modern mining settlement at Ovenstone, on the Grasslees Estate in the Parish of Elsdon, Northumberland, centred at NY963986, some 250m north-west of the Grasslees burn, west of its confluence with the river Coquet. The excavation strategy was designed to explore and define the nature of previously known and suspected buried features of archaeological significance.

The fieldwork took place at the invitation of, and as part of the fieldwork programme for the Upper Coquetdale Community Archaeology Project (UCCAP), co-ordinated at the time of the fieldwork by Elanor Johnson of the Northumberland National Park Authority, under the auspices of which the Project was set-up.

It was anticipated prior to the commencement of fieldwork that the opportunity would arise to investigate sites in the wider vicinity of interest to the UCCAP and which it was considered could be related to the Ovenstone site. Such sites in the wider vicinity of Ovenstone include a Cairnfield associated with Harehaugh hillfort and Harehaugh Neolithic long cairn (surveyed by The Archaeological Practice Ltd. in 2003) and the sites of late post-medieval whisky stills in the Tosson Hills and below Simonburn (identified by The Archaeological Practice Ltd. in 2006 during an investigation of the beer and whisky trade in Coquetdale) as areas worthy of exploration. Sites in the close vicinity of the site included a tile-works, to the north, limekiln to the west, trackways to the east and north, as well as the ubiquitous bell-pits. However, in the event the poor weather of Summer 2007 – notably wet even by the standards of the Rede-Coquet interfluvium – militated against plans to carry out explorations of any kind, invasive or otherwise, outside the immediate focus of the Ovenstone cottages and their associated enclosures.

1.2 Cultural Heritage Background

Prior to the Summer 2008 excavations, the site of Ovenstone was known from visible remains to comprise a series of earthworks and ruined walls, the latter including the remains of dwellings in the form of a cottage block within its own paddock. The actual arrangement of enclosures within which the cottages sits is obscure, but arguably includes a secondary square enclosure placed over its western boundary. Alternatively, there is some evidence for dividing the enclosures into three: one south of the cottages, one to the north and west, with the square enclosure to the south-west. The purpose of the enclosures is not known, but they are likely to have had a varied function, perhaps changing over time. The scale of the bank and ditches on the north and west sides suggests a stock boundary, while the abundance of good top-soil cover in some areas suggests small-scale arable use or cottage gardens.

Across a track-way immediately south of the cottage block lies a large midden which probably built up from the domestic refuse of the occupants of the cottages. Also part of the complex, but located just outside the site enclosure earthworks is a series of bell pits which

run north-west and south-east of the site along a coal seam. The closest of these are just over the enclosure boundary beyond the midden south-east of the site. Trackways connect the main settlement site with the bell pits and the site of an adjacent tile-works to the north. The tile-works shares with the remains of an adjacent lime-kiln the identity of an industrial structure of mainly agrarian function, the former producing land drains, the latter agricultural lime. The Grasslees corn mill, west of the lime-kiln is an earlier structure also associated with farming; other remains of the farmed landscape within which the Ovenstone settlement was located are apparent in the form of rig & furrow cultivation features and land divisions.

These post-medieval and early modern sites of significance are part of an historical landscape which also includes medieval and remains of settlement, burial, farming and industry, the most notable of which are recorded on the County Historic Environment Record (see *Appendix 5*).

Documentary sources first mention Ovenstone as an inhabited site in 1771 when the burial occurred on August 30 of '*Thomas Arkl, pauper, of y^e Ovenstone*'. Thomas Arkle had been baptised in Elsdon on June 10th 1745; it is unknown for how long he had lived at Ovenstone, and unrecorded whether he was alone there, but his status as a pauper suggests that he is unlikely to have had the financial ability to construct his own dwelling (or to attract the landlord to build one for him), suggesting that a dwelling may have existed there prior to his occupancy. The only other 18th century reference is a baptism on July 25, 1780: 'Margaret, daughter of Andrew and Margaret Kerr of y^e Ovenstone'. Andrew and Margaret Kerr were married in Elsdon on May 8 1779, Andrew having been born at 'Silloones' and Margaret at Hillock (about one mile south-east of Silloans), both, therefore, probably from shepherding stock. There are no other references in the 18th century, although Armstrong's county map of 1779 intriguingly includes an isolated steading, named 'Shield' on the north side of the Grasslees Burn between Grasslees and Harehaugh. This name would imply that the site was used as a shepherd's residency, perhaps on a seasonal basis, and would fit with the most likely function of Ovenstone prior to the development of coal-mining and related industries in the 19th century.

There are no further references to Ovenstone until 1829, when a decade-long flurry of activity involving several, apparently transient families begins. The three houses present by 1841, which are almost certainly the houses whose ruins were excavated in 2007, may well have been built around 1830.¹ Between 1841 and 1871 with the principal occupancy of the Telford and Proudlock families there is a considerable degree of continuity in the population which does not include any of the individuals or families recorded in the previous decade. This period saw the likely origin and development of mining on the site - John Dickison is the first recorded pitman living at Ovenstone in 1834 - although it is possible that mining on the site has earlier origins, particularly if the coal outcropped at the surface, in which case it could have been intermittently exploited for domestic and small-scale commercial use over many centuries. With regard to the origins of the 19th century commercial colliery, David Jones points out that there were individuals described as pitmen living within a mile or so of Ovenstone - a Benjamin Ridshaw at Swindon in 1811, a George Proudlock of Herdlaw in 1808 and a Lewis Proudlock at Swindon in 1808 - who could have worked bell pits at Ovenstone before there was any permanent housing there.

¹ David Jones(*Appendix 4*) suggests that the presence of an 80 year old man - Mark Maughan, who died there in March 1829 - implies reasonably substantial dwellings were present as early as the 1820s.

During the half century or so from the late 1820s when Ovenstone continuously maintained a settled population a number of occupations in addition to pitmen and brick/tileworkers were represented, notably shepherds, labourers, joiners and quarrymen. By the end of its period of occupation, the economic trends that had encouraged permanent settlement – principally, agricultural reform and the provision of grants for land drainage and other improvements – had passed. It may be conjectured also that the arrival of the railway in 1871 linked Rothbury and the middle Coquet valley with cheaper, superior sources of fuel and other commodities which further squeezed local production. Miners continued to be recorded in the census returns of 1851, 1861 and 1871, although it may be of some relevance that one such miner, John Telford, recorded in 1861 had by 1871 become a stone-breaker, or quarryman. In the census return of 1881 Ovenstone is not mentioned, suggesting that with the closure of the mining and tile-making concerns the settlement had been abandoned as the site of permanent residence, although it may have continued in use as a shepherd's bothy and tinker's shelter. Indeed, the prevention of its use by tinkers appears to have been considered reason enough for its eventual demolition.

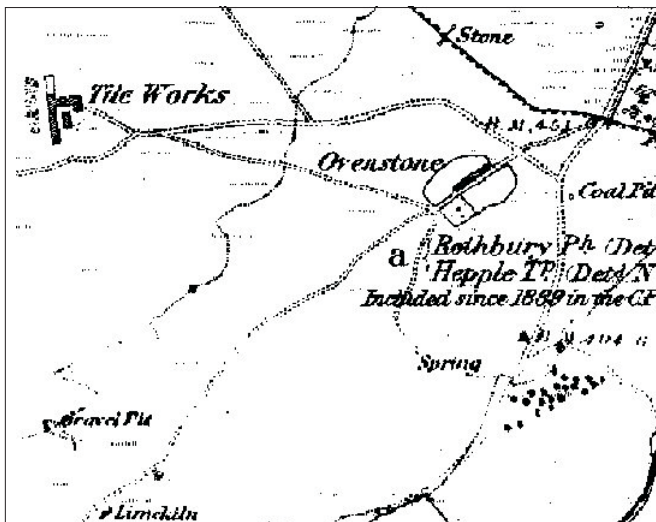


Illus. 03: Aerial photograph of the Ovenstones site (© Tim Gates) - detail of the cottage block and enclosure below.

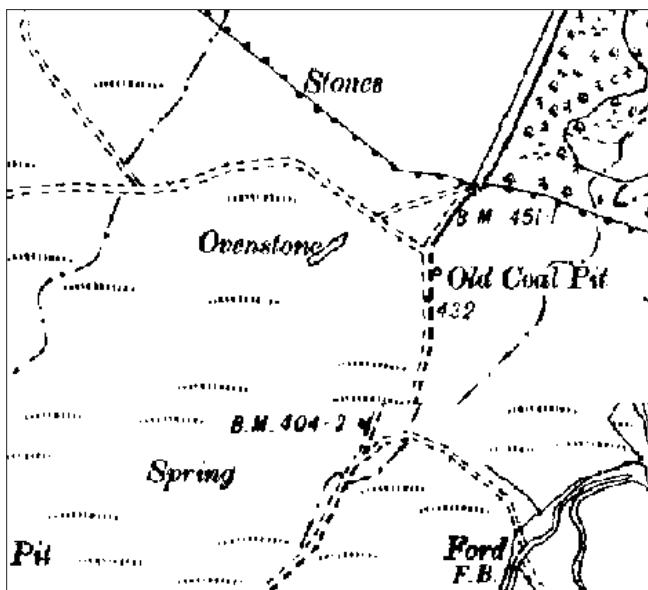




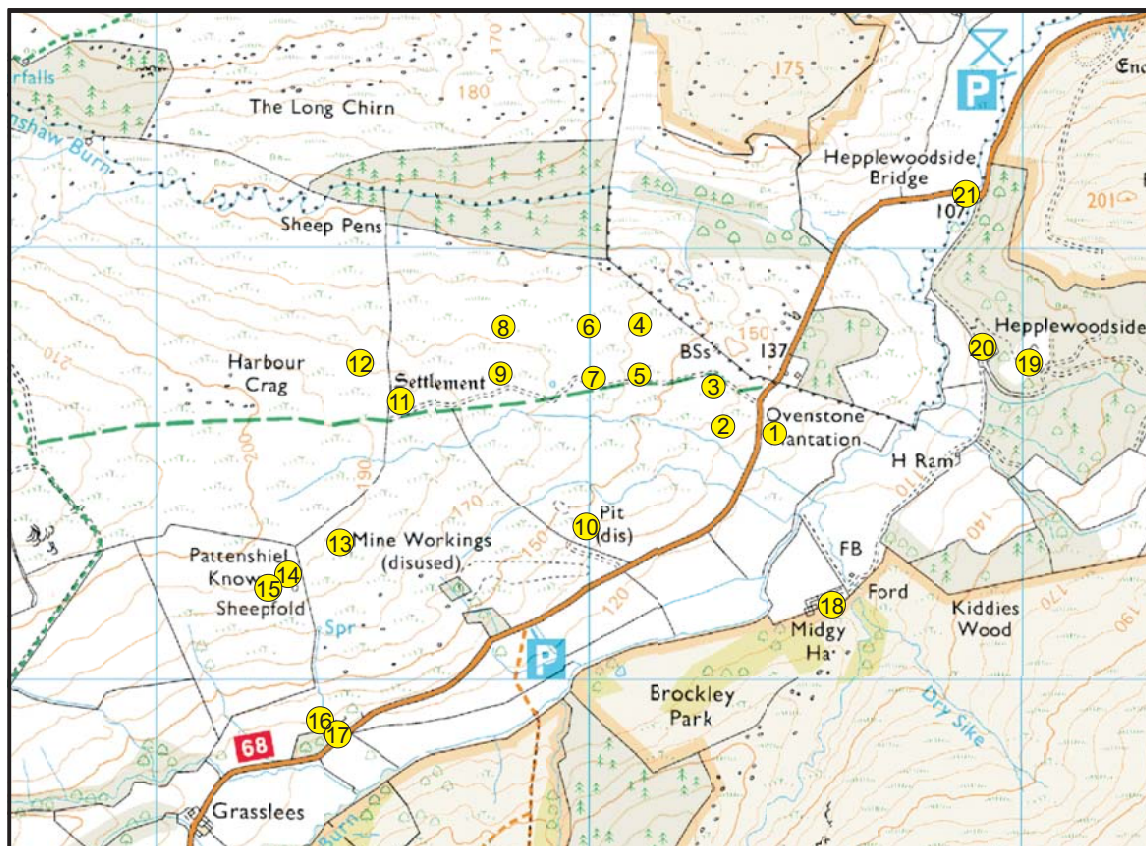
Illus. 04: Extract from Armstrong's map of Northumberland, showing Shield (circled).



Illus. 05: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey plan (surveyed c.1855)



Illus. 06: Extract from the second edition Ordnance Survey plan (c.1898)



Illus. 07: Known cultural heritage sites in the vicinity of Ovenstones.

- Key
- 1: Bell Pits
 - 2: Ovenstone(s)
 - 3: Boundary stones
 - 4: Ruined building and oval enclosure of stone.
 - 5: Bell Pits, probably 19th century.
 - 6: Circular Enclosure
 - 7: Tilery at Ovenstone referred to in an 1855 directory.
 - 8: Field system incl. sod cast dykes, turf and stone field walls
 - 9: Bell Pits with recorded dates of 1808, 1827, 1851 and 1871.
 - 10: Two, late 18th-early 19th century stone built lime kilns at Grasslees
 - 11: Pattenshiel Knowe Iron Age/Romano-British enclosed farmstead
 - 12: Bell Pits with recorded dates of 1808, 1827, 1851 and 1871.
 - 13: Bell Pits; the earliest known date of 1808.
 - 14: Sheepfold
 - 15: Ruined Building known to have been present in 1771.
 - 16: Polished stone axe (findspot)
 - 17: Grasslees Mill, referred to in the Eldon parish register as early as 1687
 - 18: Midge Ha', mid 19th century settlement
 - 19: Hepple Woodside, 14th century tower (now ruined)
 - 20: Hepple Woodside Cottage
 - 21: Hepple Woodside Bridge, 1852

2. EVALUATION PROGRAMME

2.1 Aims

The aims of the programme of excavation were to investigate visible structural remains, including the outlines of buildings, enclosures and other earthworks, to determine the character and date of those remains and determine, as far as possible, their function and state of preservation.

2.2 Methods

Prior to the commencement of the excavation on 18th June 2007 a digital survey of the site was carried out which included the visible outline of the cottages as well as the main, outer enclosure and some of the bell pits south of the midden. Also included was a base-line running along the track on the south side of the cottages. The south side of the main excavation trench was set out upon this base-line and its exact position related to it. This enabled full recording of the trench during excavation using hand tapes.²

The single, large trench measuring 10 metres E-W by 12 metres N-S was positioned to encompass the entire internal area of one of the three main divisions – presumed to be an individual dwelling - of the cottage block. Its southern edge extended beyond the house to include a trackway and the northern fringes of the midden beyond, while its northern edge was set some four metres or so beyond the north side of the cottage block. Other trenches were placed in order to explore visible earthworks. The first, Trench 2, was positioned across the major boundary earthwork north of the cottage block. Trench 3 was positioned over the same earthwork west of the cottage block, with its eastern part crossing a circular or sub-circular earthwork of some nine metres diameter.³ Trenches 4 was positioned to explore a wall extending westwards from the south wall of the cottages and Trench 5 was an exploratory incursion intended to investigate the possible position of a fireplace against the east-facing west gable end of the west cottage. The locations and extent of the evaluation trenches are shown on *Illustration 08*. All excavation was carried out by hand, with all anomalies or features of potential interest examined closely to appraise their importance and, if necessary, for recording purposes. Recording was carried out using digital photographs taken by the author, and drawn plans completed by members of the combined AP and UCCAP team.

The work was carried out using core staff of the Archaeological Practice Ltd. assisted by four student volunteers from the Universities of Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumbria. This, along with the presence of the UCCAP project archaeologist, provided sufficient experienced personnel to guide and advise the volunteers, although in many instances the process was reciprocal, since many of the volunteers were experienced archaeologists and, in addition, provided specialised knowledge in a range of relevant fields, notably geology and Northumbrian lifeways.

² The main trench and subsidiary trenches were also recorded digitally following excavation.

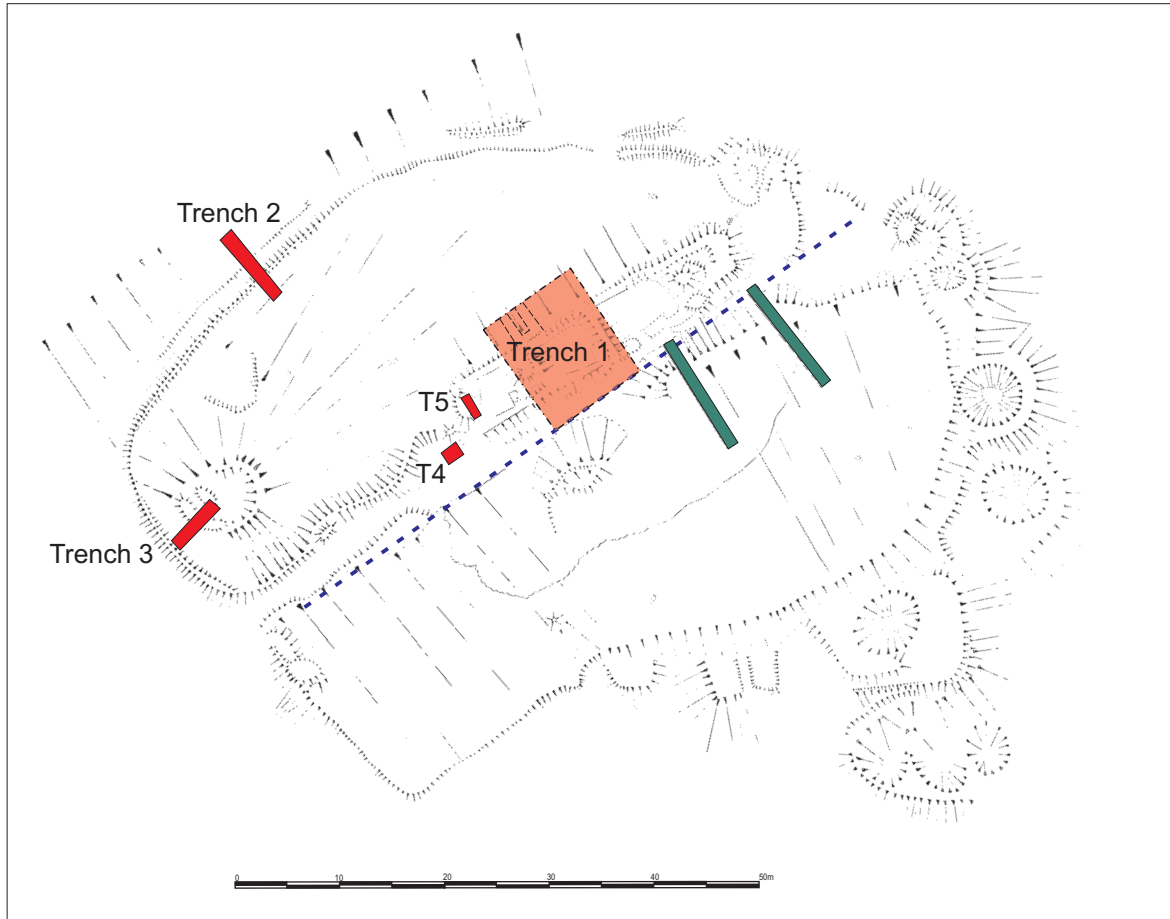
³ This feature was planned by a UCCAP team under the direction of Rob Young and Jane Webster in February 2007.

In order to provide shelter and working areas for staff, volunteers and visitors to the site, a scout tent was erected by UCCAP.⁴ Although tested by rain and winds, this structure survived to serve as a finds processing shelter during the latter stages of the excavations.⁵

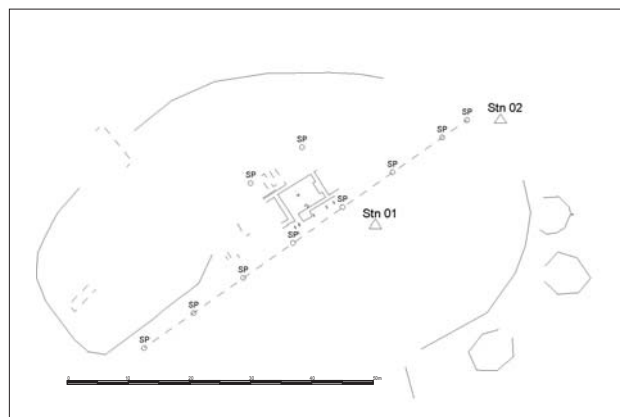
The spoil excavated from the trenches was stored next to the excavated areas in separate piles for turf, top-soil and stones. These were back-filled with the aid of a machine at the end of the excavations, care being taken to restore the site in a way that conserved the remains as far as possible, notably by supporting the house walls with loose stones.

⁴ A supplementary gazebo structure was found wanting during overnight gales and provided no further service after the first week.

⁵ The same level of resilience could not be claimed for a gazebo structure optimistically erected adjacent to the tent in order to provide shelter from the expected high summer sun!



Illus. 08: Trench location plan based on plane-table survey carried out in 2007 and additional survey data (see below) from 2008 (base-line shown in blue); Summer 2008 trenches highlighted red, February 2007 trenches highlighted green.



3. RESULTS

3.1 **Trench 1** - 10m by 12m

Trench 1 was positioned to include a single complete division of the cottage block, interpreted as a discrete dwelling, as well as parts of the neighbouring dwellings. Except where drystone walling penetrated the surface, the entire area was covered by a deposit of sandy loam [101] which varied in depth between 0.1 and 0.65 metres and sat immediately upon the archaeological remains. Although several phases of development or occupation can be interpreted from the excavated remains, complex stratigraphic sequences were absent. The trench is divided for purposes of description into four areas:

1. House One (the west house)
2. House Two
3. South of the cottage block,
4. North the cottage block.

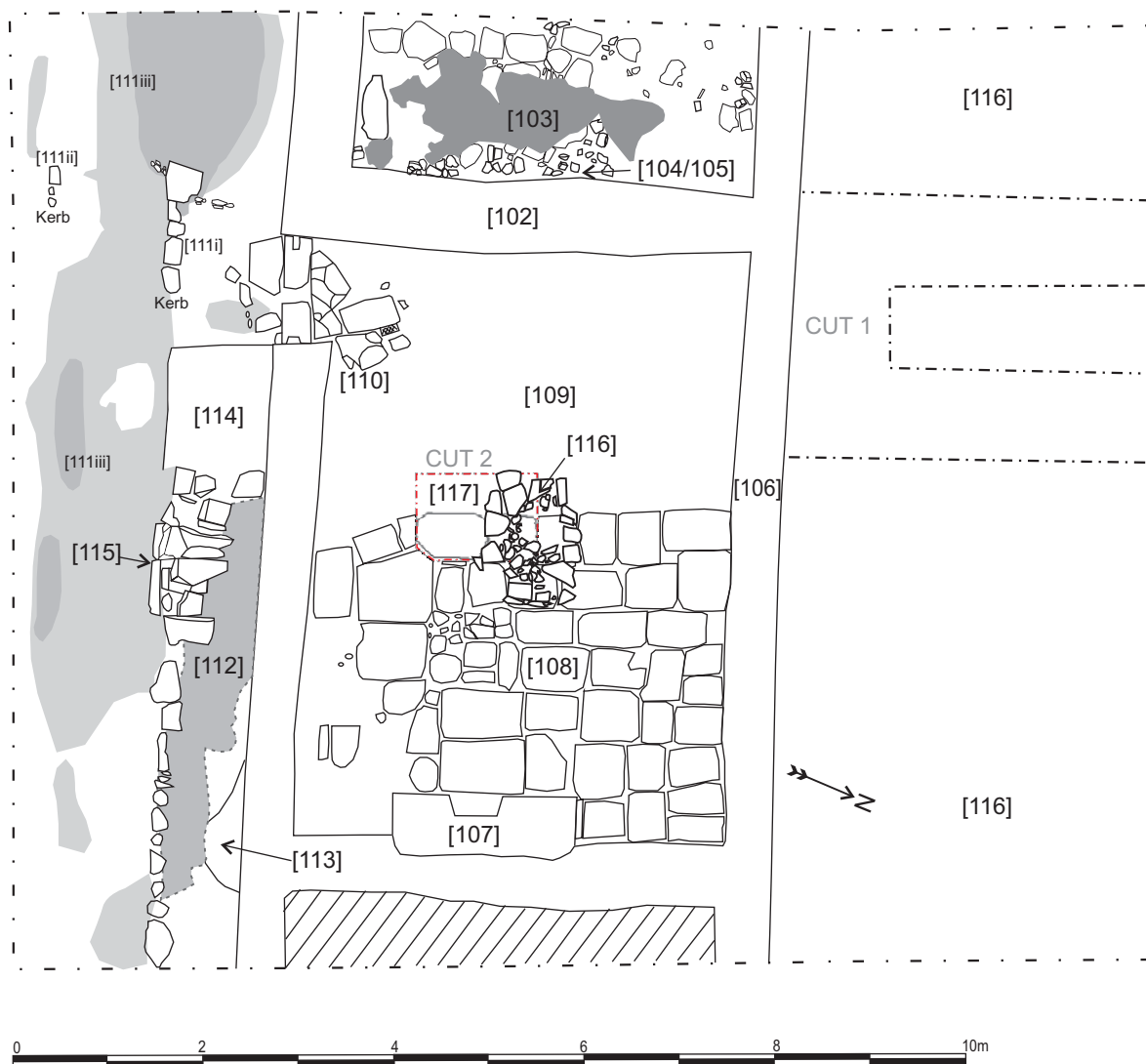
1. House One

House One was a structure some 6.15 metres wide internally, comprising clay-bonded walls [102] of irregularly coursed, faced sandstone with a rubble core, set on a plinth of larger, crudely worked boulders. The latter was visible on the north side of the structure when a cut was made to explore the depth of top-soil in this area; a single uncut quoin, possibly part of the plinth was also visible at the south-east corner of the building, adjacent to the doorway of House 2 (see below). The walls of House One were some 0.85m wide and survived up to a height of 1.1 metres, or some six courses.



Within the structure the humus-rich topsoil [101] sat upon a floor comprised of brick tiles [104] and small, irregular sandstone flags [105] set in pounded earth and burnt deposits [103]. Closer investigation revealed a stratigraphic sequence suggesting at least three phases of occupation. First was the layer of sandstone flagstones set in compressed, or pounded earth. The flagstones did not occupy the full floor surface area, but appeared to have been partially robbed, out, or perhaps were themselves used to plug gaps in an earlier, earth floor. Above the sandstone flagstones were the even more fragmentary remains of a brick floor comprising tiles some 0.06m thick; no measurements for the other dimensions of the tiles could be obtained because only fragments survived, any complete specimens presumably having been robbed out following abandonment. Above and between both the tiles and flags were extensive patches of a burnt or organic deposit, probably dung-based, probably derived from a period following the partial robbing of the brick (and flag?) floor(s) when the building was used as an animal shelter or pen. At this level were some loose stones, including both rubble and facing stones, derived from the collapse of the surrounding house walls [102].

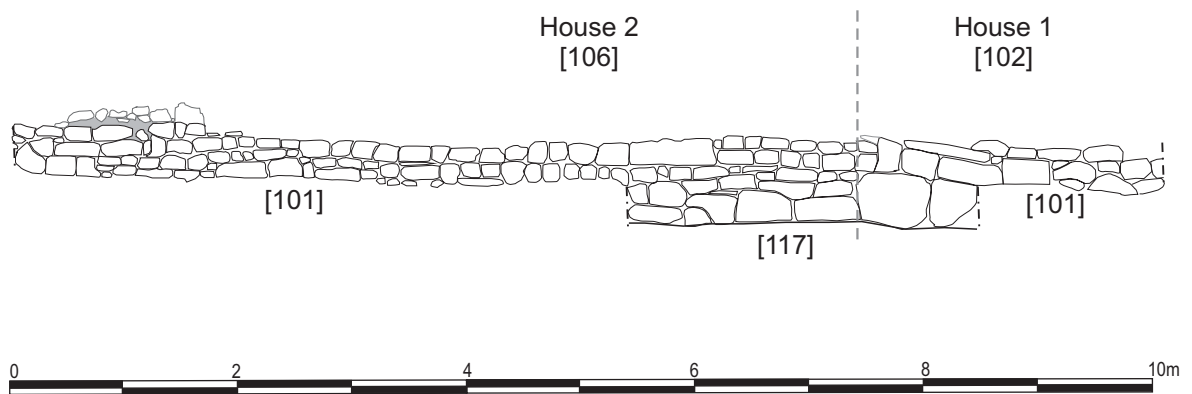
2. House Two

House Two measured 6.65 metres wide internally and was constructed of drystone and/or partially mortar-bonded walls [106] some 0.65m thick, comprised of small sandstone facing stones either side of a loose rubble core. The walls were built on a foundation of crudely dressed stones slightly large than the wall stones, much smaller than those used in the plinth

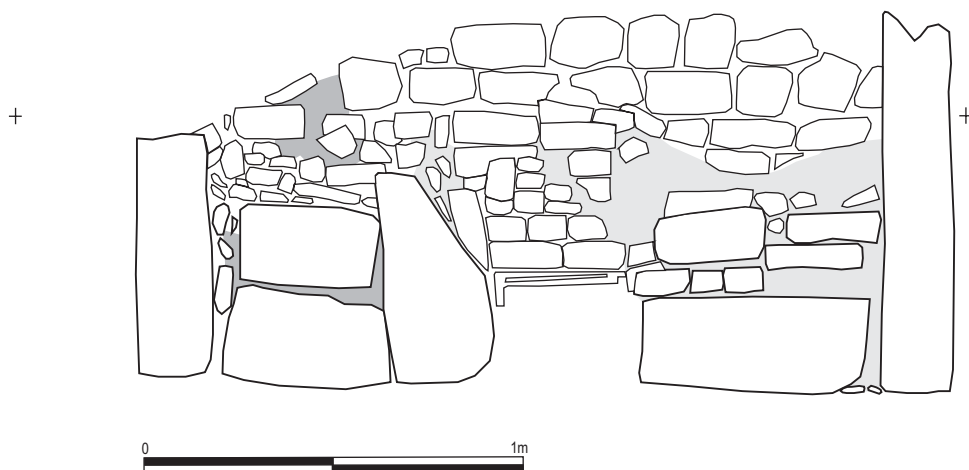


Illus. 09: Plan of TRENCH 1.

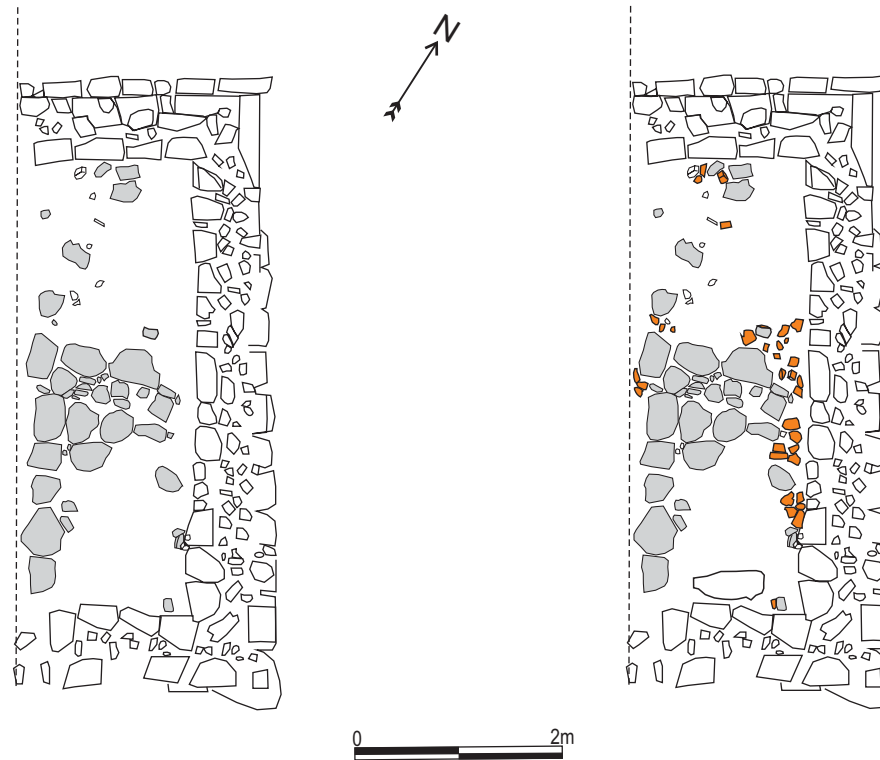
Key:  Shading variations reflect compaction and intensity of cobbling
 Burnt floor surface in House 1



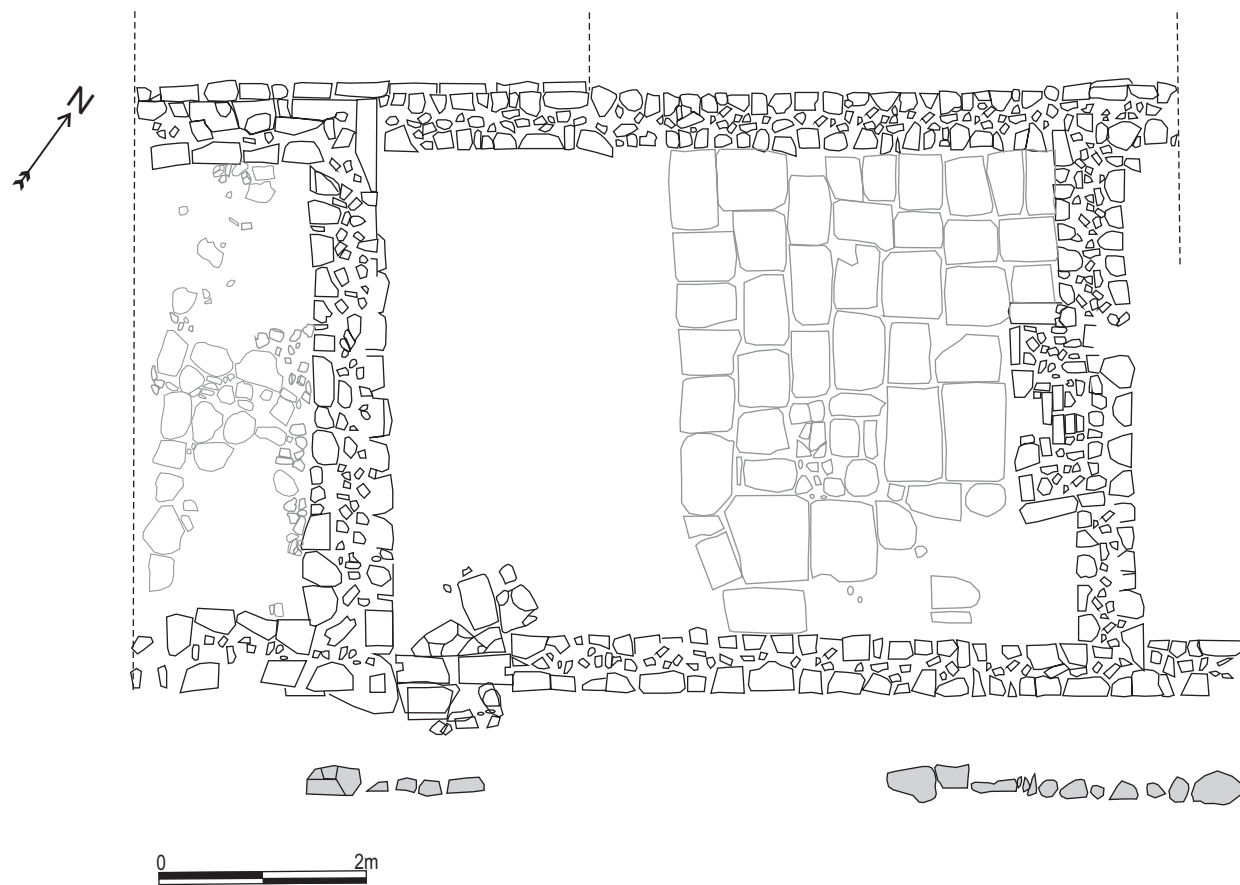
Illus. 10: TRENCH 1 - Section drawing of the external (NNW) face of the north wall of the excavated cottage block.



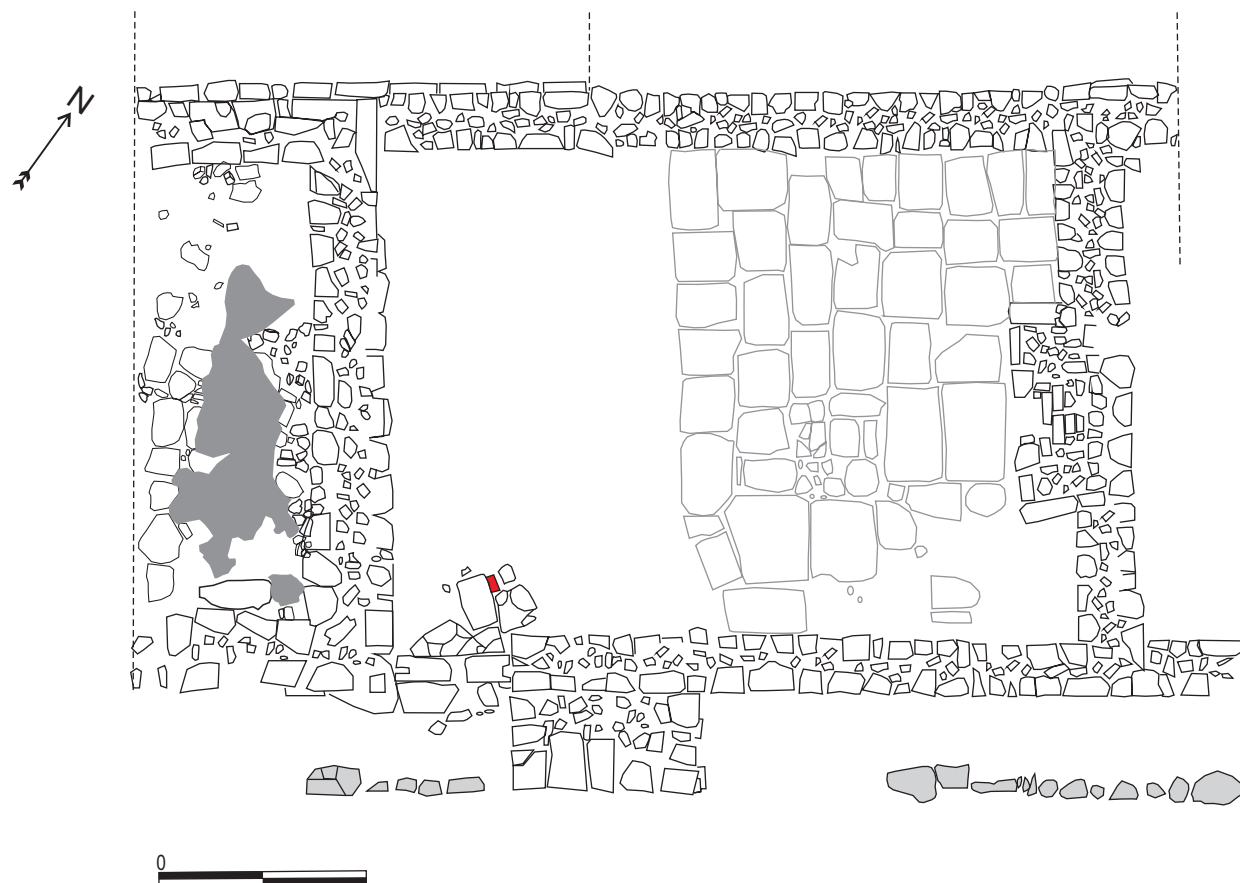
Illus. 11: TRENCH 1 - elevation of fireplace [107] in the east wall of House 2.



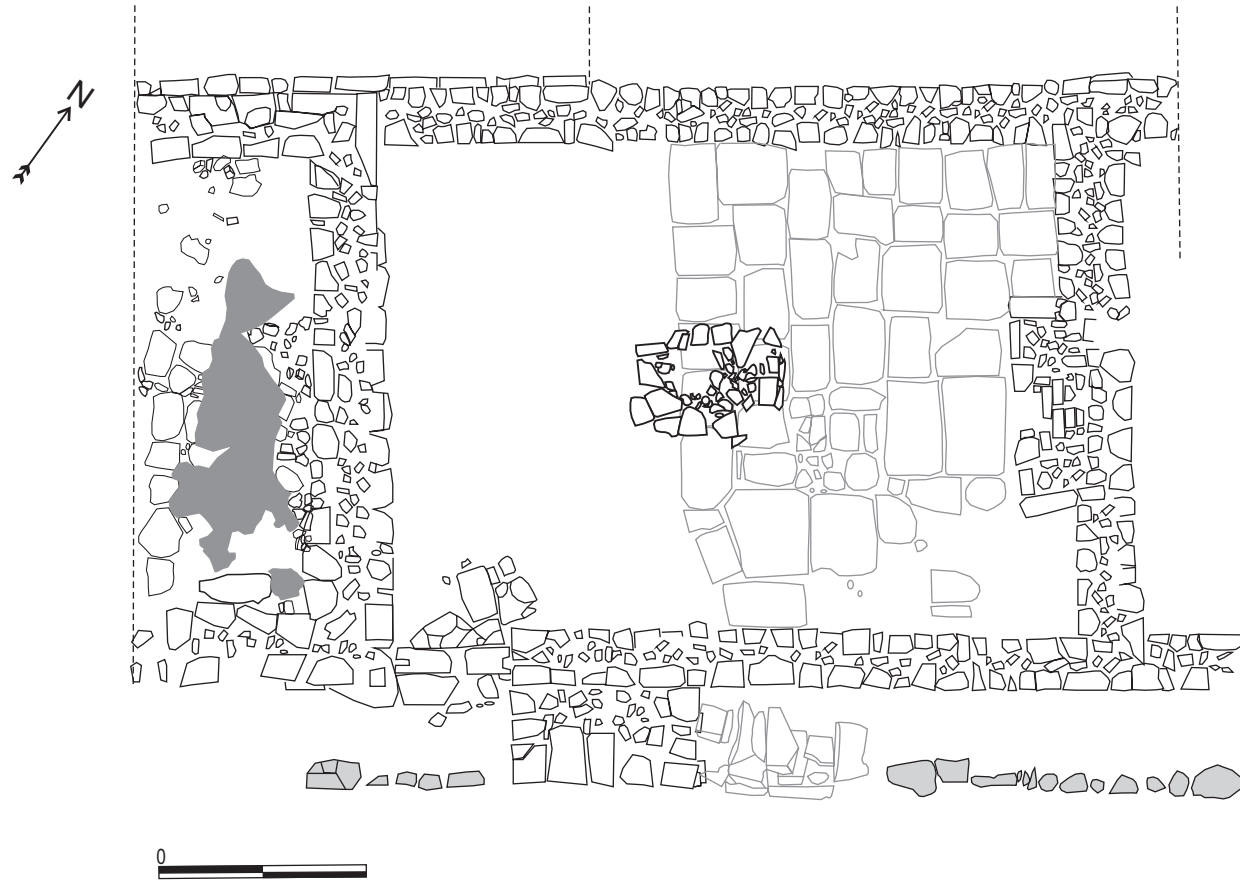
Illus. 12 & 13: TRENCH 1 - plans of the West House, phases I & II.



Illus. 14: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase III.



Illus. 15: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase IV.



Illus. 16: TRENCH 1 - plan of the West House, phase V.

of House 1. Enough of the cottage block was excavated to reveal that the neighbouring house to the east (House 3) was constructed in a similar way, suggesting that the entire block east of House 1 was constructed in a single phase. The walls survived up to a height of 1.05 metres at the east gable end where a fireplace [107], the only feature of note was uncovered.

The fireplace, some 2.15m long and set in the middle of the east gable wall, from which it extended into the room, was constructed from two massive side posts, both of neatly cut sandstone, which would have supported the lintel. Other large sandstone blocks defined the front of the structure, in the middle of which was a gap with surviving hearth grate in position. Behind the central hearth a skin of loose brickwork protected the stonework of the gable end wall from fire damage, and to either side were platforms of loose brick and stonework, one side (probably the north, which contained more burnt deposits) formerly containing an oven, the other a socket for an iron water heater.

A flagged floor [108] occupied more than half of the room extending westwards from the east gable end (and hearth), excepting the south-east corner which may, it is surmised, have contained a cupboard or drying compartment. The floor comprised large flat sandstone flags of uneven size, set directly upon the boulder clay sub-soil. The west part of the room, comprising some 40% of the total area had a beaten earth floor [109] at the same depth as the flags, implying some kind of functionally-related spatial division within the household space. It did not appear to be the case that the flagged area had been robbed out in order to create this floor. Although it can not be entirely discounted that such an event occurred following the abandonment of the house for human use, during or preceding a period of use as an animal shelter or pen, there was no evidence in the form of continuous spreads of animal deposits to support this. No other structural or artifactual remains were found to shed light upon the nature of this division or how it was bounded, but an animal/human division appears most likely.

The only other small area of flagging was in and around the doorway [110] of the house which was uncovered at the west end of the south wall, providing access, therefore, to the unflagged area of floor space. The flagging here was fragmentary and arranged on a different axis to the regular pattern of the main area of flagging, indicating that it was not directly associated with the latter. Door sockets were located on both sides of the doorway and some of the larger, worked stones excavated as rubble from the vicinity of the doorway is likely to have been the broken remains of door pillars and the lintel.

3. South of the cottage block

South of the cottage block was a trackway [111], defined by an interrupted line of kerb-stones [111i] set some 1.00m from the south wall of the cottages, with another, much more fragmentary line [111ii] 2.4m south of the house wall, marking the south side of the track- or road-way. The trackway itself was constructed from compressed sub-soil (probably the original sub-soil with silt and clay washed away over time) with patches of cobbles [111iii] which appear to have been used to fill worn parts of the surface, rather than laid across the entire area as a continuous surface.

The space between the northern line of kerb-stones and the south walls of the cottage block was occupied by a partially cobbled surface [112] – probably originally a path - similar to that of the roadway. Against the south wall of the east end of House One was a shallow deposit of coal finings [113]. West of this, the area between house wall and trackway was occupied

by two, apparently related structures built upon the kerbstones and cobbled surface. The first and most substantial of these structures were set immediately adjacent to the doorway at the west end of the building. It comprised a coursed but poorly keyed platform of good sandstone masonry [114], unbonded but with rubble infill between wall and house. Abutting it to the east was a lower, rubble-built structure [115] continuous with the southern wall of the first, but not wide enough to reach the southern wall of the house. The function of these structures is debateable – enclosed storage areas, milking platforms, garden features were amongst the range of options discussed - but they clearly post-date the primary function of the cottage block. The inclusion of well-dressed masonry blocks, likely robbed from a disused part of the cottage block suggests that the most likely function of these features is as buttresses to shore up the creaking walls of House Two during or just after its final phase of human occupation. A similar date can be argued for a fireplace [116] uncovered in topsoil in the centre of the house; crudely constructed from rubble and re-used facing stones arranged in single course around a central space within which were signs of burning, this was clearly a camp-fire heart constructed following the abandonment of the house as a permanent residence.

4. North of the cottage block

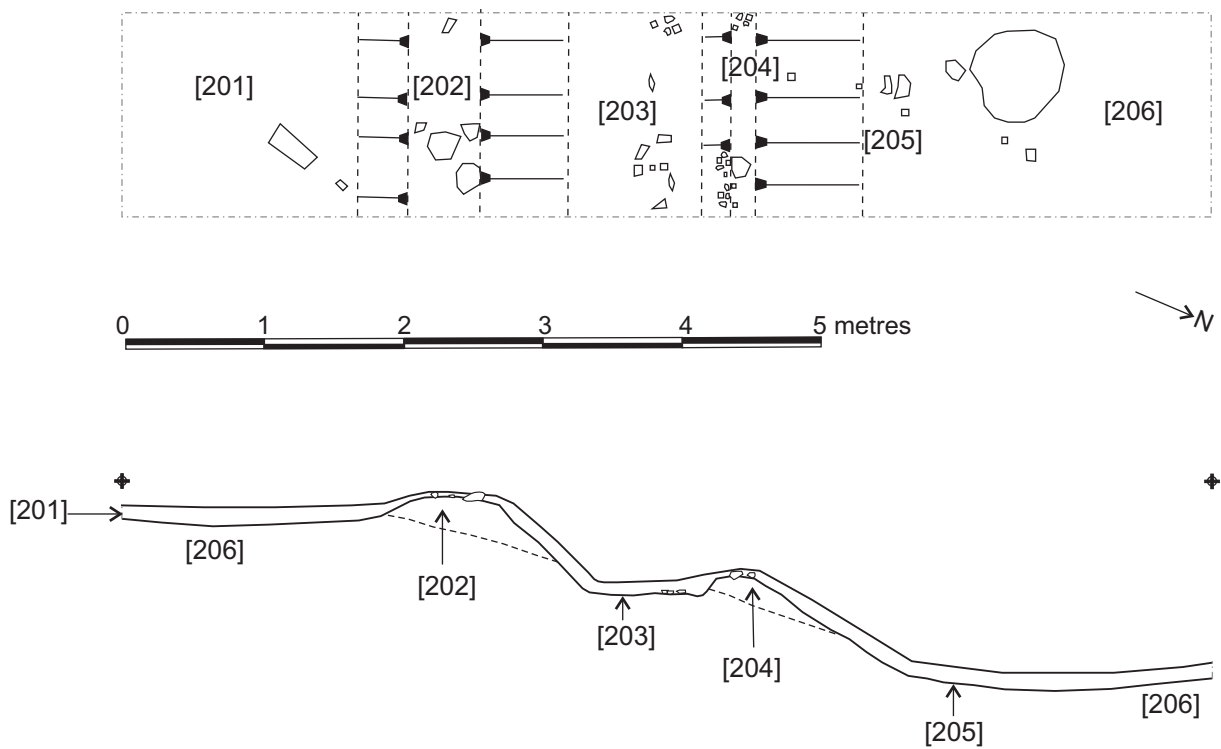
The area north of the cottage block included within the boundaries of Trench 1 contained a greater depth of top-soil [101] than encountered elsewhere, but sparse finds and no features of any archaeological importance. Two cuts were made to determine the depth of topsoil and examine the foundations of the cottage block, with sub-soil [117] encountered at a maximum of 0.65m below the surface. It would appear that this area, set in the shadow of the cottages for much of the year, was used as pasture rather than for gardening or even waste disposal, although the depth of topsoil would certainly have made it productive cottage garden land. The lack of discarded pottery on this side of the cottage block suggests that there may not have been windows opening onto this side of the properties.

3.2 Trench 2

North-west of the cottages, Trench 2 was positioned across a substantial boundary feature forming part of a large enclosure within which the cottage block is set. The south part of the trench sat within the enclosure and revealed a substantial depth of sandy-loam topsoil [201] giving way to subsoil [206] at 0.30m. This flat area gave way to a bank [202], probably created by cutting into the slight slope from the north side and heaping sub-soil and stones to the south. A second bank [204] had been created, probably by a similar process, to the north, with the stony area [203] between the two banks being rather flat, perhaps a path of trackway rather than a ditch. South of the second bank was a natural depression [205], its ditch-like character possibly enhanced by its use as a seasonal trackway.

Interpretation

Trench 2 revealed the character of a substantial boundary earthwork, comprised of a double bank and ditch, perhaps originally a single bank around a natural promontory, subsequently altered by the incision of a trackway along its northern flank. The creation of the boundary earthwork allowed the levelling of and development of topsoil within the enclosure, thereby enhancing the natural topography by forming a raised platform. Indeed, it may well have been the purpose of the enclosure to create a discrete area of cultivable land associated with the settlement. Any defensive purpose would have to have been assisted by fencing or



Illus. 17 & 18: Plan (above) and East Facing Section (below) of Trench 2.

thorny entanglements, of which no trace was found. The scale of this earthwork suggests that it may have been constructed, possibly over a long time period before the known period of occupation of the settlement, but no pottery or other small finds were made to corroborate this suggestion.

3.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was excavated in the west part of the cottage enclosure, from the inner edge of the boundary earthwork explored in Trench 2, across the slight remains of a sub-circular earthwork. The excavation revealed the earthwork to comprise a bank [302] some 0.70m wide and 0.28m high, apparently formed from redeposited sub-soil, outside which – i.e. between [202] and the bank of the major enclosing earthwork [304] – was a shallow ditch [303]. The rest of the trench revealed topsoil [301] some 0.30m deep sitting directly upon sub-soil [305].

Interpretation

No firm conclusions can be made about the function of this sub-circular earthwork feature explored in Trench 3, although it appears to have been formed by excavating a slight external ditch. The most likely interpretation of the feature is as a stack stand, temporary enclosure (the bank being topped by a fence or dry hedge) or other agricultural feature. Its relatively insubstantial nature and lack of coal spoil found in the vicinity appears to preclude the possibility that it served a function related to mining.

3.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was excavated to explore the apparent continuation westwards of the south wall of the cottage block. The excavation revealed that, below a substantial deposit of topsoil [401] a wall did indeed continue westwards, and was comprised of a single line of facing stones [402] similar in character to those of the main cottage block. There were hints that the wall had once been double-faced, but a return to the north – a single line of blocks faced to the west [403] – appeared secondary. On the east side of this return [403] was a deposit of ash [404] below the topsoil, suggesting either a dump of waste materials from the domestic hearth or the remains of an ash closet.

Interpretation

Trench 4 revealed somewhat fragmentary remains hinting at the continuation of the cottage range to the west, but perhaps more likely revealing insubstantial structures related to domestic activity – a boundary wall, waste deposits and/or a possible 'nettie'.

3.4 Trench 5

Trench 5 (not illustrated) was excavated into the east side of the west gable end of House 1 in order to test for the presence of a fireplace in that area. The presence of burnt bricks, revealed in the tumble [501] adjacent to the remains of the solid masonry wall indicated that the remains of a fireplace indeed existed there, but the excavation was stopped before impacting upon the fireplace itself.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The excavations carried out at Ovenstone in June and July 2007 explored some of the main features of the site visible as earthworks and built remains, namely the cottage block, a surrounding earthwork enclosure and ephemeral traces of a sub-surface enclosure to the west. In addition, documentary work was carried out which added social and economic context to the physical remains.

The exploration of the cottage block revealed that it was of two distinct periods, the more substantial earlier part to the west showing evidence of successive phases of use, probably beginning in the later 18th century, the latest of which probably concurred with the construction and use of the eastern part of the block in the period between c.1830 and 1870. Documentary evidence suggests that the first attested settlement of the western house was in or before 1771, probably by shepherds, a function also tantalisingly suggested by the name 'Shield' attached to a settlement in the position of Ovenstone on Armstrong's 1769 county map. It is possible that the large enclosure(s) surrounding the cottage block also date to this period, or perhaps was formed over a longer period of intermittent occupation. Having established a sequence of occupation from west to east, it is now thought that the most likely position of any earlier structural remains is west of House 1 in the area where masonry remains appear in the bank north of the trackway which extends from the west side of the present cottage remains.

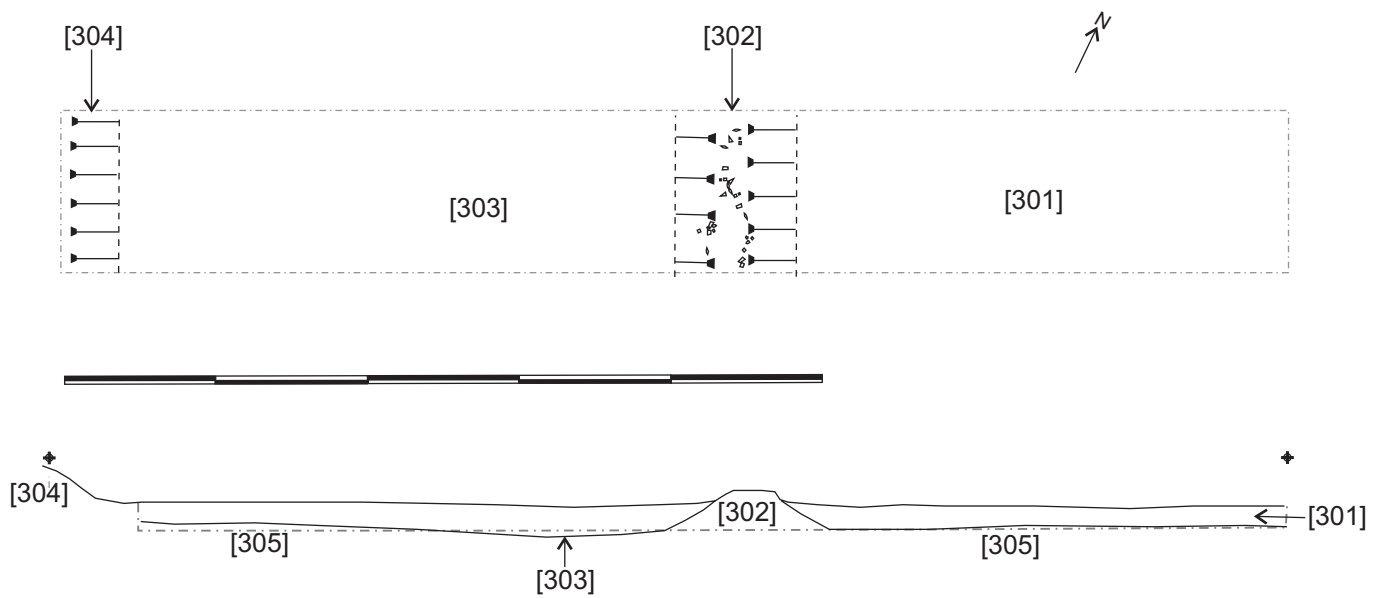
Houses 2 and 3 were built around 1830 when mining through the use of bell pits began in earnest on the site (the first record of a pitman is from 1834), followed soon after by the development of a tile works on an elevated site to the north. These developments can be viewed as logical responses to government-sponsored land-improvement policies which provided incentives to produce land-drains and agricultural lime, as well as improvements in agricultural machinery, stock and farm buildings. Census returns and other data show the occupancy of the cottages in this period to be dominated by coal- and tile-workers, mostly itinerants in the first decade of the industrial period of the site, later stabilising under the occupancy of the Proudlock and Telford families.

The archaeological evidence indicates that the main focus of social activity outside the houses was on a narrow pathway and trackway south of the cottages, between the houses frontage and large communal midden. It is likely that the square enclosure seen on aerial photographs within the main sub-circular enclosure west of the cottages was an area set aside for gardening, but the main enclosure north of the central trackway may also have performed this role, although it is more likely to have been used as a paddock for domestic stock, possibly including working ponies during the period of mine-working, particularly on the shaded north side of the cottages.

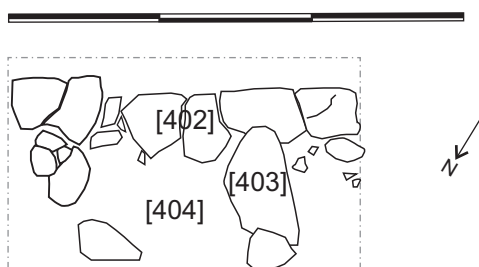
Analysis of the pottery assemblage by Jenny Vaughan (see Appendix 6) confirms that the material is mainly 19th century in origin, but some could date to the previous century. The pottery contains a mixture of fine tablewares and coarser utilitarian earthenware, but in general does not suggest that the people here were particularly poor or deprived, as indicated by the presence of small quantities of china, good quality yellow glazed kitchenwares and relative abundance of transfer printed wares for use on the dinner table.

By the end of its period of occupation, the economic trends that had encouraged permanent settlement at Ovenstone had passed, and it may be conjectured also that the arrival in Coquetdale of the railway in 1871 further squeezed local production. Miners continued to be recorded in the census returns of 1851, 1861 and 1871, but in the census return of 1881 Ovenstone is not mentioned, suggesting that with the closure of the mining and tile-making concerns the settlement had been abandoned as a site of residence.

Local tradition that the cottages continued in use as a shelter for shepherds and tinkers is attested archaeologically by several remains, including those of a hearth made from loose stones in the centre of House 2, and by two platform-like features outside House 2, one abutting and one separate from the south wall. The function of these structures is debateable, but they clearly post-date the primary occupation of the cottage block and the inclusion of well-dressed masonry blocks suggests that parts of the cottage block had become disused. It is thought most likely that these features were built as buttresses to shore up the creaking walls of House Two during or just after its final phase of human occupation, perhaps during its secondary use as a bothy. Local tradition suggests that the use of the site by tinkers led to a decision by the landlord to demolish the site. It appears that most of the useable roofing tiles (attested from fragmentary excavated remains) and easily accessible flooring materials, as well as much of the masonry was removed at this time or subsequently, the latter used locally for the construction of field walls and other structures.



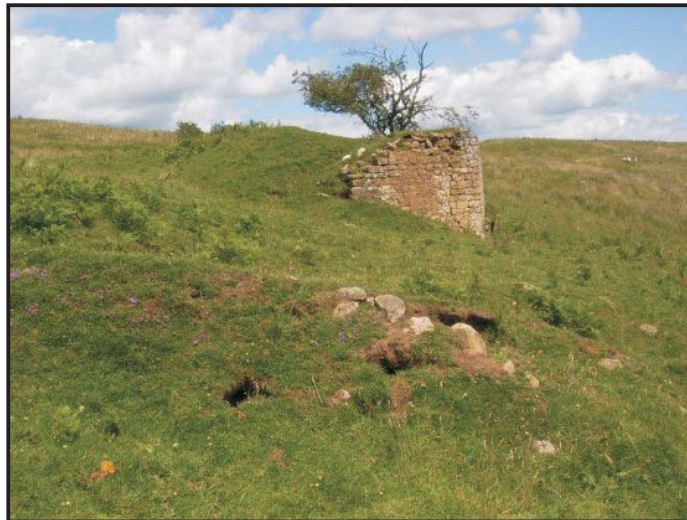
Illus. 19 & 20: Plan (above) and south-east Facing Section (below) of Trench 3.



Illus. 21: Plan of Trench 4.



Illus. 22: View of the Grasslees limekiln.



Illus. 23:
View from the west side of the Grasslees limekiln.



Illus. 24: A flooded bell pit at Ovenstones.



Illus. 25:
View of the excavations soon after turf stripping.



Illus. 26: View of the north-east corner of Trench 1 soon after turf stripping, showing the original appearance of the remains, with the upper walls just visible.



Illus. 27:
View of trench 1 from the south-east during an open day.



Illus. 28:
View of trench 1 from the east during an open day.



Illus. 29: View of House 1 from the south.



Illus. 30: View of the part of the north wall of House 1 (right) at its junction with House 2 (left)



Illus. 31:
View of Houses 1 (foreground) and 2 from the west.



Illus. 32:
View from the west of the trackway and 'platform' feature in front of House 2



Illus. 33: View from the east of the trackway in front of House 2:



Illus. 34: View of the doorway at the south-west corner of House 2, leading onto a trackway (both sides of kerb visible)



Illus. 35:
View of cobbled footpath and trackway in front of the south wall of House 2, east end.



Illus. 36:
View from the south-west of 'platform' features outside the south wall of House 2, with the trackway beyond.



Illus. 37: View from the south-west of 'platform' features outside the south wall of House 2.



Illus. 38: View of House 2 interior from the east.



Illus. 39: View of the flagged floor of House 2, looking southwards towards the interior south wall with fireplace to left of view.



Illus. 40:
View of the secondary internal fireplace in House 2.



Illus. 41: Flags removed from the floor of House 2 to reveal clay and bedrock immediately below.



Illus. 42: Fireplace in the east wall of House 2, viewed from the north-west.



Illus. 43: Fireplace in the east wall of House 2.



Illus. 47: Trench 3 viewed from the west.



Illus. 48: Trench 4 viewed from the south.



Illus. 44: Trench 2 viewed from the north.



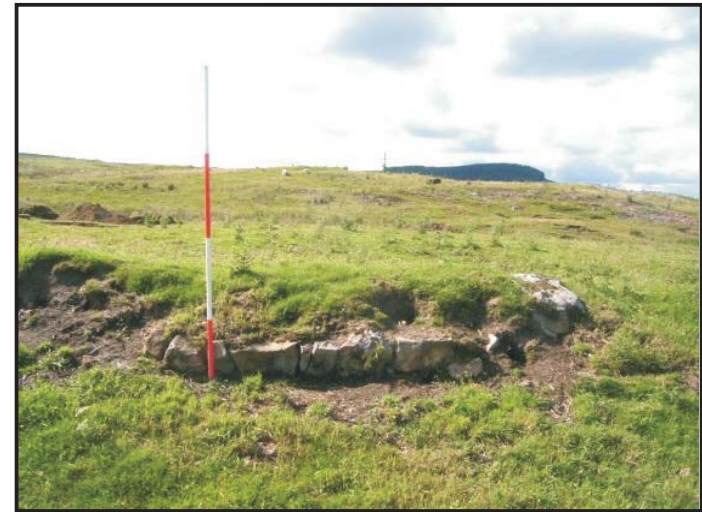
Illus. 45: Trench 2 viewed from the east.



Illus. 46: Trench 2 viewed from NNW



Illus. 49:
View from the south-west of 'masonry remains in a bank on the north side of the central trackway.



Illus. 50: View of masonry remains west of the cottage block (suggested as the possible site of earlier occupation)



Illus. 51: Backfilling in progress.



Illus. 52: Backfilling in progress, showing the method to protect the surviving masonry remains.

5. REFERENCES

Carlton R J, 2002, Harehaugh hillfort: preliminary report on fieldwork in Summer 2002; *UDNAP vol. 24 (2001/2002)*. Durham.

Carlton R J, 2003, The History and Landscape of Low Cleughs Bastle, in Frodsham P, *Recent Archaeological Work in the Northumberland National Park*. CBA Publications.

Frodsham, P. 2004. Archaeology in Northumberland National Park. C.B.A. Research report, 136.

Frost, D. V. and Holliday, D. W., 1980. The Geology of Bellingham (Sheet 13), Mem. Geol. Surv. G.B., H.M.S.O., London

Roberts, I. D. 2000. Iron Making in Redesdale and North Tynedale in the Nineteenth Century: the Problems of Rural Exploitation and Diversification, *Northern History*, 36, No.2, 285 -298.

Sewell, G. W. M. 1992. *The North British Railway in Northumberland*, Braunton (Devon)

TAP (The Archaeological Practice Ltd.), 2006, *The Tasset Archive Group Atlas of Archaeological and Historical Sites*

TAP (The Archaeological Practice Ltd.), 2006, *The production and sale of beer and whisky in Upper Coquetdale*, October 2006 (For NNPA)

6. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

[101] Top-soil and tumble. This context was sub-divided in terms of area into the following: 101/i House 1; 101/ii House 2; 101/iii North of the houses; 101/iv South of the houses.

[102] Clay-bonded walls of irregularly coursed, faced sandstone with a rubble core, set on a plinth of larger, crudely worked boulders

[103] Pounded or trampled earth floor with organic and/or burnt deposits

[104] Floor of brick tiles.

[105] Floor of small sandstone flags.

[106] Drystone and/or partially mortar-bonded walls comprised of small sandstone facing stones either side of a loose rubble core, built on a foundation of crudely dressed stones slightly large than the wall stones.

[107] Fireplace, 2.15m long, constructed from two massive side posts, both of neatly cut sandstone, which would have supported the lintel, with other large sandstone blocks marking the front of the structure, in the middle of which was a gap with surviving hearth grate in position. Behind the central hearth was a skin of loose brickwork protecting the stonework of the gable end wall, and to either side were platforms of loose brick and stonework, one side formerly containing an oven, the other a socket for an iron water heater.

[108] Floor of large flat sandstone flags of uneven size

[109] Beaten earth floor

[110] Doorway with door sockets and fragmentary flagging.

[111] Trackway defined by interrupted lines of kerb-stones [111i/ii] either side of a surface of compressed sub-soil with irregular patches of cobbles [111iii].

[112] Partially cobbled surface, probably originally a path between the south wall House One and the trackway

[113] Shallow deposit of coal finings, probably the residue of a supply dump.

[114] Coursed but poorly keyed platform of good sandstone masonry, unbonded but with rubble infill between wall and house.

[115] rubble-built structure continuous with the southern wall of [114], but separate from the south wall of the house.

[116] Internal fireplace made from reused facing stones and rubble crudely arranged around a central flat space in the centre of the house, overlapping the flagged and beaten earth floor surfaces.

[117] Sub-soil of orange boulder clay.

Trench 2

[201] Top-soil.

[202] Earthen bank containing some stone deposited on its crest.

[203] Stony area between the two banks [202 & 204], rather flat.

[204] Slight Earthen bank.

[205] Ditch-like depression possibly enhanced by its use as a seasonal trackway.

[206] Sub-soil of orange boulder clay.

Trench 3

[301] Top-soil.

[302] Earthen bank some 0.70m wide and 0.28m high, apparently formed from redeposited sub-soil, outside which – i.e. between {202} and the bank of the major enclosing earthwork

[303] Shallow ditch.

[304] major enclosing earthwork (see [202-205], above)

[305] Sub-soil of orange boulder clay.

Trench 4

[401] Top-soil.

[402] Wall comprised of a single line of facing stones, perhaps once been double-faced.

[403] A single line of blocks faced to the west, apparently secondary to [402].

[404] A deposit of grey ash and cinder below the topsoil.

[405] Sub-soil of orange boulder clay.

Trench 5

[501] Burnt brick in tumbled masonry.

7. APPENDIX 2: EXCAVATIONS AT OVENSTONE, FEB 2ND – 4TH 2007

By Rob Young

The work undertaken in February 2007 was supervised by Dr Rob Young (NNPA Archaeologist), Dr. Jane Webster (Lecturer in Archaeology at Newcastle University) and Ms Elanor Johnson (UCCAP) and the excavation and survey involved student from the University and several members of UCCAP, all of whom are thanked for their efforts, which helped to complete the work in the available time!

Previous site investigations had shown that the midden deposits were being subjected to much rabbit damage, and three linear trenches were excavated to sample the extent and the nature of these deposits (two of these are shown on the plane table plan). The aim was:

- i) to recover cultural material to provide dating evidence for the midden's formation and
- ii) to shed light on the external links of the people living at Ovenstone by examining the provenance of the material recovered and linking this back to potential patterns of trade and consumption on the site and
- iii) to gain insights into the day to day living experience of the site's inhabitants.

The surface of the midden was gridded out at one metre intervals and a surface collection of visible material was also carried out.

Excavation of the three trenches revealed no definite structures within the midden, which was over 1m deep in places. The excavation was carried out in a series of 10cm spits and finds were recorded on the basis of this spit system. The sections of each trench were drawn and as the accompanying photographs show there was some stratigraphy visible in the deposited material. This could be examined in more detail if a larger area of the midden deposit was exposed in future work.

The eastern trench (Trench 1) showed that the midden material overlay the rammed cobble surface of the trackway that ran in front of the houses

Trench 2 exposed the surface of a thin coal seam lying within the natural yellow clay subsoil

Trench 3 showed the extent of the rabbit damage to the deposits when the line of a rabbit burrow was recorded running through the base of the midden and biting into the natural clay subsoil.

The finds were examined by Jenny Vaughan of NCAS and we are grateful to her for all her help. This work is on going but in the main there was a large amount of plain cream and white wares present with some sponge decorated and transfer printed pottery and several fragments of vessels, probably made in Sunderland, decorated with religious (Methodist?) tracts. There was also much ash and cinder from domestic fires and several fragments of clay tobacco pipe bowl and stems. Many retained maker's marks and the firm of Tennants in Berwick seem to have been major suppliers. These pipes are all of nineteenth century date with many coming from the last 20 years or so of the nineteenth century. Again further work will be undertaken on this material.

8. APPENDIX 3: OVENSTONE BEFORE 1841

By David Jones (UCCAP)

The nature of the Ovenstone settlement after 1841 has been researched from census data and has been described elsewhere. This document uses research from the Elsdon parish registers of births, deaths and marriages to try and determine what (if anything) happened at Ovenstone before 1841.

8.1 Caveats

By their very nature, registers of births, deaths and marriages cannot provide a complete picture of a community. A family may arrive in a village, live there for 5 or 10 years and move on without ever appearing in the registers. Equally, a small settlement with a few families may go unrecorded for several years, although with 18th and 19th century birth (and death) rates this is less likely.

There are other problems as well. Families may have been less than completely diligent about registering births and marriages; some may have been Non-conformist or Catholic - and entries may have been made in different registers that have not survived. Catholic records, for example, were often treated as the personal property of the parish priest and moved on with him when he went elsewhere. The registers may not be specific about whereabouts in the parish individuals came from; only in the early 19th century did pre-printed books of forms become widely available that prompted curates or priests to record a farm or an address. Before then, the details of each record depended on the diligence of the incumbent; with marriages, especially, people are often recorded as just 'of this parish'.

Finally, people's activities were not always recorded in the parish where they lived. Ovenstone is just inside the Elsdon/Rothbury parish boundary - but the Elsdon records also contain at least some of the entries for Swindon, which is just the other side of the boundary (the settlement is sometimes referred to as 'Swindon of the parish of Rothbury'). Equally, the Rothbury records might contain some entries for Ovenstone. I have not yet searched the Rothbury records

8.2 Elsdon Parish Registers

These are available on microfilm at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn. The originals are obviously not in good condition; even as late as 1760 or 1770 it is not uncommon to find pages that are hard to read and which the microfilm operator has marked as 'poor'. I conducted a search of births and deaths between 1749 and 1840, and of marriages between 1749 and 1812.

The earliest reference to Ovenstone is in 1771 with the burial on August 30 of Thomas Arkle pauper, of 'y^e Ovenstone'. The IGI shows a Thomas Arkle being baptised in Elsdon on June 10th 1745. The only other 18th century reference is a baptism on July 25, 1780: 'Margaret, daughter of Andrew and Margaret Kerr of y^e Ovenstone'. Andrew and Margaret Kerr were married in Elsdon on May 8 1779, so this was probably their first child. Andrew came from 'Silloones' and Margaret from Hillock (about one mile SE of Silloans); banns were read on

April 18, April 25 and May 2. There is no record of Andrew's trade, but I don't know of any mines at Silloans. Maybe he was a shepherd. An Andrew Kerr was born at Harbottle on June 10, 1742; there are also at least two possible Margaret Turnbells born in Harbottle and another in Elsdon. They don't seem to have had any other children at Ovenstone, or elsewhere in Elsdon.

After 1780, things go quiet. The next record of Ovenstone is in 1829, at which point a flurry of activity starts. It is interesting to note, however, that none of the following events involve any of the families that we know were living at Ovenstone in 1841 (the Proudlocks and the Telfords).⁶ Between 1841 and 1871 there is a considerable degree of continuity in the population; before 1841 what information we have points to a more transient set of inhabitants.

Table 1: Ovenstone events 1829 - 1840

Date	Name	Event	Comment
23 March 1829	Mark Maughan	Burial	Aged 81
18 October 1829	Bartholomew Milburn	Baptism	Son of Hannah & William Milburn, labourer
11 April 1830	Mary Hall	Baptism	3 rd daughter of Mgrt & Edward Hall, shepherd
8 June 1830	Bartholomew Milburn	Burial	Aged <1
9 September 1832 (born August 9)	Margaret Hall	Baptism	4 th daughter of Margaret & Edward Hall, shepherd
18 April 1834 (born March 9)	Richard Dickison	Baptism	4 th son of Margaret & John Dickison, pitman
25 February 1835	Richard Dickison	Burial	Aged 1 (<i>nearly</i>)
31 December 1835 (born 21/12/1834)	Joseph Maughan	Baptism	Illegitimate son of Margery Maughan, singlewoman
31 December 1835 (born 21/10/1835)	John Maughan	Baptism	Illegitimate son of Margery Maughan, spinster
15 January 1836 (born 13/12/1835)	Luke Dickison	Baptism	5 th son of Margaret & John Dickison, joiner
25 November 1838 (born 1/1/1836)	Ann Stokoe	Baptism	Daughter of Ann & Forster Stokoe
25 November 1838	Joseph Brodie Stokoe	Baptism	Son of Ann & Forster Stokoe

⁶ We also know, from the *Census of Rothbury Parish 1816* compiled by the rector, Rev Levison Venables Vernon Harcourt (NRO EP 103/114), examined by David Jones for the benefit of the Ovenstones Project, that the Proudlock family was resident at neighbouring Swindon in the early part of the 19th century, where they practiced coal-mining.

George PROUDLOCK and his wife have six sons and five daughters one Bible and one Prayer Book.

Lewis PROUDLOCK and his wife have two sons and seven daughters - one Bible and one Prayer Book. Total: 28 Persons, 2 Bibles, 2 Prayer Books.

John PROUDLOCK and his wife have one son . Presbyterian, have one Bible.

Benjamin RENSHAW is married and has one son and daughter. Presbyterian. They have two Bibles.

William WAUGH has a wife, four daughters, two sons, one grandson, one Bible and is Presbyterian.

Total: 16 persons, 4 Bibles.

8.3 Hypotheses

What can we deduce from all this? Here are some thoughts:

a) While there were people living at Ovenstone in the late 18th century, the dwellings may have been very rudimentary - and perhaps not even on the same site as the current house ruins. One of the individuals was a pauper, and the other family may not have been there for very long. There is then a gap of almost 50 years.

b) Serious activity starts in the late 1820s. One would like to think that an 80 year old man would have had somewhere reasonably substantial to live, so maybe this period marks the first real houses at Ovenstone. The Maughans were quite a large family. In the 1841 census Margery (who was presumably Mark's granddaughter) was aged 32 and living at Lonning with her parents (Mary & Nicholas, a labourer) and 4 children (Jane 7, John 5, Joseph 5 and Hannah 1). Lonning is not on the current OS map but I assume that it was a dwelling by the Loaning Burn, since the other houses on the page include The Raw, Dunns Farm and High Shaw. There is no father on the scene, but in 1835 it seems reasonable to assume that there were 6 Maughans living at Ovenstone - 3 adults and 3 children.

c) The Milburns were probably only transient dwellers at Ovenstone. William was born at Elsdon in August 1805. I can't find his marriage(s), but in 1841 he is living at Heatherwick (near Otterburn) with a second wife (Margaret) and 5 children (William 11, James 11, Bartholomew 9, Thomas 7 and Ann 2). So there are no surviving children born before the first Bartholomew in 1829, and none of the later children had baptisms recorded at Ovenstone. It seems likely that William and Hannah moved to Ovenstone soon after they were married and left after their (probably first) child died.

d) The Halls had 2 children at Ovenstone, so they were made of slightly sterner stuff. In 1841 they are living at Nook near Bellingham with 4 children (Mary 11, Margaret 9, John 7 and Catharon 2). Edward is still a shepherd, and they had obviously left Ovenstone before John was born in 1834. It is probable that Edward and Margaret married in Bellingham in March 1829, so it's unlikely that they were at Ovenstone for more than 4 years at the most.

e) John Dickison is the first recorded pitman living at Ovenstone in 1834, although by 1836 he's a joiner. In 1841 he's living at Littlehoughton with no wife (absent - because she's with him in the 1851 census) and 4 children (George 16, Mary 9, Luke 5 and Margaret 3). So they must have arrived at Ovenstone after 1831 (Mary was baptised in Embleton on July 24) and left before Margaret was born in 1838 (baptised at Longhoughton on March 4) - say, a possible 6 year stint. In 1841, by the way, John is a miner again, as is son George. John was born at Rock and baptised at the Sion Meeting House in Alnwick in 1801, so he was 32 when we first see him at Ovenstone. George was his first son.

f) Our final pre-1840 family, the Stokoes, are a lot more elusive. I can't easily track them down in the 1841 census; we know they had left Ovenstone by 1841, but we have no idea when they arrived.

8.4 Other Ovenstone families

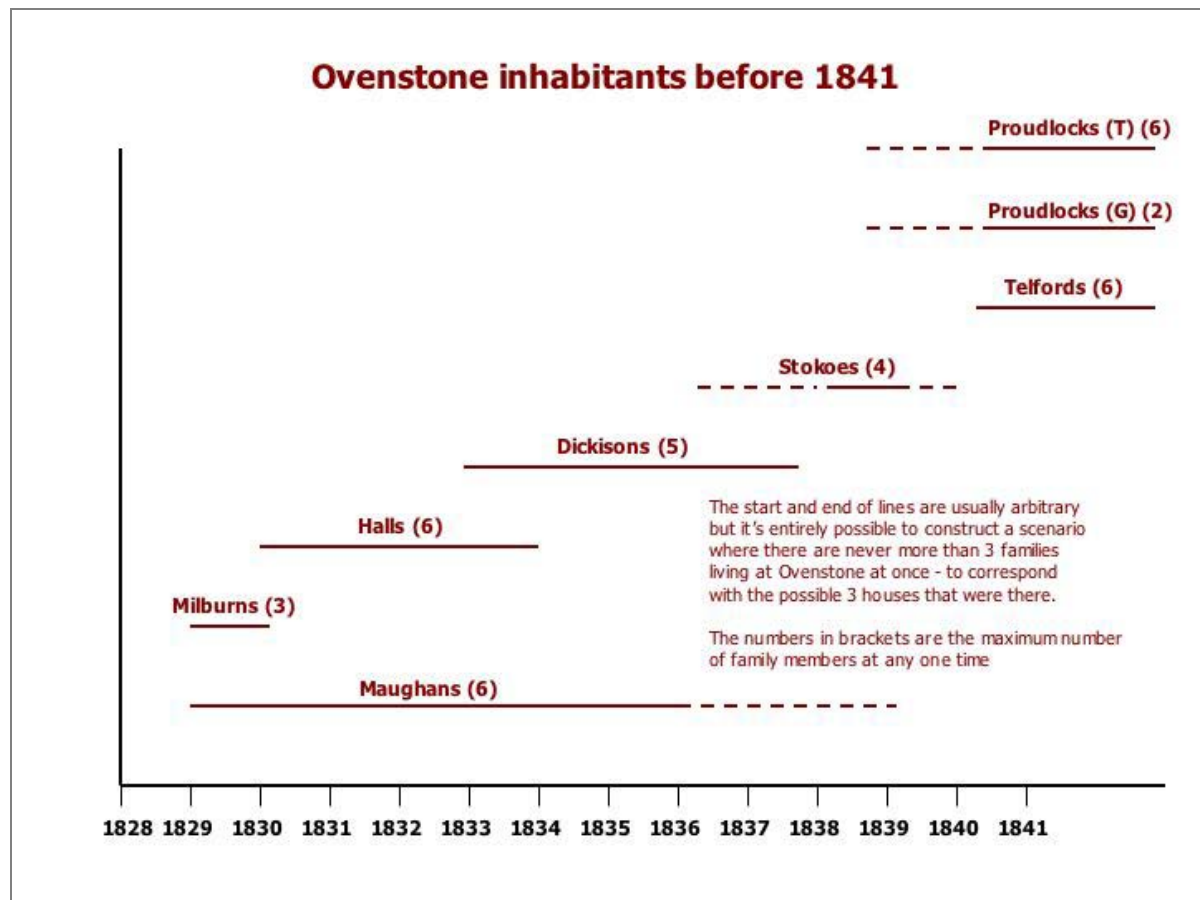
It's worth asking if we can find out if any of the 1841 families were at Ovenstone significantly earlier. The individuals in question are:

- George Proudlock aged 45-50 with son Lewis, aged 15-20. I cannot track down Lewis's baptism, but some of the Proudlocks were Catholic (A Ludovicus Proudlock, parents Thomas Proudlock and Joanna Hall was baptised in October 1816 at the RC chapel at Callaly Castle). It is possible that George Proudlock had been at Ovenstone for some time before 1841.
- John and Jane Telford and their 4 children. I can't track down their marriage or the baptisms of their children, but the youngest, Ann, was born in either 1839 or 1840. There is no record of this at Ovenstone, so we can assume they arrived not long before the 1841 census. John Telford was born in North Alwinton circa 1806, and Jane in Rothbury circa 1807.
- Thomas Proudlock and his children (Thomas 13, Dorothy 15, Elanor 11 and Mary 7). Thomas was probably baptised at Elsdon on July 1 1792, with parents George and Dorothy living at The Flat. I cannot find a marriage entry for him, but he may have been the father of the Ludovicus Proudlock mentioned above. The ages are all slightly wrong, but a Thomas Proudlock (parents Thomas Proudlock and Joanna Hall) was baptised at Thropton RC Church on 24/12/1824, Helena at the same place on 6/11/1828 and Dorothea on 1/10/1826. The coincidence of the (Latinised) names is too strong for this to be anything but the right family. Although Thomas was born into the Church of England, Joanna was a Catholic; she had been baptised at Thropton RC Church on 10/4/1791, with parents Henry and Dorothy. However, none of this helps us determine when they arrived at Ovenstone.

8.5 Conclusion

There seems to have been sporadic habitation of Ovenstone in the 1770s and 1780s. We can't tell if the houses were in the same place as the current ruins. There was a real upsurge of activity from the late 1820s onwards. There were 3 houses present by 1841, and it's quite possible that they were built around 1830. These are almost certainly the houses whose ruins we see today.

The available records do not tell us when the mines were started. There were certainly earlier individuals described as pitmen living within a mile or so of Ovenstone - a Benjamin Ridshaw at Swindon in 1811, a George Proudlock of Herdlaw in 1808 and a Lewis Proudlock at Swindon in 1808. It is quite possible that these or other individuals walked over the moors to work the bell pits at Ovenstone before there was any permanent housing there.



9. APPENDIX 4: OVENSTONE CENSUS 1851-81

By Dr Ian Roberts

The four census surveys of the Woodside township of Elsdon Parish were examined for four years - 1851, 1861, 1871 and 1881 – paying regard to the entries for Grasslees, Grasslees Mill and Ovenstone. Notes of the results are provided below. A search was also made for other, estate records, particularly those containing maps earlier or more detailed than the 1st edition Ordnance Survey plan. No such records or maps were located, however.

1851.

This survey showed that all three areas were occupied. The farm was occupied by the Stevenson family. This consisted of the farmer, Alexander (aged 73) who stated that he was a farmer of 122 acres of land and 1212 acres of heath and employed three labourers. This is roughly the farm as set out in the Tithe survey. He was married and had two 32 year old sons who worked on the farm. They also had a servant. The miller, William Stevenson was married and had 5 children, 10 years old and under. There was also a servant. At Ovenstone, there were four properties. In the first, John Telford, aged 45, was stated to be a coal miner. He had a wife and four children, two of whom were at school, one was a servant and the fourth was aged three. The second house was occupied by a 62 year old miner, John Proudlock, his wife, daughter and a granddaughter – the daughter aged 20 being classed as a house servant. The third house contained two coal miners, Thomas Proudlock, a widower of 58 and his son, also Thomas, aged 20. There were also two daughters, classed as house servants and two grandsons, both at school. The final house contained George Proudlock, a coal miner aged 25, his wife and a son and daughter. The four coal miners gave no indication of status other than job title and no place of work.

1861.

The farm was now run by the sons of the previous farmer, who had died. His widow lived with the sons and a granddaughter. They had been joined by William Stevenson (another brother?) and his family. William stated that he was also a farmer. The mill was now occupied by John Telford, now described as a former pitman, his wife and two children. At Ovenstone, James Oliver Telford, the son of the above and also a coal miner, his wife and a son occupied one house. Thomas Proudlock, clearly the son of the former miner of the same name, his wife and four children were in occupation of another house. He stated that he was a coal miner. Another house was occupied by John Shiel, a 59 year old shepherd and agricultural labourer, his wife and a 22 year old son who was a coal miner. The fourth house was occupied by James Clark, a 47 year old tile maker, his wife and 3 children. There was also a 32 year old servant and labourer, John Clark, who was a member of this household. There was also an entry for Swindon in this register of a family called Proudlock, which included a father and three sons, all of whom were coal miners. However, no pit or place of employment is stated.

1871.

There was a complete change at the farm and mill according to this return. The farm was now occupied by Henry Robson, a shepherd, his wife and seven children, the oldest of which was ten. At the mill, there was a new occupant, Lancelot Brown, miller and farmer of six acres, aged 31, his wife and two children. There were also changes at Ovenstone. John

Telford had moved back to a house at Ovenstone and now classed himself as a stone breaker though in what context is not stated. His wife and three children were also resident. One son and the daughter are classed as indoor farm servants while another son is classed as a coal miner. Three grandsons are also residents. The only other property occupied was the residence of James Sanderson, a fifty one year old brick and tile maker. He was accompanied by his wife, five children and a granddaughter. The eldest child, a son of 26, is also classed as a coal miner.

1881.

Only one property was occupied at the time of this census – Grasslees farm. This was now occupied by Timothy Hedley, aged 53, a farmer of 1500 acres, his wife and two indoor servants. The mill is listed as unoccupied. There is no mention of Ovenstone as an unoccupied property and one wonders if it had been pulled down or otherwise made uninhabitable. Clearly, the high water-mark of its activity was around 1861 and thereafter it rapidly declined.

10. APPENDIX 5: KNOWN SITES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPORTANCE IN THE VICINITY OF OVENSTONE (DATA FROM NCC HER RECORD)

Catalogue number 1, Bell Pits, HER number 9712, Grid Ref. NY964986

More than 17 pits and waste heaps near Hepplewoodside

Catalogue number 2, Ovenstone(s), HER number 9710, Grid Ref. NY963986

Two ruined buildings remain of the Ovenstone settlement, earliest recorded date 1771, remains associated with enclosure wall and many crop pits.

Catalogue number 3, Boundary stones, HER number 9724, Grid Ref. NY963987

Estate/farm boundary stones at Ovenstone. These is a single blank stone on either side of field wall.

Catalogue number 4, Ruined building, HER number 9709, Grid Ref. NY961988

Remains of a building overlain by a field wall. Associated with an oval enclosure of stone.

Catalogue number 5, Bell Pits, HER number 9717, Grid Ref. NY961987

More than 7 crop pits near Ovenstone Plantation, known dates for cal workings 1808, 1851 and 1871.

Catalogue number 6, Circular Enclosure, HER number 9732, Grid Ref. NY960988

A circular orthostat enclosure 40m in diameter.

Catalogue number 7, Tilery, HER number 9721, Grid Ref. NY959986

A 19th century tilery at Ovenstone including ruined brick kilns and clay pudding area. Referred to in an 1855 directory.

Catalogue number 8, Field system, HER number 9718, Grid Ref. NY958988

An area of sod cast dykes, turf and stone field walls on the east slope of Pattenshiel Knowe near Ovenstone.

Catalogue number 9, Bell Pits, HER number 9714, Grid Ref. NY958987

More than 14 crop pits, recorded dates of 1808, 1827, 1851 and 1871.

Catalogue number 10, Lime kiln, HER number 9713, Grid Ref. NY959983

Two stone built lime kilns at Grasslees are the only surviving kilns on the MOD estate. Late 18th - early 19th century in date.

Catalogue number 11, Pattenshiel Knowe farmstead, HER number 9704, Grid Ref. NY955986, SAM 20907

An Iron Age/Romano-British enclosed farmstead settlement at Pattenshiel Knowe including 2-3 huts.

Catalogue number 12, Bell Pits, HER number 9715, Grid Ref. NY955987

Two large crop pits, recorded dates 1808, 1827, 1851 and 1871.

Catalogue number 13, Bell Pits, HER number 9716, Grid Ref. NY954983

Five small crop pits. Earliest known dates 1808.

Catalogue number 14, Sheepfold, HER number 21905, Grid Ref. NY953982

A sheepfold is marked on the 1st edition ordnance survey map, c.1866.

Catalogue number 15, Ruined Building, HER number 9711, Grid Ref. NY959983

Ruined building on south side of Pattenshiel Knowe, possibly shieling or quarry dwelling. Earliest recorded date 1721, not marked on 1866 OS map.

Catalogue number 16, Polished stone axe head findspot, HER number 9690, Grid Ref. NY954979

Polished stone axe head found at Grasslees Mill, Elsdon.

**Catalogue number 17, Grasslees Mill, HER number 9705, Grid Ref. NY954978
SAM 618**

The remains of an 18th century watermill complex was found at Grasslees. The complex consisted of a mill, corn drying building and a walled enclosure. 'Girslees miln' is referred to in the Eldon parish register as early as 1687, it was still complete by the time of the 1st edition OS.

Catalogue number 18, Midge Ha', HER number 14698, Grid Ref. NY965981

Mid 19th century cottages built of rubble with dressings and Welsh slate roof. Formerly three cottages now divided into two.

Catalogue number 19, Hepple Woodside, HER number 20712, Grid Ref. NY969987

A 14th century tower (now ruined) with an extensive mansion added during the 19th century. It was demolished in 1970.

Catalogue number 20, Hepple Woodside Cottage, HER number 14695, Grid Ref. NY969987

A late 19th century cottage built of snecked stone with Welsh slate roof. An estate cottage from the demolished Hepple Woodside (cat. No. 19).

Catalogue number 21, Hepple Woodside Bridge, HER number 14696, Grid Ref. NY968991

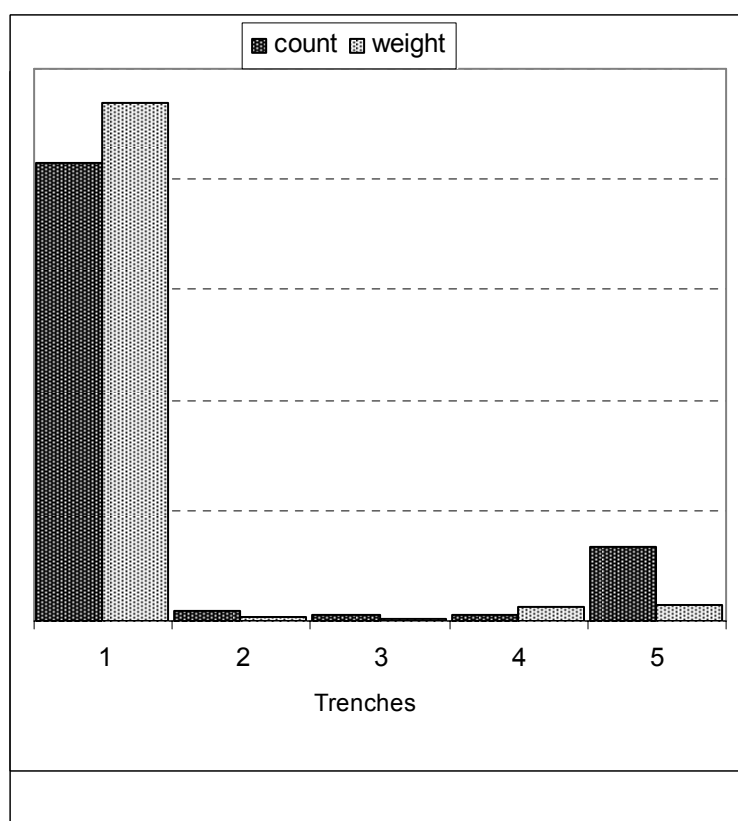
Road bridge built in 1852 of rock faced stone. The bridge is inscribed 'Hepple Woodside Bridge, 1852, Armstrong and Hudspeth Builders'.

11. APPENDIX 6: POTTERY REPORT

By Jenny Vaughan (NCAS)

Introduction

Over 2000 sherds of pottery weighing 2.126 kgs were recovered during the excavations. The bulk of this assemblage came from the main trench, T1, as might be expected, with over 50% of the pottery (by weight) from that trench coming from within the interior of House 2. The quantities from the other trenches were not only much smaller but the material (apart from T.4) was more fragmented, as can be seen from the chart.



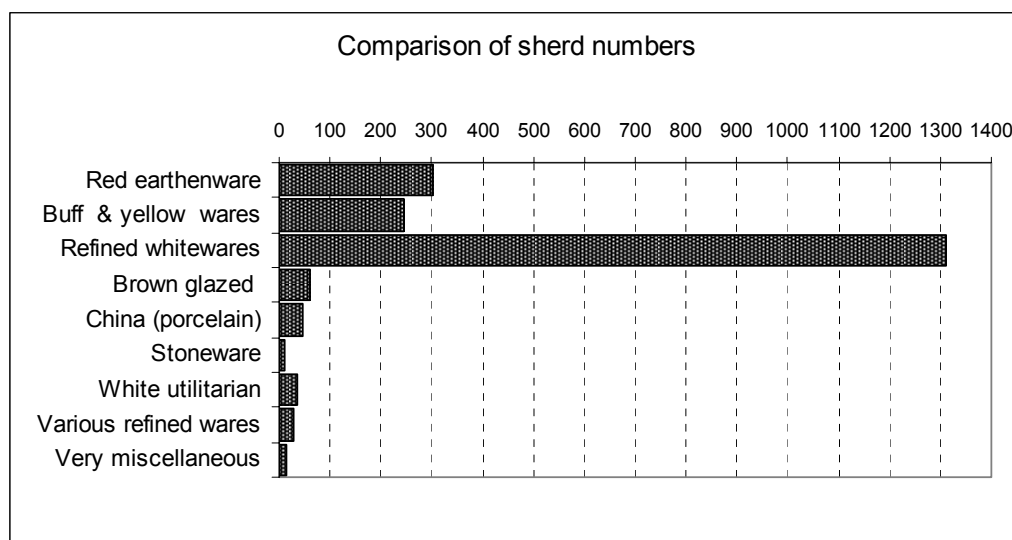
The assemblage is broadly mid to late 19th century, a brief scan of the clay pipes recovered confirms this, but a small quantity of material of possible 18th century date was present.

Methodology

The pottery was sorted into types per context and counts and weights were recorded in an access database table together with notes on the vessels. For the upper tumble and topsoil in House 2 [context 101/i] the number of vessels was also estimated. As the recording proceeded, consistently noting the number of vessels was abandoned, partly because of time constraints - the material was more fragmented and therefore the process became both more difficult and more subjective. It was also evident that the same vessel was appearing in different contexts. As the pottery was unmarked it was not possible to do much cross context comparing, but there was, in any event, not enough time to do this properly.

The Assemblage (see Catalogue for further details)

A variety of ceramic types were present ranging from fine porcelain/china to coarse kitchen wares. There were three main categories: coarse red earthenware, refined whiteware and plain buff and yellow glazed wares.



The chart compares quantities by sherd numbers alone. This gives a general idea, but is biased by the fact that the refined whitewares are more highly fragmented than most other types. However, the proportions of sherd quantities compares quite well with the proportions of the estimated vessels which were recorded in [111]. Weight, on the other hand, is totally biased towards the red earthenwares because of the large heavy nature of the vessels.

Red earthenwares, or brownwares, were made at many potteries on Tyneside and Wearside and are often found in large quantities on late 18th/19th century sites. Almost all the vessels here have an internal coating of white slip. Both bowls with flanged rims and taller jars with external glaze were present. One or two of the bowls had brown mottling on the white slip. These are all large kitchen or storage vessels. The 'buff & yellow wares' categories includes kitchen type bowls but some of the vessels appeared to be tablewares; plates, dishes and small hollow vessels. At least two vessels with white interiors and buff (pale brown) glazed exteriors had external moulding, similar, on one vessel, to that on what is still the standard type of kitchen mixing bowl. This vessel, however, was not a bowl though the form could not be identified with any certainty.

Refined whiteware vessels were more numerous than any others. A few may have been plain white, though it is not possible to be sure that, for instance, an apparently undecorated base does not belong to a decorated vessel. The majority however had some type of decoration. Some had simple slip or painted bands but a greater number were transfer printed, most in blue. It was noted that the pattern 'Albion' occurred quite frequently and that different sizes and shapes of vessels in the design were present. Fragments with a delicate 'seaweed' pattern in mauve also indicated different matching vessels. The 'Albion' vessels evidently came from different manufacturers. Both John Wood and G.R Turnbull of the Stepney Bank pottery are represented. As Turnbull occupied the pottery between 1863 and 1866, and John Wood from 1872 this gives us an indication of date.

Sponged decoration was also quite popular. Vessels both with cut sponge patterns and random sponging were present. The former included a bowl with a repeated butterfly stamp - there may have been two with the same design. Vessels with random sponging included hollow vessels (e.g. drinking vessels, jars or jugs) as well as flat wares. In the mid to late 19th century sponged wares were the cheapest available with decoration (David Barker, course notes).

Part of a vessel (including the rim), a bowl or large mug, bore the transfer printed motto 'Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker'.⁷ This is known on a plaque from the Garrison pottery in Sunderland. Part of a verse was present on another fragment. Although only a small sherd, this is identifiable as a verse found on bowls of both Scott and Garrison (See John Baker 1984 *Sunderland Pottery* p. 120 for the full verse).

*But if as[sailed by squall or shower]
Or w[afted by the gentle gales]*

However, it is just as likely that these vessels came from a Tyneside pottery. John Carr of the Low Light pottery at North Shields is known, from wasters found at Clifford's Fort, to have used some of the same verses and mottoes found on Sunderland products on his wares.

Included in the whitewares figure is a small quantity of cream glazed material. The sherds were very flaked and fragmented but a plate or dish with moulded rim was present. It is possible that this is an 18th century vessel. Some of the other whitewares had blue tinged glaze and there were also one or two blue shell edge rims. It is possible that these items are late 18th/early 19th century.

The brown glazed wares are buff earthenwares with glazes ranging from dark brown to mottled brown to lighter speckled yellow brown. A lot of the fragments are probably from teapots but many were too small to tell vessel form.

Most of the fragments of porcelain/china belonged to one, or possibly more, small dishes with blue transfer printed willow pattern, but there were sherds of several other vessels including ones with overglaze painting and moulded decoration. Similarly, most of the fragments in the 'various refined....' category also belonged to one vessel. This was a brown glazed refined redware with white internal slip and wide white band externally - possibly a teapot. Two sherds of blue earthenware were present. The 'white utilitarian' category refers to jars for preserves. One base was marked MALING. Maling produced the great majority of commercial jars used in this country in the late 19th century. Two Dundee marmalade jars and one marked Wotherspoon Scotch marmalade were present. There were, perhaps surprisingly, only a few fragments of stoneware bottles.

It is likely that the great majority of this material, both the coarse red wares and the refined whitewares, came from the potteries of Tyneside.

⁷ Although two sherds of this were 'surface finds', they joined a sherd from context [111].

Discussion

This is an interesting assemblage because it can be directly related to those living at Ovenstones in the second half of the 19th century. Although a small proportion of the material may possibly have belonged to earlier, 18th century, inhabitants of the site, on the whole the group would appear to represent a cross section of the ceramics owned and used by the residents around this time. It has been beyond the scope of this preliminary study to compare the assemblage with similar groups from elsewhere, should they exist, but there seems nothing to indicate that the people here were particularly poor or deprived. As well as the kitchen brownwares they used good quality yellow glazed kitchenwares. Although there is a quantity of 'cheap and cheerful' sponged wares there are proportionately more transfer printed wares for use on the dinner table. The china vessels may be a few prized items saved for special occasions. However, china vessels might have been more carefully treated, resulting in fewer breakages. In that case the relatively small quantity present may be unrepresentative. Overall the assemblage does not suggest luxury living but neither does it suggest people living on the breadline!

Further, detailed analysis of the assemblage would give more accurate quantification data and a clearer picture of the size, type and source of vessels in use. The assemblage could usefully be amalgamated with, or reconsidered in comparison with the assemblage collected from the excavations of the midden in February 2007. A search for other comparable assemblages should also be made.

Abbreviations used in pottery type names

dec	decorated
ew	earthenware
gl	glazed
misc	miscellaneous
ref	refined
tp	transfer printed
util	utilitarian

Form sherds:

b	base
h	handle
prof	profile
r	rim

Additional abbreviations which may be used in comments:

ext	external
frag	fragment
freq	frequent
imp	impression
int	internal
sh	sherd
sl	slight
sv	same vessel
ves	vessel

The Catalogue

Fabric Group	count	wgt		Cat. no
Context 105	36	2775		
1 red ew	5	37 r b	Brown gl	110
1 red slip	25	617 4r 6b	Ungl ext. Rolled/everted bowl type rims. ?no of vessels	106
1 red slip	11	156 r	Gl ext.	107
1 red slip	3	45 r	Flanged bowl rim with brown mottling on white slip.	108
1 red slip	1	28 r	Elaborate bifid rim.	109
2 buff gl ew	16	121 r 4b	3 ring bases, 1 flat (sl recessed), rim of bowl/dish/saucer	130
2 buff/white gl	9	29 2b	Buffish gl ext white int. Includes frags of moulded ves from other contexts.	135
2 yellow gl	6	39 r	Flanged bowl rim	132
2 yellow ware	9	76 r	Simple upright rim with bands of blue and narrow white (6 same ves). Others sl darker different ves.	133
3 black tp	2	6 r	Moulded plate rim with some tp dec in black too.	141
3 black tp	4	12 r	1 is from mug/bowl with verse	146
3 blue tp	73	414 10r 7b	A lot of the fragments very flaked - hard to see how many vessels present. Seems to be 4 different Albion type rims - one a non-circular dish. Rim and base fragments of a more floral design. 2 rims and 2 bases of willow pattern . 2 other base and 2 rims	115
3 brown tp	6	20	One is willow patt as in [101/ii]	147
3 cream gl	2	11 b ?		131
3 gl white ew	50	228	Various plain - ring and flat bases, simple rims. Could be from dec vessels.	140
3 gl white ew	66	93	Misc small flakes, chips etc.	144
3 gl white ew dec	31	113	Miscellaneous decorated, lines, painted. Various bowls, mugs/jugs a lid.	139
3 misc tp	5	18	Incl. pink, green and grey	149
3 purple tp	5	6 r h	Seaweed type pattern	148
3 shell edge	4	34 4r	Looks like 4 different vessels - though 1 frag very small. Poss. Late 18th c.	138
3 sponged	66	252 7r h	Mostly blue some green and brown. One cut sponge on flatw rim. Some other flatw but rims mostly simple bowl/upright	117
4 brown gl	11	75 b sp h	Light fabrics with brown/mottled gl.	134
5 china	10	66 prof 3r b	Willow patt dish as elsewhere. Rim with sprig . Rim with moulded dec and overgl painting. Sl cream coloured similar.	143
6 stoneware	3	61 2b		116
7 white util	4	135 r b	Base of jar with tp label: WOTHERSPOON/SCOTCH MARMALADE. Other frags of ridged jar.	142
8 black gl	2	6	Not as 'ref blackw'. Bit with holes in - tea pot?	113
8 blue ew	1	11		112
8 ref blackw	3	22	Brown fabric with shiney black gl with fine textured surface.	111
8 ref red	1	15	As in [111]. White int and in band ext.	114
9 misc	1	4	Yellow gl, pink buff fabric with painted/stamped simple motif. Base elsewhere?	137
9 reduced ew	1	25	Grey with brown glx2	136

Context 107	20	691		
1 red slip	5	149 r b	Prob same ves as in [101ii] - large jar.	200
2 buff gl ew	4	251 2r b	Rolled everted rim and ring base of bowl, flanged rim flatware.	198
2 buff/white gl	2	18 r	With ?bamboo moulding as in other contexts.	205
2 yellow gl	4	158 r	Flanged rim of shallow dish, sl yellow gl. 2 other not same ves more lemon yellow gl.	199
3 blue tp	1	32 r	Willow patt type	202
3 sponged	2	22 r	Blue	201
5 china	1	3 b	With red brown tp.	203
7 white util	1	58 b	Dundee marmalade jar	204
Context 101/ii	1	10		
4 brown gl	1	10	Moulded	209
Context 116	30	241		
1 red slip	2	137 2r		190
2 buff gl ew	3	14 r		191
2 buff/white gl	1	7	With moulded ext as in other contexts	192
3 blue tp	11	21 r b	Some frags no dec but small and prob from dec vessels.	195
3 purple tp	4	5 r	Seaweed type pattern as other contexts.	196
7 white util	3	10 b		197
8 ref red	3	44 b	Vessel with white slip int and band ext as elsewhere.	193
9 misc ew	3	3	Small frags with yellow sl speckled glaze.	194
Context 105	11	135		
1 red slip	6	77 2r		206
2 yellow gl	1	54 b	Ring base of jar.	207
3 gl white ew	4	4		208
Context 101/iv	94	468		
1 red slip	5	60		187
3 black tp	1	4 b	Crest with ?Prince of Wales feathers ..CH ? ICH DIEN. Underneath in large caps ...KELT?O	183
3 blue tp	28	128	Various - incl willow patt and Albion - John Wood.	178
3 brown tp	1	13 b	Willow pattern - prob sv as elsewhere.	179
3 cream gl	13	41 r	very flaked as in other contexts.	177
3 gl white ew	17	75	Plain frags - may be from dec vessels. Various bits of base.	180
3 gl white ew	4	22 2r	One with blue bands, one with painted pink/red and blue.	181
3 gl white ew	1	12 b	Moulded dec as in other conts - blue tinged gl.	184
3 sponged	16	49	Miscellaneous - prob all vessels seen elsewhere - incl. butterfly.	182
5 china	1	8 b	Ring base.	189
6 stoneware	1	12		188
7 white util	3	37 r	Ribbed jam jar.	185
9 misc ew	3	7		186
Context 116	49	446		
1 red slip	11	293 h	Side handle. Most gl ext, ones that aren't possibly	152

			from lower bits of ves that is.	
2	buff gl ew	1 2	White int.	161
3	black tp	2 9	2 joining flakes	156
3	blue tp	6 18	Misc.	154
3	cream gl	2 7		159
3	gl white ew	11 36 r	Misc - incl rim with blue bands and moulded frag.	158
3	purple tp	2 3		155
3	sponged	3 11		157
4	brown gl	4 16	2 small dark brown, 2 joining flakes speckled lighter	
			Brown	160
5	china	7 51 2r b	Willow patt dish again. Dish rim with grey seaweed	153
			type pattern, base same but prob not same ves.	
Context 110		22 85		
1	red slip	1 12		211
2	yellow gl	1 2		212
3	gl white ew	19 53	Various incl tp, bands and sponged - small	213
7	white util	1 18 r	Trans print MAJES	210
Context 101/iii		207 1544		
1	red ew	2 36	I dark brown gl, 1 small black	92
1	red slip	27 478 r 2b	Ungl ext, flanged bowl rim	85
1	red slip	4 58 r	With brown mottling, flanged rim.	86
1	red slip	10 152	Glazed ext.	87
1	red sltr	1 5	Lighter red fabric than the 'brownwares' perhaps	96
			an earlier piece. Trace of slip line.	
2	buff gl ew	6 90 2b h	Ring base bowl, low ring base dish/plate moulded	91
			handle.	
2	buff/white gl	4 36 r	Moulded ext as in [101/ii]	88
2	yellow ware	6 21 b	2 have slip lines - pale blue and white..	89
3	black tp	4 12	Seaweed type pattern and ?.	101
3	blue tp	35 172 5r 4b	Rim and base of Albion type pattern, part of base	100
			has Turnbull Stepney mark. 3 willow patt rims. Rim	
			of jar with 'flow' type print.	
3	cream gl	28 124 2r h b	Flatw rims, small handle, base on low ring of dish.	84
			Very flakey as vessel in [101/ii]	
3	cream gl	1 4 r	Sl everted rim.	97
3	gl white ew	43 53	Small flaked and misc. frags, some from dec. ves.	99
3	mauve tp	1 2		102
3	pearlw?	9 96 2b	Blue-grey tinged gl. Splayed ring & chipped ?ring.	105
3	shell edge	3 10		104
3	sponged	6 77 b	Bowl with green butterflies and pink other cut	94
			sponge dec.	
3	sponged	7 33 4r	Simple upright rims. 1 brown rest blue random	95
			sponging.	
5	china	2 25 prof	Willow patt as elsewhere.	103
6	stoneware	3 38	Grey buff	90
7	white util	4 15 r	Jam jar as in [101/ii]	93
8	pink gl	1 7 b		98
Context 101/ii		737 10290		
1	red slip	23 1066 prof	Bowl with everted rolled rim. Ungl except for	32
			patches of thin wash ext.	
1	red slip	35 1997 r h	Large jar with everted/rounded rim. Most of frags	33
			join. Glaze externally but not right down to base.	
			Side lug handle	

1	red slip	13	296	r	Large jar very like #33 but ext glaze lighter/brighter.	34
1	red slip	16	624	3r 3b	Bowls - variations on rolled/folded rims. Bases may belong, or to large vessel #33.	35
1	red slip	2	66		Gl ext	36
1	red slip	3	77	b	With traces brown mottling. 2 join. One small abraded frag not same ves.	37
2	buff gl ew	14	499	r b	'Off white' fabric with clear buff coloured glaze. Bowl with ring base and everted rolled rim.	25
2	buff gl ew	4	99	b	Smaller ring base than #25	26
2	buff gl ew	11	103	prof	Plate	27
2	buff gl ew	1	13	r		28
2	buff gl ew	1	51	prof	Profile of small shallow dish/saucer.	29
2	buff gl ew	1	16	b	Plain base	30
2	buff gl ew	39	311		Misc. incl flaked spout and flaked ?base.	31
2	buff gl ew	10	81		Simple rim sherds	145
2	buff/white gl	15	174	r b	Moulded dec. ext. with buff (very pale brown) glaze. Int has white glaze but in most frags it has flaked off. Some pieces look burnt and one has holes - as in teapot spout.	40
2	buff/white gl	19	258	2r 3b	Buff glaze ext white int. Recessed base of straight sided jar. Ring base of rounded vessel, frag of ring base. Simple rims different vessels. One fragment has moulded ext ?bamboo.	56
2	yellow ware	15	683	prof	Large bowl with clear yellow/buff glaze, concentric bands of white and brown slip. Rolled rim and ring base, handle but not attached.	1
2	yellow ware	3	11		Small sherds not the same vessel as #1. One has small section of blue mocha dec.	2
2	yellow-buff gl	3	30	r	Buff ew with elaborate white glazed applied moulded horizontal band on yellow buff ground. Rim has brown runs. Yellow/buff glaze has small flecks.	54
2	yellow-buff gl	8	90	r	Flanged bowl rim - plain glazed but as vessel with elaborate moulding.	55
2	yellow-buff gl	8	47	2r	Misc buff/yellow gl frags.	63
3	black tp	3	87	prof	Plate. 2 small frags of base have figure with ?goat. May not belong to dec. rim	12
3	black tp	1	3	r	Seaweed	23
3	blue tp	31	391	prof	Plate of Albion design (landscape with buildings figures and lake) impressed mark WOOD STEPNEY. May be two vessels from same service.	16
3	blue tp	14	80	r	Miscellaneous blue. One frag has ALBION printed mark. Part of one other mark. Simple rim	17
3	blue tp	7	35	r+h	Simple rim ?teacup	20
3	blue tp	7	70	2r 3b	3 ring bases smallish vessels.	21
3	blue tp	13	26		Misc.	22
3	blue tp	5	54	2r	Plate rims with dark blue willow pattern type border.	24
3	brown tp	21	109	r	Very fragmented rim. Border is willow pattern type but trace of mark says GEM and fragment has figures. (GEM is moorish traders by lake). J. C probably Carr.	13
3	brown tp	7	18	r	More delicate pattern than #13.	14
3	brown tp	11	79	2r	Simple rim ?deep bowl and rim of more open vessel same brown tp design. Simple pattern	15
3	cream edge	5	117	r	Wavey rim with painted blue feathered edge.	44

3	cream gl	7	35	r 2h	Cream coloured glaze but probably not early.	
3	gl white ew	9	143	6b	Very flaked but appears to be moulded rim of plate.	52
3	gl white ew	2	61	r h	Ring bases, various sizes. All have slight blue tinge.	45
3	gl white ew	2	16	2b	Rolled jar rim and handle frag with blue tinged clear glaze.	46
3	gl white ew	3	126	b	Small frags with blue tinged glaze - plate bases?	47
3	gl white ew	1	28	b	Ring base large dish. Plain white	48
3	gl white ew	4	76	r b	Small recessed base - tea cup? Plain white	49
3	gl white ew	32	97	3h	Simple rim and recessed base - jar? Not necess same ves.	50
3	gl white ew	22	83	3r	Plain white - incl small handle frags.	51
3	gl white ew	70	144		With blue stripes and bands. At least three vessels. Simple rims.	57
3	gl white ew dec	2	15	prof	Misc small frags and flakes.	59
3	gl white ew dec	16	76	6r 3h 2b	Shallow bowl/dish with blue and green painted lines and some other motif.	58
3	gl white ew dec	3	36	r	Various decorated white earthenware. Mark on bottom of one says GRECIAN and T TILL but no dec on this bit.	62
3	motto tp	15	51	r 3b	Rim of ?large mug with 'Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker'. Frags with words surface finds but join to piece from this context.	43
3	purple tp	23	216	prof	Seaweed pattern in purplish blue. 2 ring bases and one flatter	18
3	sponged	4	13	r	Simple rim and ring base with cut sponge dec - purple flowers and green butterflies.	3
3	sponged	8	42	prof	Slightly different rim but same flowers as #3.	4
3	sponged	25	108	prof	Plate with green cut sponge dec and painted red brown concentric lines in centre.	5
3	sponged	4	50	r	Bowl with ring base and simple rim wide band of blue sponging with dark grey lines either side.	6
3	sponged	11	55	2r	Simple rim with blue sponging in band inside as well as ext.	7
3	sponged	5	49	r	Misc frags with blue sponging	8
3	sponged	3	35	2r	Rims with very faint blue dec. appears to be sponged	9
3	sponged	7	25		Plate and saucer with purplish blue cut sponge dec.	10
4	brown gl	23	206	2lid r sp	Misc. frags with sponging	11
4	brown gl	1	15	r	brown glaze teapot frags. 2 or 3 vessels	41
4	brown gl	1	15	r	? Tea pot but lighter brown than other ves.	65
4	brown gl	3	4		Deep vertical grooves. Straight sided ves.	67
4	brown speckled	3	16	r b	Misc small brown gl.	68
5	china	12	118	profile	Upright rim and ring base.	64
5	china	8	43	2r 2b h	Dish with pale blue tp willow pattern.	19
6	stoneware	3	47		Plain white. Bases with low rings, small handle, simple rims.	53
7	white util	16	428	2 prof 2r b	Two ves.	61
7	white util	3	11		Straightsided plain white jars - base marked MALING	38
8	blue ew	1	18	b	Printed frags from marmalade jar.	39
8	ref blackw	1	6			60
8	ref red	15	122	b	With fine impressed 'texture'.	66
					Dark red fabric, white slip int and in broad band ext with brown gl above and below. Possibly teapot.	42

Context 103	96	3128		
1 red ew	1	10 h	Brown gl smallish handle.	77
1 red slip	28	667 b	Clubbed base and body sherds, glaze begins part way up. May be same ves in [101/ii] with just rim.	71
1 red slip	8	277 r	With darker ext gl as large ves in [101/ii] #33.	72
1 red slip	2	58 r	Rolled rim, probably bowl - ungl ext	73
1 red slip	11	1460 b	Large clubbed base - seems to be from glazed vessel but not large jar in [101/ii].	74
2 buff gl ew	3	163 prof	Rectangular dish	70
2 yellow-buff gl	1	4 r	yellowish buff, flanged rim	83
3 blue tp	9	73 6r 2b	Misc. blue patterns. 4 simple rims, 2 plate rims (1 looks like another Albion). Base of willow patt plate.	78
3 gl white ew	11	137 prof	Straight sided mug with ring base and handle. Fine light blue bands of slip.	69
3 gl white ew	8	116 r 2b	Complete smallish ring base and part of larger one. Could be from sponge dec vessels.	80
3 sponged	6	71 3r b	Rim of bowl with cut sponge in pink. Rest are blue - plate rim and simple rim	79
4 brown gl	3	47 b	Ring base, buff fabric with brown gl. One bit is moulded.	76
5 china	3	29 2r	Willow patt small dish, wavey rim with faded paint dec.	81
6 stoneware	1	5		82
8 ref red?	1	11 b	Splayed pedestal, dark brown gl. White int slip.	75
Context 201	9	61		
1 red slip	3	48		126
3 gl white ew	6	13	Misc - some with dec.	127
Context 202	24	27		
3 gl white ew	22	23	Misc - some dec	128
9 misc ew	2	4		129
Context 203	3	40		
3 gl white ew	3	40 b	T2. Main bit is sponge dec, 2 others prob same ves. I small other dec.	118
Context 204	2	1		
4 brown gl	2	1	Tiny frags of ?moulded brown gl	119
Context 301	14	41		
3 blue tp	5	26 b	Willow patt	120
3 gl white ew	9	15	One has green sponge the rest plain but small.	121
Context 302	7	30		
1 red slip	1	24		151
3 gl white ew	6	6	mall flakes, incl 1 sponge.	150
Context 401	22	526		
1 red slip	5	321 b	Ungl ext, clubbed base	174
2 yellow ware	16	204 b	Splayed ring base. Most frags are flakes. Blue slip band.	175
3 blue tp	1	1	Tiny flake	176

Context 501	250	517		
1 red ew	10	60	One frag has slip bands.	168
1 red slip	16	102 r		169
3 blue tp	38	58		162
3 gl white ew	80	95	Misc - most are small or flaked frags. Some with traces of dec - slip/painted bands, bits of ?sponge or ?tp. Etc	166
3 green tp	10	6 r	Delicate floral patt.	164
3 grey tp	2	12	Diff ves.	163
3 sponged	79	131	Includes flatware rims and handles of cups/mugs.	167
4 brown gl	6	10 h	Dark brown gl buff ew. Small handle.	170
4 brown gl	3	27 r	Light gold-brown sl streaky gl. ?tea/coffee pot.	171
5 china	1	7 r	With painted dec.	165
6 stoneware	1	3		172
9 misc ew	4	6		173
Context 50	22	70		
(2 nd part)				
1 red ew	2	8	Brown gl	123
1 red slip	5	50		122
3 gl white ew	14	11		124
8 black gl?	1	1		125
Grand totals	2056	21126		

12. APPENDIX 7: BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1. INTRODUCTION

An excavation is planned at the late post-medieval miners settlement at Ovenstone, centred at NY963986, some 250m north-west of the Grasslees burn, west of its confluence with the river Coquet. The fieldwork will take place as part of the Upper Coquetdale Community Archaeology Project (UCCAP).

The site of Ovenstone is known to comprise a series of earthworks and ruined walls, the latter including the remains of dwellings. Also part of the complex are a large midden set close to the south side of the dwellings and series of bell pits which run north-west and south-east of the site along a coal seam. Trackways connect the main settlement site with bell pits and the site of an adjacent tile-works. Remains of the farmed landscape within which the Ovenstone settlement was located are apparent in the form of rig & furrow and land divisions.

It is also anticipated that the opportunity will arise to investigate sites in the wider vicinity which are of interest to the UCCAP and may be related to the Ovenstone site. It is stressed that such work will occur only if there are sufficient community volunteers to enable the core work to be carried out satisfactorily; particularly if the number of volunteers is too great to be safely or practically accommodated at Ovenstone. It is suggested that the Ovenstone site could, if numbers of volunteers are sufficient, provide a base for exploratory investigations of the wider landscape. Sites presently identified for exploration are listed in *Appendix 1*.

It is proposed to carry out the work using core staff of the Archaeological Practice Ltd. assisted by student volunteers from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, School of Historical Studies. This, along with the presence of the UCCAP archaeologist, will provide sufficient experienced personnel to guide and advise the UCCAP volunteers, not all of whom are likely to have had previous archaeological experience. The Archaeological Practice Ltd. has considerable experience facilitating and leading community-based research projects (see *Appendix 2*), involving students members of the public and designated community groups.

In order to care for the well-being of staff, volunteers and visitors to the site, it is proposed to provide shelter using gazebo structures and to ensure that sufficient quantities of liquid and food are available to cater for emergencies, particularly during hot weather. An up to date medical kit will also be on hand. Toilet provision will be made by accessing the NNAP Grasslees toilets east of the site; an 8-seater vehicle will be available to make regular trips. A noticeboard giving brief details of the work in progress will be prepared for display on-site for the benefit of visitors; digital summaries and photographs will also be prepared for UCCAP and NNPA to make available for viewing through their web-sites, if desired.

2. SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

2.1 Programme and specification

2.1.1 A programme of evaluation fieldwork sufficient to establish the character and quality of any surviving archaeological features, such as those identified above, is described below. This will be backed-up by limited documentary and historic map-based work. Specifically, the proposed excavation programme has the following principal features:

2.2 Trench location and dimensions

2.2.1 A number of archaeological trenches, to be agreed with the ACCAP Advisory Group, are to be excavated within the Ovenstone complex in order to determine the character and date of surviving remains. A full project design will be provided when this has been determined. However, it is anticipated that a single large trench will expose a large part of all of the main dwellings structure and that other, smaller trenches will be used to explore other features such as earthwork enclosures, boundary monuments and a bell pit.

2.2.2 In addition, it is anticipated that the opportunity may arise to investigate sites in the wider vicinity which are of interest to the UCCAP and may be related to the Ovenstone site (see *Appendix 1*).

2.2.3 All trenches will be excavated to a depth sufficient to investigate the character and stratigraphy of significant archaeological features. This is likely to require excavation to sub-soil level in at least some part of each trench.

3. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

3.1 General

3.1.1 The Field Investigation will be carried out by means of Archaeological Excavation.

3.1.2 All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and will follow the IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations.

3.1.3 All archaeological staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. Before commencement of work they will have been made aware of what work is required under the specification and they will understand the aims and methodologies of the project.

3.2 Excavation

3.2.1 Evaluation trenches will be excavated in the positions indicated in the preceding section. Excavation, recording and sampling procedures will be undertaken using the strategies indicated below.

3.2.2 The setting out of the trenches will be undertaken by The Archaeological Practice Ltd., using plans (if available) provided by UCCAP.

3.2.3 It is anticipated that all excavation will be by hand. However, in the unlikely case that deep overburden is encountered, topsoil and unstratified modern material sealing colliery period or earlier horizons will be removed mechanically, using an appropriate machine with a toothless ditching blade. The removal of topsoil or recent overburden above the first significant archaeological horizon will be executed in successive level spits up to a maximum depth of 1.2 metres. During hand excavation all trench faces will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. All mechanical excavation will be supervised by, and all manual excavation carried out by archaeologically competent staff.

3.2.4 All excavation of archaeological horizons will be carried out by hand and every effort will be made to leave important remains *in situ*.

3.2.5 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified will be excavated by hand through a sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. Pits and postholes will normally be sampled by half-sectioning although some features may require complete excavation. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate. No archaeological deposits will be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable.

3.2.6 Archaeological stratigraphy revealed by excavation will be recorded by the following means:

3.2.6.1 **Written descriptions.** Each archaeological context will be recorded on a pro-forma sheet. Minimum recorded details will consist of the following: a unique identifier; an objective description which includes measurements of extent and details of colour and composition; an interpretative estimate of function, clearly identified as such; at least one absolute height value; the identifiers of related contexts and a description of the relationship with such contexts (for preference, executed as a mini Harris matrix); references to other recording media in which representations of the context are held (plans, sections, photographs).

3.2.6.3 **Measured illustrations.** Detail plans and sectional profiles of archaeological features will be at appropriate scales (1:20 or 1:10). Archaeological contexts will be referenced by their unique identifiers. All illustrations will be properly identified, scaled and referenced to the site survey control.

3.2.6.4 **Photographs.** Digital photographs will be taken for purposes of record. A system will be used for identifying the archaeological features photographed.

3.2.7 An appropriate control network for the survey of any archaeological remains revealed in excavation will be established.

3.2.8 The survey control network will be related to the OS grid.

3.2.9 The survey control network and the position of recorded structures, features and finds will be located on a map of an appropriate scale (1:2500 or 1:500)

3.2.10 At least one absolute height value related to OD will be recorded for each archaeological context.

3.2.11 All processing, storage and conservation of finds will be carried out in compliance with the relevant IFA and UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation) guidelines.

3.2.12 Portable remains will be removed by hand; all artifacts encountered will be recovered.

3.2.13 Deposits/fills with potential for environmental evidence will be assessed by taking up to two bulk samples of up to 30 litres from any contexts selected for analysis. Deposits/fills totalling less than 30 litres in volume will be sampled in their entirety. Up to six of the collected samples which are judged to be most suitable on grounds of deriving from will be selected for full analysis, reporting and publication. The samples will be selected on the basis that they derive uncontaminated and reasonably well-dated deposits and/or recognisable features.

3.2.14 A maximum of 5 samples of material suitable for dating by scientific means (eg: Radiocarbon, Luminescence, Remnant Magnetism, etc.) will be collected, should it be appropriate to do so.

3.2.15 The potential requirement for specialist analyses is an unavoidable risk in all such excavations. The scientific investigation of any features/deposits which are considered significant will be undertaken as a part of this programme and funded by the excavator, in consultation with ACCAP and NNPA.

3.3 Analysis and Reporting of Recovered Data

3.3.1 Following the completion of the Field Investigation and before any of the post-excavation work is commenced, an archive (the Site Archive) containing all the data gathered during fieldwork will be prepared. This material will be quantified, ordered, indexed and rendered internally consistent. It will be prepared according to the guidelines given in English Heritage's MAP 2 document, Appendix 3 (English Heritage 1991).

3.3.2 An interim report of no less than 300 words, containing preliminary recommendations for any further work required, will be produced within two weeks of completion of the field investigation for UCCAP and the NNPA Archaeologist.

3.3.3 Following completion of the Field Investigation, a full report will be prepared collating and synthesizing the structural, artefactual and environmental data.

3.4 Production of Final Report

3.4.1 Bound copies of the report will be provided by Monday, 31st December 2007 to UCCAP and the NNPA Archaeologist, with additional copies made available for dissemination to the Northumberland County Conservation Team (for deposition in the County HER).

3.4.2 Any further copies required will be produced electronically. The report will include as a minimum the following:

Type of monument and its period
National Grid Reference of site
Name of compiler, date of investigation
A summary statement of methodologies used.
A location plan of the site and any significant discoveries made.
Summary statement describing the salient features
Detailed description of the site, including full analysis and interpretation of the plan, form, dimensions, area, function, age, development sequence and past land use
Supporting evidence
Topographic setting of the site
Brief assessment of local, regional and national significance of the site.
A list of drawings, cross-referenced to a location plan or plans
A card cover - with title, date, author, contractor organisation and commissioning client – and secure ring binding

3.4.3 The report will finish with a section detailing recommendations for further archaeological or conservation work at the site

3.4.4 Following completion of the analysis and publication phase of the work, an archive (the Research Archive) containing all the data derived from the work done during the analysis phase will be prepared. The archive will be prepared to the standard specified by English Heritage (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation guidelines.

3.4.5 Arrangements will be made to deposit the Site Archive (including Finds) and the Research Archive with the designated repository, The Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle upon Tyne, by the end of December 2007.

3.4.7 Summary reports of the project will be prepared, if necessary, for inclusion in the appropriate Notices, Annual Reviews, Reports, etc.

3.5 OASIS

3.5.1 The Archaeological Contractor will complete the online form for the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations Project (OASIS). The Contractor agrees to the procedure whereby the information on the form will be placed in the public domain on the OASIS website, following submission to or incorporation of the final report (see 3.4) into the County HER.

4. TIMETABLE AND STAFFING

It is proposed to carry out the excavation and recording work between Monday 18th June and Monday 2nd July, 2007. Prior to the works commencing a site meeting will be held with all interested parties, notably UCCAP and NNPA representatives in order to identify trench locations. Provisional agreement for the potential exploration of sites in the wider vicinity (see *Appendix 1*) will be sought by AP Ltd.