
RIPLEY HILL
WOODLAND CREATION PROJECT
GUNNERTON, NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

November 2020



Prepared for: <i>Chipchase Estate</i>	By: <i>The Archaeological Practice Ltd.</i>
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RIPLEY HILL

Archaeological Assessment & Survey
for a
Woodland Creation Planning Grant

Prepared by

The Archaeological Practice Ltd



Frontispiece: *Field boundary bank 23E, running obliquely up the scarp on the east side of Gunnerton Burn.*

Grid Reference: NY 9140 7750 (approximate centre)
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SUMMARY

This document provides a report on a rapidly completed desk-based cultural heritage assessment undertaken by The Archaeological Practice Ltd with respect to a proposed Woodland Creation Planning Grant project on the Chipchase Estate, north of Gunnerton and NNW of Chollerton in south-central Northumberland.

In addition to site visits, the assessment involved consultations with the local planning authority, an examination of historic maps and documentary records for the area, consultation of published local and regional histories, consideration of the results of previous archaeological investigations pertaining to the area and consultation and synthesis of data held by the Northumberland Heritage Environment Record (HER).

The main findings of the assessment are that while later prehistoric/Romano-British settlement sites, in particular, are well-attested in the vicinity, with evidence of earlier prehistoric funerary monuments also being recorded, there is little specific evidence for such sites within the present assessment area.

The surviving remains, which have been identified within the assessment area through a combination of aerial photography and LiDAR imagery analysis and walkover survey, mostly comprise features associated with the management and exploitation of this enclosed moorland, principally during the 18th and 19th centuries. These visible surviving remains – ridge and furrow earthworks and field boundary banks (e.g. 23E, 23W and 24) – are not in themselves of more than very local archaeological significance. They do, however, appear to precede the earliest Ordnance Survey mapping. In addition, features of uncertain date and significance identified in the area include the small circular feature (Site 22), the cairn incorporating an irregular stone slab with possible cup markings (Site 21) and the L-shaped linear bank (Site 25).

Only a single HER site entry falls within or immediately adjoins the study area (Site 01; HER 9196), a site apparently labelled an ‘entrenchment’ on survey plans by MacLauchlan in the mid-19th century and subsequently interpreted as a possible enclosed farmstead, though no traces have ever actually been identified. Comparison of MacLauchlan’s drawings and accompanying description here has determined that this ‘site’ is simply the result of the misplacing of the word ‘entrenchment’ on the published plan and map. The term actually applies to Site 02, the enclosed settlement 120 m to the east of the assessment area (HER 9182; Scheduled Monument 20927), which is specifically described by MacLauchlan as ‘an entrenchment’ and as resembling an ‘entrenched residence’.

The assessment also considers the potential impact of the proposed planting on the setting of monuments the wider landscape, specifically the three Scheduled Ancient Monuments immediately to the east and south east (SAMs 1011422, 1011424 & 1011425). It is concluded that the creation of the new woodland will impact visually on the setting of the three scheduled monuments to the east (SAMs 20927, 20929, 20930), to some degree. However, this impact is only very marginal in the case of SAM 20929 and is not considered to be of critical significance in the other two cases, given greater proximity of a pre-existing plantation in the case of 20927 and continued distance of the woodland edge from 20930. It is noted that woodland plantations form a traditional component of the overall landscape setting of this area.

Recommendations resulting from this assessment call for mitigation by avoiding planting on cultural heritage features.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Assessment

This assessment and survey, prepared by the Archaeological Practice Ltd. was commissioned by Mark Smith of Galbraith Group, on behalf of the Chipchase Estate, to inform a proposed forestry project associated with a Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG). The request was for a Stage 2 Archaeological Survey, as defined in the Forestry Commission's Guidance on Woodland Creation Planning Grants, laying out the objectives for the site and the constraints and opportunities in relation to the Historic Environment.

1.2 Policy Background

The current proposal is being developed in full compliance with Forestry Commission Standard Guidelines. In *'Forests and Historic Environment'* (Forestry Commission 2011, chapter 6) it is specifically noted that:

1. All landscapes have intrinsic historical value and many have special cultural significance, as can the individual elements within them. The historic context provides the starting point in forest planning for the historic environment.
2. Assessing the evidence is vital in establishing the historic environment value of a site.
3. Consideration of the historic environment forms part of the forest planning process in both new woodlands and the redesign of existing woodland.
4. Open space is often the most appropriate setting for historic environment features; open areas may have to be managed to minimize erosion or inappropriate woodland regeneration.
5. Forest operations, ground disturbance and heavy machinery involved in earthworks all have the potential to seriously damage historic environmental features.

In relation to these issues, the following thirty specific guidelines relating to forestry and the historic environment are specified. This assessment represents the first stage in the application of these guidelines to the current Ripley Hill WGS proposal.

1.2.1 Historic context

1. Contact the local historic environment services for information on the historical context; check to see if a historic assessment/categorisation has been undertaken or the landscape is listed or registered as being of historic or design interest.
2. Use the historic assessment /categorisation or any description given in a historic register or list, together with the landscape character assessment, to inform the development of proposals.
3. Consider the impacts of forestry on the historical context and landscape character in forest management plans; consider opportunities to complement, enhance or re-create landscapes of historic interest.

1.2.2 Evidence of the historic environment

4. Take advice on the historical interest of the site from the historic environment services and by checking the historic environment records.
5. Look for indications of the historic environment on the ground and conduct further investigation where evidence is found; commission specialist surveys where evidence is significant.
6. Ensure those working in woodlands are aware of the importance of the historic environment; encourage them to recognise evidence and assist in gathering information.
7. Include long-established boundaries, banks and veteran trees as historic environment features to be protected.
8. Record the nature and position of any historical features or objects such as pottery, flint or bone, and report them to the relevant historic environment services.
9. Where historic environment surveys are requested, offer access and assistance to help extend historic environment records.

1.2.3 Forest planning

10. Ensure the historic environment considerations are fully integrated into the forest planning process.
11. Plan an appropriate area of open space around features of historical significance; for Scheduled Monuments this will normally be a minimum of 20 m. Consider the setting as well as the individual features.
12. Where evidence suggests that significant historical remains may be present, but specific features have not been identified, identify these areas in forest management plans, restrict any planting to smaller trees or shrubs and minimise ground disturbance.
13. For new woods in areas where the landscape history is important, consider restoring tree cover on previously wooded sites.
14. Take particular care to avoid sites of historic interest where short rotation forestry crops are proposed.

1.2.4 Woodland heritage

15. Manage trees and shrubs that may damage important historical sites and features: limit the establishment of woody vegetation and consider removing large trees vulnerable to windthrow.
16. Retain and manage existing veteran trees and select and manage suitable individuals to eventually take their place.
17. Monitor important historic environment sites and features, including woodland features, to check they are not being damaged or degraded.

1.2.5 Open space

18. Aim to maintain the open settings for features of historical interest; where appropriate monitor changes in vegetation and consider using grazing or mowing as part of the management plan.
19. Manage public access so that open settings for historical features are not subject to erosion or damage caused by visitor pressure.

1.2.6 Forest operations

20. If operations are planned near a Scheduled Monument, consult the relevant historic environment authority before site operations commence. If operations are likely to affect other known or suspected features of historic environment interest, seek advice on operations from the local historic environment service.
21. Avoid disturbing the ground on or near sites of historical significance.

22. Identify relevant historic environment features in the operational plan and identify them on the ground; ensure they are excluded from the operational area and that the plan is communicated to all those working on the site.
23. Avoid using areas of historical importance for storing material, stacking timber or as a parking area for machinery.
24. Where operations are a necessity near vulnerable historical features, take precautions to avoid damage and take particular care with felling and extraction.

1.2.7 Site hydrology

25. Keep drains well away from known archaeological deposits; as a guide a minimum of 20 metres, depending on the nature of site hydrology.
26. Where there is preserved archaeology, and drains may be having a detrimental effect, consider blocking or re-routing them.
27. Avoid the establishment of new woodlands or short rotation coppice on areas where changes in hydrology may affect preserved remains.

1.2.8 Access and interpretation

28. Consider providing access to features of historical interest.
29. Consider how the historic environment could be interpreted for visitors as part of an integrated access strategy if that is a management objective.
30. Ensure historical features and any visitor facilities associated with them are well maintained.

1.3 Methodology of the Survey and Assessment

The Stage 2 archaeological work reported on here included:

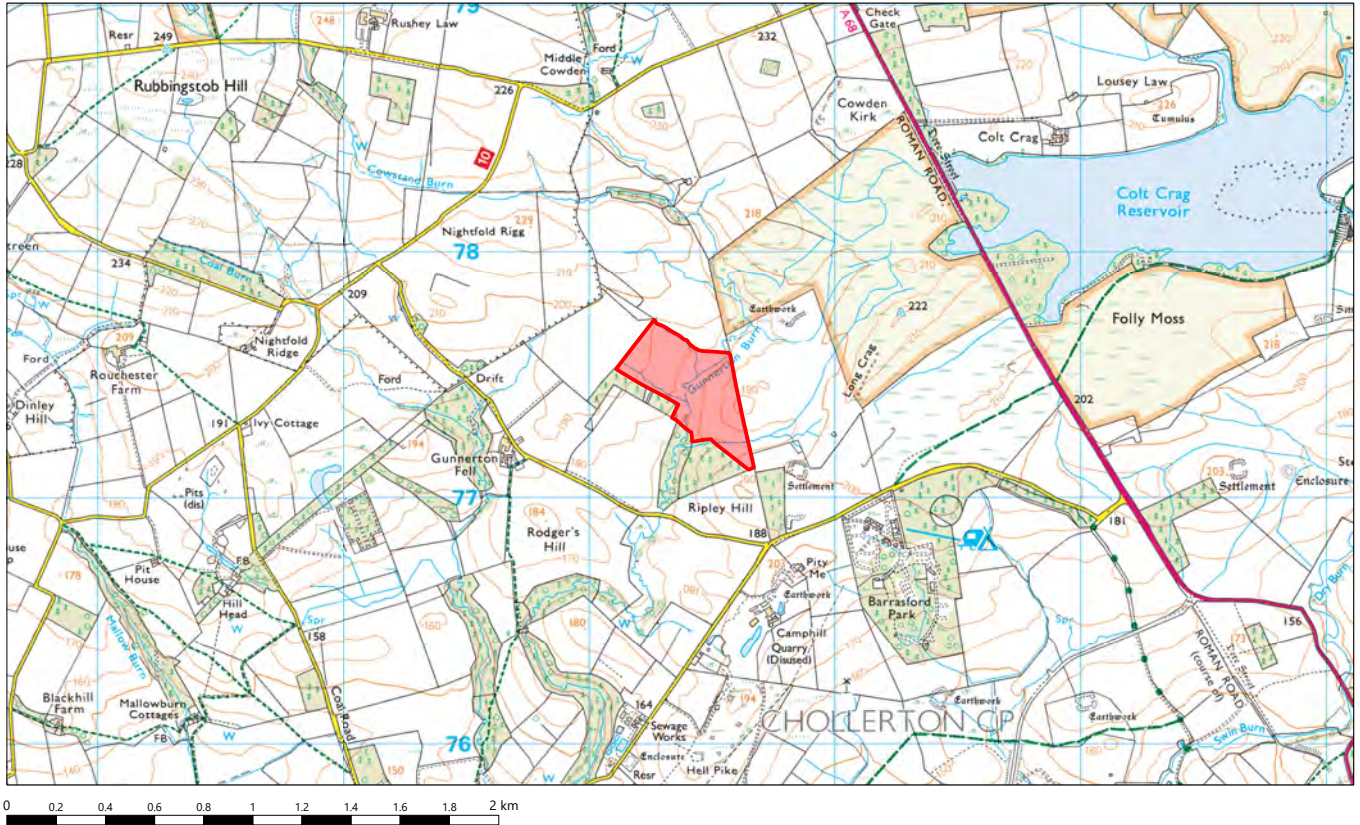
- A detailed assessment of the HER data, aerial photographs and available LIDAR of the site
- A site visit to confirm the setting of the three scheduled Romano-British farmsteads (SM 20927, 20929 & 20930) to the east of the site, including any intervisibility between the farmsteads within the current landscape and the proposed planting areas
- A detailed walkover survey in transects recording the full extent of any archaeological sites and features which are identified
- A discussion with the applicant or agent to establish how proposed planting may impact on identified archaeological remains

This report resulting from the survey and assessment work:

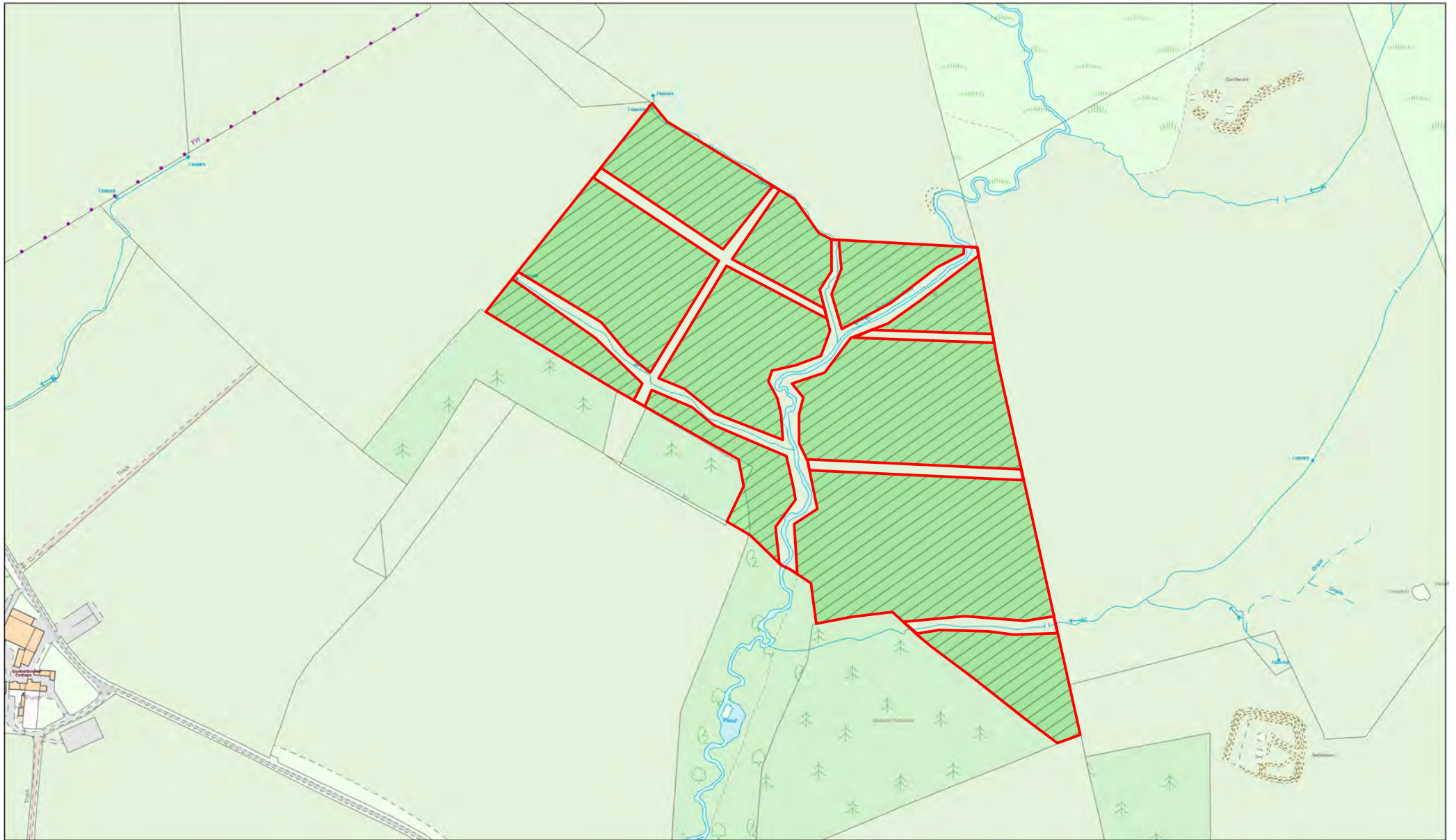
- Defines the principal sources of information available for archaeological assessment (Section 3).
- Presents a catalogue (Section 4) and chronological synthesis (Section 5) of archaeological data derived from various sources. Accompanying base maps locate established structures and features within, or in close proximity to, the assessment area.
- Provides an assessment of archaeological potential with respect to the development site and potential threats represented by the WCPG scheme (Section 6).
- An assessment of the setting of the scheduled Romano-British enclosed farmsteads, setting out the degree to which the proposed planting impacts on that setting (Section 6)
- Recommends further work to define more clearly the nature of the archaeological record and facilitate management or mitigation of this resource (Section 7).



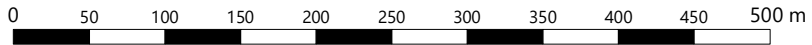
Illus. 01: Regional view, showing the location of the study area at Ripley Hill (circled in red), near Gunnerton in southern Northumberland.



Illus. 02: Regional view, showing the location of the study area at Ripley Hill (bound in red).



Scale 1:5000



Illus. 03: Site view, showing the proposed planting areas (highlighted) at Ripley Hill, Northumberland.

2. ASSESSMENT CONTEXT

2.1 Description of Assessment Area

The assessment area comprises an irregular plot, roughly trapezoidal in outline, encompassing c. 15 hectares, on which it is proposed to plant trees. The site is located in the North Tyne valley towards the northern end of Chollerton Civil Parish and is situated 0.5km north-west of Gunnerton Fell farm and 1.1km west of the A68 highway. It lies at the eastern edge of the Chipchase Estate, with the fence and fieldwall along the east side marking the boundary between the Chipchase and Swinburne estates.

The wider area generally rises in elevation towards the north, but topography of the site itself is rendered more complex and dynamic by the deeply incised headwaters of Gunnerton Burn, plus its several tributaries. Gunnerton Burn itself generally flows south or SSW towards the North Tyne river, whilst the smaller streams flow into the burn from the east and west. This has resulted in the formation of a series of defiles dividing the site, the most significant of which is that formed by the main channel of Gunnerton Burn itself, which splits the site roughly equally into western and eastern halves. Overall the site's highest elevations exceed 190m, dropping to below 170m beside the streams on the southern margins of the site.

The entire area comprises rough grazing land with a covering of grass and rushes, the latter reflecting the very waterlogged nature of the ground. It is bounded by improved pasture in the field to the west, existing stands of conifer plantation to the south and south-east, and further rough pasture to the north and east. The field which adjoins the south-east angle of the assessment area and includes the summit of Ripley Hill (at over 200m aOD), is under an arable crop. No fence lines subdivide the assessment site and there is presently no fence line marking the northern extent of the proposed plantation, though a western tributary of Gunnerton Burn marks much of its course.

2.2 Summary of Heritage Constraints identified

There are no sites or structures with designated statutory protection – Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings – within the defined assessment site, but there are three scheduled monuments, all settlement remains of late prehistoric or Romano-British date located between 100m and 450m to the east, south-east and north-east of the site (National List nos 1011422, 1011424 & 1011425; SM 20927, 20929 & 20930). One heritage asset is specified by the Northumberland County HER as lying on the southern margin of the assessment site (Site 1; HER: 9196), with a further 12 identified sites located within a 1km radius of the site. Detailed descriptions of all the known heritage assets within and up to 1km around the assessment area, are given in the Catalogue (Section 4).

2.3 Previous Archaeological Investigations

No formal archaeological interventions or fieldwork have previously been carried out on this site, though it did fall within the general scope of two large scale assessments in 2006 and 2011, associated with the Green Rigg Wind Farm, respectively the cumulative review of landscape, visual and archaeological issues, and the archaeological appraisal of the grid connection route options (HER Events 14601 & 14939; see 4.2 below: Events 16-17). In the wider vicinity (up to 1km radius), investigations previously undertaken are limited to geophysical survey and trial trenching at Camphill Quarry (HER Events 15386 & 15537; see below: Events 18-19), 500m to the SSE, which revealed no features of significance, just a modern trackway. The area of Barrasford Quarry, to the south-east of

the proposed new woodland is also covered by two desk-based assessments (HER Events 14221-2; below: Events 14-15).

Most important however is the *Barrasford and Gunnerton Historic Village Atlas* project, which encompassed the two villages of Barrasford and Gunnerton and the ancient township territories formerly associated with the two settlements. The assessment site falls within the northern part of Gunnerton township. The data and analysis contained in the Atlas report provides an understanding of the overall history of the wider area and its various communities, period by period, which in turn sheds contextual light on the potential development of the site itself, from prehistory until the recent past.

2.4 Nature of Proposed Scheme

This assessment relates to a Woodland Creation Planning Grant proposal to create new woodland over most of the survey area. It is envisaged c. 13.5 ha of the 15 ha site will be planted with the remainder forming clear rides and open ground alongside the streams. The planting mix will comprise 90% conifers with 10% broadleaves along the site edges.

Ground preparation in advance of planting will be by continuous mounding, which involves creating a shallow scrape for each tree that is usually around a foot in depth or less and 2 ft across.

3. SOURCES FOR ASSESSMENT

3.1 Archival Material and Secondary Sources

The report collates evidence from a wide range of published, documentary and cartographic sources consulted in the following archival repositories:

Northumberland Historic Environment Record, County Hall, Morpeth (HER)

Northumberland County Record Office, Woodhorn.

The National Monuments Record (NMR), Swindon.

The Archaeological Practice archive (AP)

3.2 Types of Information

Included amongst the various kinds of information used from each of the above sources to assess the significance of the assessment area are the following:

3.2.1 HER and Statutory designations (see Illus. 25)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The Scheduling of a site by the Secretary of State denotes it is of at least national significance and provides statutory protection over a defined area. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the defined assessment area, but **3** such monuments, principally farmsteads or settlements of probable Iron Age/Romano-British date, do occur between 100m and 450m to the east, south-east and north-east of the area, distributed roughly in a line from north to south. These comprise:

- **Site No. 02 (SM 20927; HER 9182).** Ripley Plantation IA/RB farmstead 550m NW of Barrasford Park
- **Site No. 03 (SM 20929; HER 9193).** IA/RB farmstead 70m SW of Pity Me
- **Site No. 05 (SM 20930; HER 9197).** Stone hut circles and linear boundary 750m SE of Low Cowden

Listed Buildings

The listing of structures by the Secretary of State denotes historical or architectural interest but does not necessarily include all buildings of significance or local importance. There are no listed buildings within the site or within a distance of 1 kilometre from it.

Sites Appearing on the Heritage Environment Record (HER)

The County HER has been accessed for entries within and in close proximity to the assessment area that may be impacted by proposed developments. Consideration of sites outside the defined area enables better evaluation of its archaeological and historical context, highlighting the nature of potential remains within the assessment area. There is **1** designated HER site entry within or bordering the defined assessment site, plus a further **12** sites within a 1 km radius of the site are considered for contextual purposes in the wider vicinity.

3.2.2 Primary documentary sources

All primary records pertaining to the site have been incorporated in secondary sources and were consulted in that form (see below), with the exception of the Gunnerton Tithe award (NRO DT 203M).

3.2.3 Secondary and Published Information

Published works which shed general contextual light upon the assessment area or upon particular aspects of its archaeology or history were consulted, and cited where relevant in the synthesis chapter included below (see Section 5). The principal works of reference are the section devoted to Chollerton Parish, and more specifically Gunnerton Township, in Volume IV of the Northumberland County History edited by John Crawford Hodgson (NCH IV (1897), 245-375; Gunnerton Township 318-29), plus the *Barrasford & Gunnerton Historical Village Atlas* (Carlton & Rushworth 2011).

3.2.4 Historic Map Evidence (see *Illus. 04-15*)

The study of early maps provides invaluable evidence for the historical development of the area. All available historic maps and plans were examined, beginning with the successive county maps starting with Saxton in 1576 and continuing with Speed (1610), Jansson (1646), Morden (1695), Horsley & Cay (1753), Armstrong (1769), Cary (1789), Fryer (1820) and Greenwood (1828) (*Illus. 04-09*).

In terms of detailed maps, the earliest available examples is the 1842 tithe map for Gunnerton Township (NRO DT 203M; *Illus. 10*), based on a survey by I Coulson in 1841. This is followed by MacLauchlan's Survey of 'Watling Street' (Dere Street), undertaken in 1850-51 (1852a; *Illus. 11*), and then the First Edition Ordnance Survey about a decade after that (*Illus. 12*). Unfortunately, no copy of the map associated with the 1741-2 Inclosure Award (NRO QRA 25) has survived, although the award itself has. MacLauchlan's survey map sheet 5, plus accompanying inset plan, extends up to the south-east corner of the assessment site and incorporates the evidence relating to Gazetteer Site 01. The First Edition Ordnance Survey constitutes the earliest comprehensive record of the layout of field patterns, to assist in interpreting the extant earthwork systems, and the wider settlement pattern, providing a baseline. In addition, late 19th-century maps of several farms in Gunnerton township – Camphill Farm, Gunnerton North and South Farms – are included amongst the Riddell family's Swinburne Estate maps, these being particularly informative because they contain field names, but unfortunately all fall outside the assessment area. The cartographic assemblage for is completed by later editions of the Ordnance Survey (*Illus. 13-15*).

The following maps have been reproduced for the purposes in this report:

- ❖ *Saxton's Map of Northumberland 1576.*
- ❖ *Speed's Map of Northumberland 1611.*
- ❖ *County Maps of Northumberland by Morden (1695), Armstrong (1769), Fryer (1820), Greenwood' (1828).*
- ❖ *Gunnerton Township Tithe plan NRO DT 203M, surveyed 1841*
- ❖ *MacLauchlan's Survey of Watling Street, Sheet 5, surveyed 1850/51*
- ❖ *1st Edition Ordnance Survey, surveyed 1862*
- ❖ *2nd Edition Ordnance Survey, 1896*
- ❖ *Ordnance Survey, 1957 Edition*
- ❖ *Ordnance Survey, 1981 Edition*

3.2.5 Aerial Photographs and LiDAR

Existing aerial photographic coverage of the site has been examined and significant features noted. The features visible on the photographs predominantly survive as upstanding earthworks, or did so at the time the photographs were taken. The coverage extends right back to series of vertical runs made by

the RAF in the mid-1940s and these are in themselves now a valuable historical record of features which, in some instances, have been damaged by more recent agricultural practices.

In addition, the detailed colour coverage provided by Google Earth has also been consulted as was accessible LiDAR imagery. Together these sources revealed multiple archaeological earthwork features of relatively moderate significance predominantly related to the post-medieval management and exploitation of the landscape.

In addition to aerial views, a search for historic photographs of the defined assessment area did not return any significant results.

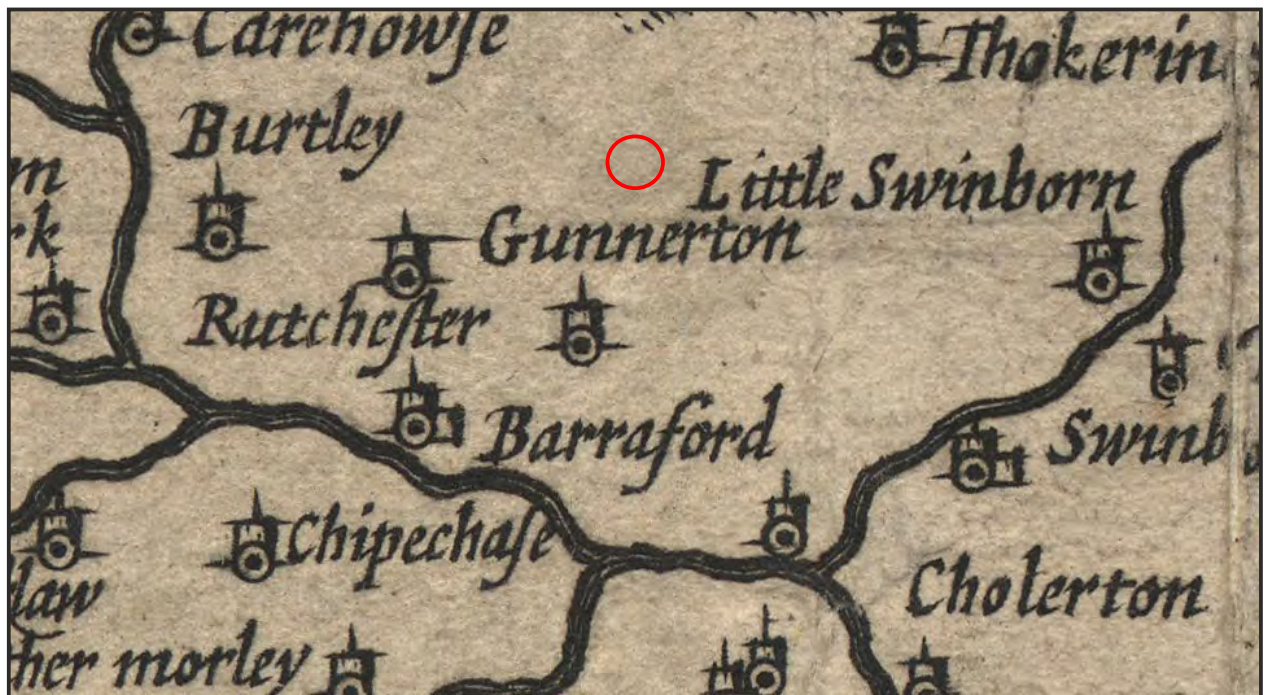
3.2.6 Site Inspection and Local Information

Three visits were made to the site by Alan Rushworth and Marc Johnstone of The Archaeological Practice Ltd. on 4th November 2020, in order to assess the current condition of any visible remains within and around the defined assessment area and to view the location, accessibility and current state of the site. During these visits photographic recording of features previously recognised for their archaeological importance, as well as new features, was carried out along with written notes and grid reference locators in order to provide a record of significant features observed.

Most of the site was found to be relatively open ground with good visibility of surface features, although dense patches of rushes obscured the ground surface in places areas, particularly in the north-west part of the site. However, all the features identifiable on aerial photographs and LiDAR images were readily located, validating the thoroughness of the walkover, and it is considered unlikely that further survey work would be productive.



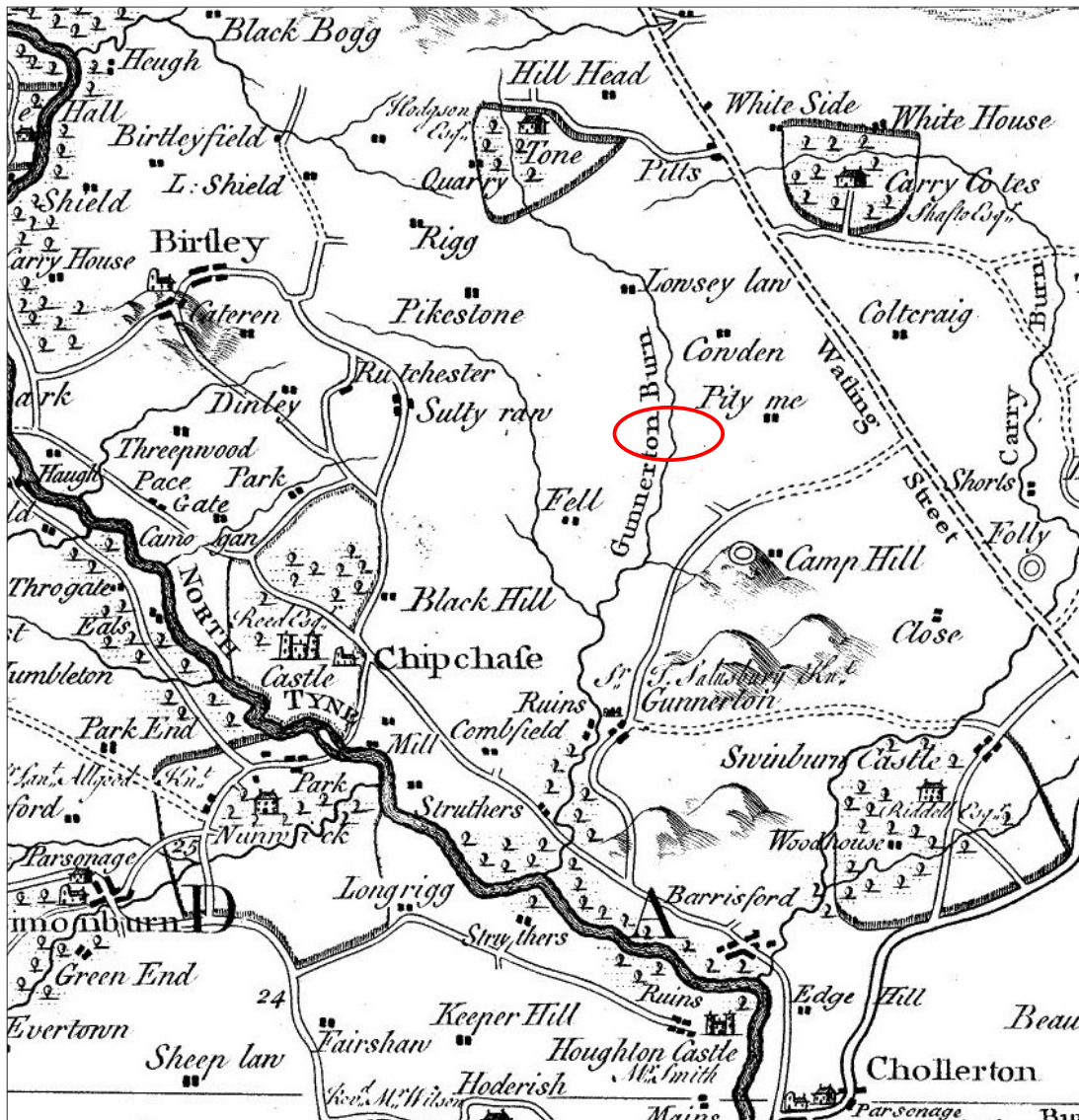
Illus. 04: Extract from Saxton's map of Northumberland, c.1576.



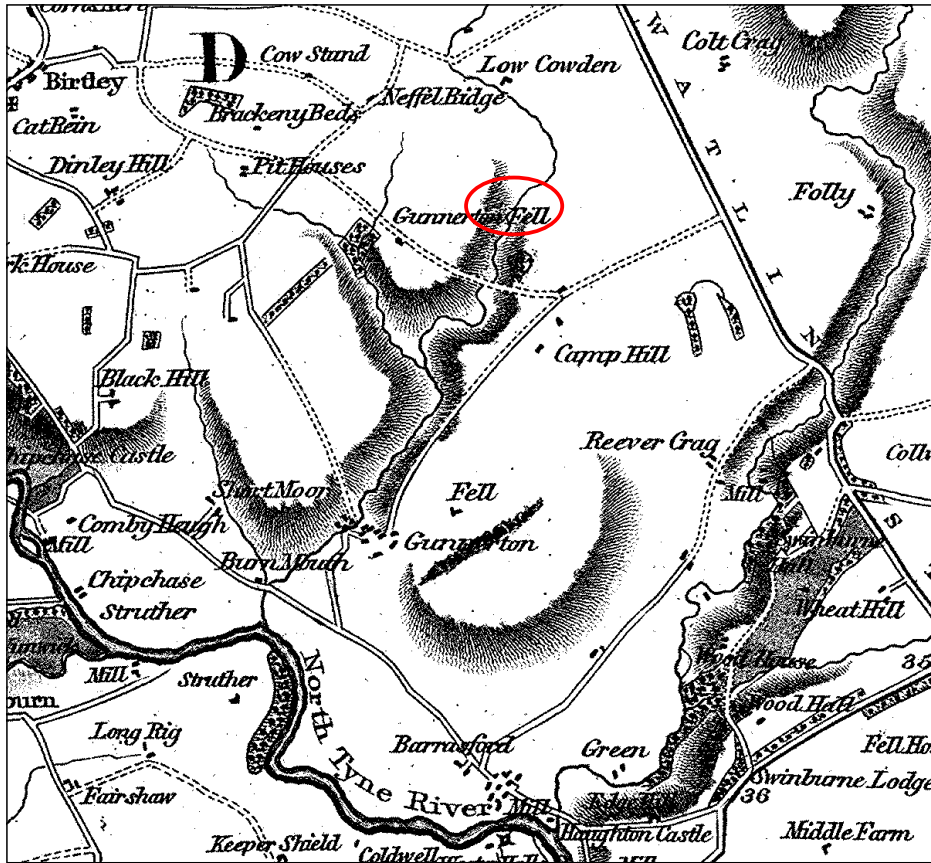
Illus. 05: Extract from Speed's map of Northumberland, 1610.



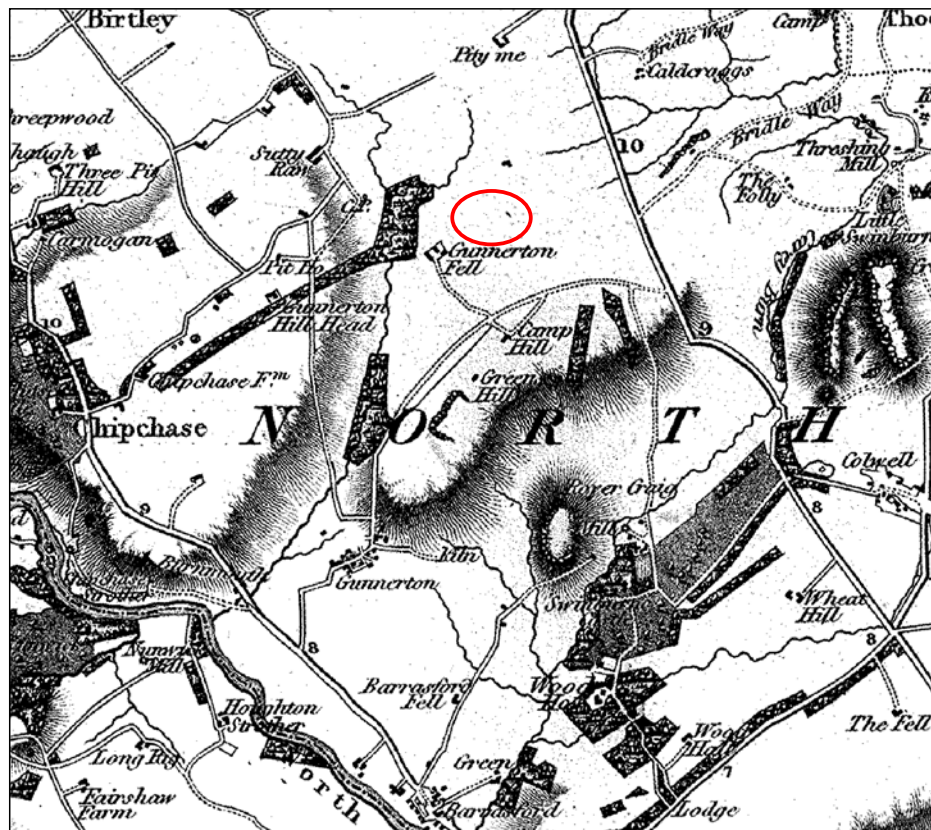
Illus. 06: Extract from Morden's map of Northumberland, 1695.



Illus. 07: Extract from Armstrong's map of Northumberland, 1769, with the general location of the assessment site outlined in red.



Illus. 08: Extract from Fryer's map of Northumberland, 1820, with the approximate position of the assessment site outlined in red.



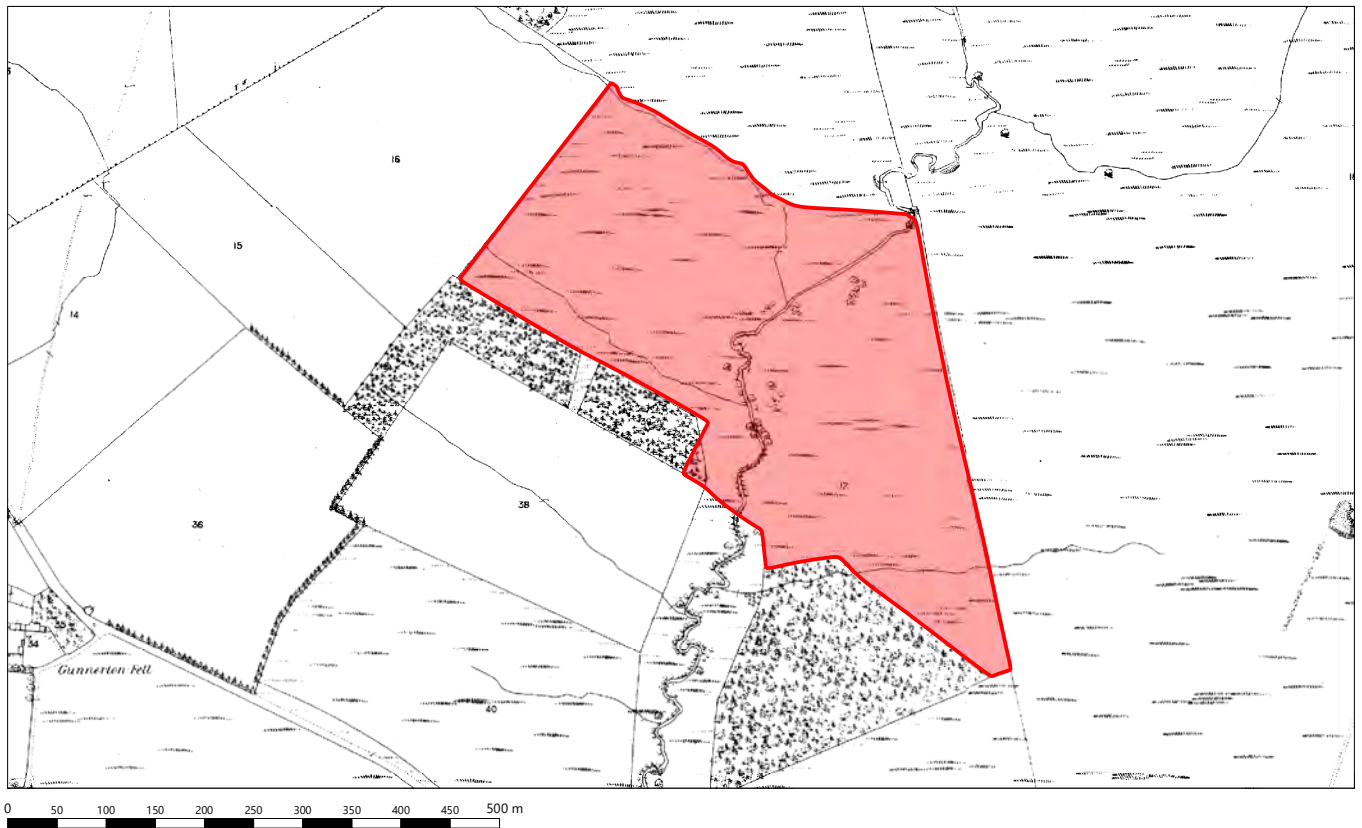
Illus. 09: Extract from Greenwood's map of Northumberland, 1828, with the approximate location of the assessment site outlined in red.



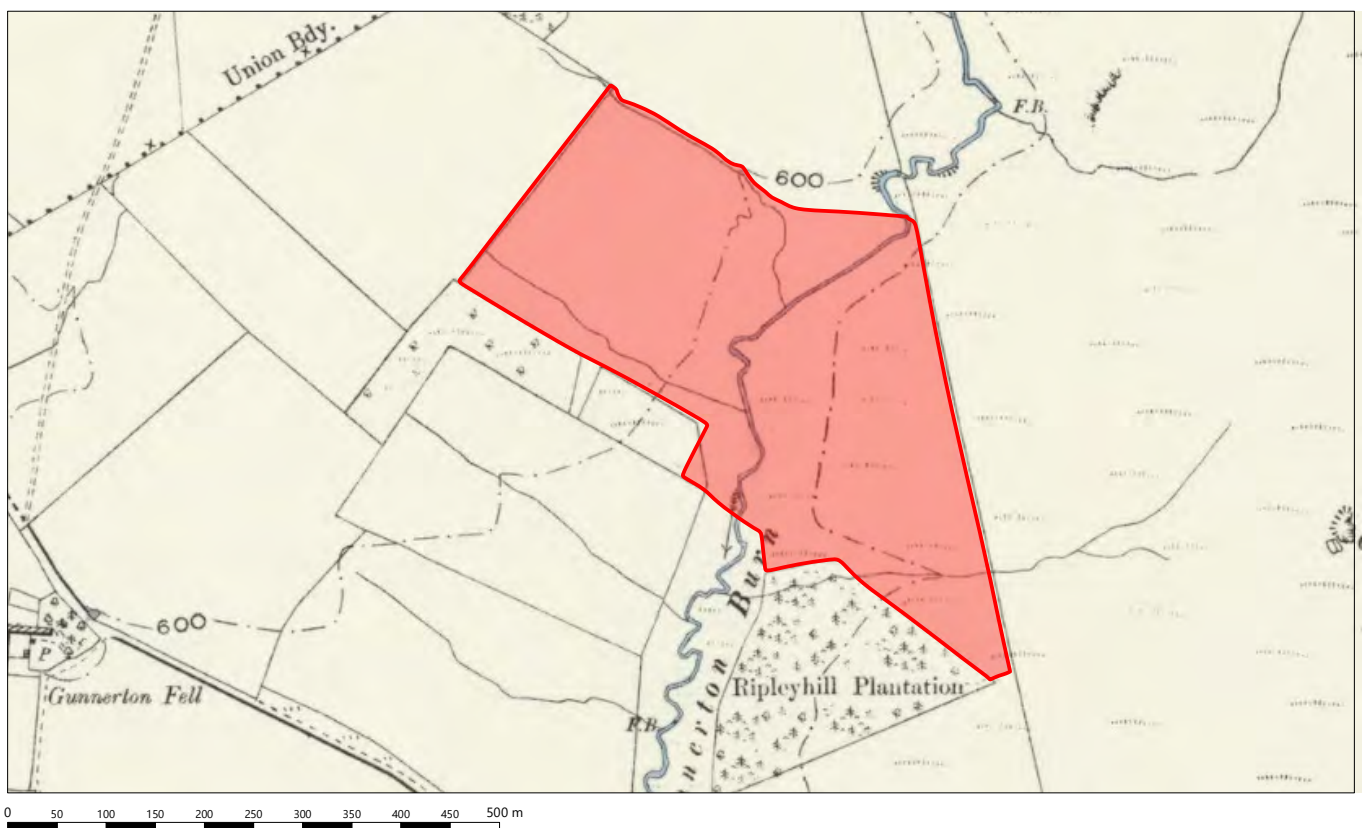
Illus. 10: The tithe plan of Gunnerton township surveyed by I. Coulston, 1841 (award dated 1842 - NRO DT 203M), with the Ripley Hill site highlighted in red.



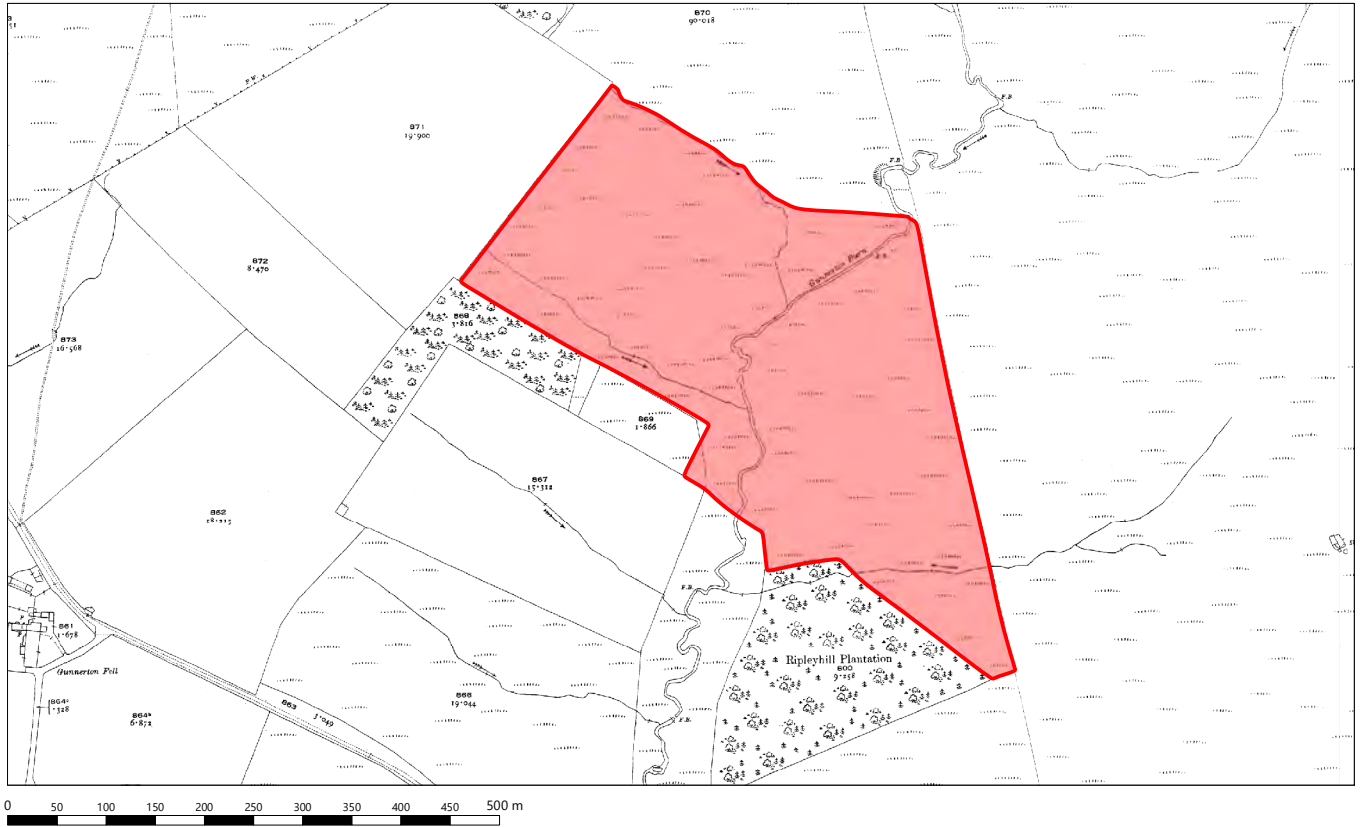
Illus. 11: Extract from Sheet 5 of MacLauchlan's Map of 'Watling Street', 1852, with the SE corner of the study area shown outlined in red next to Ripley Hill Plantation.



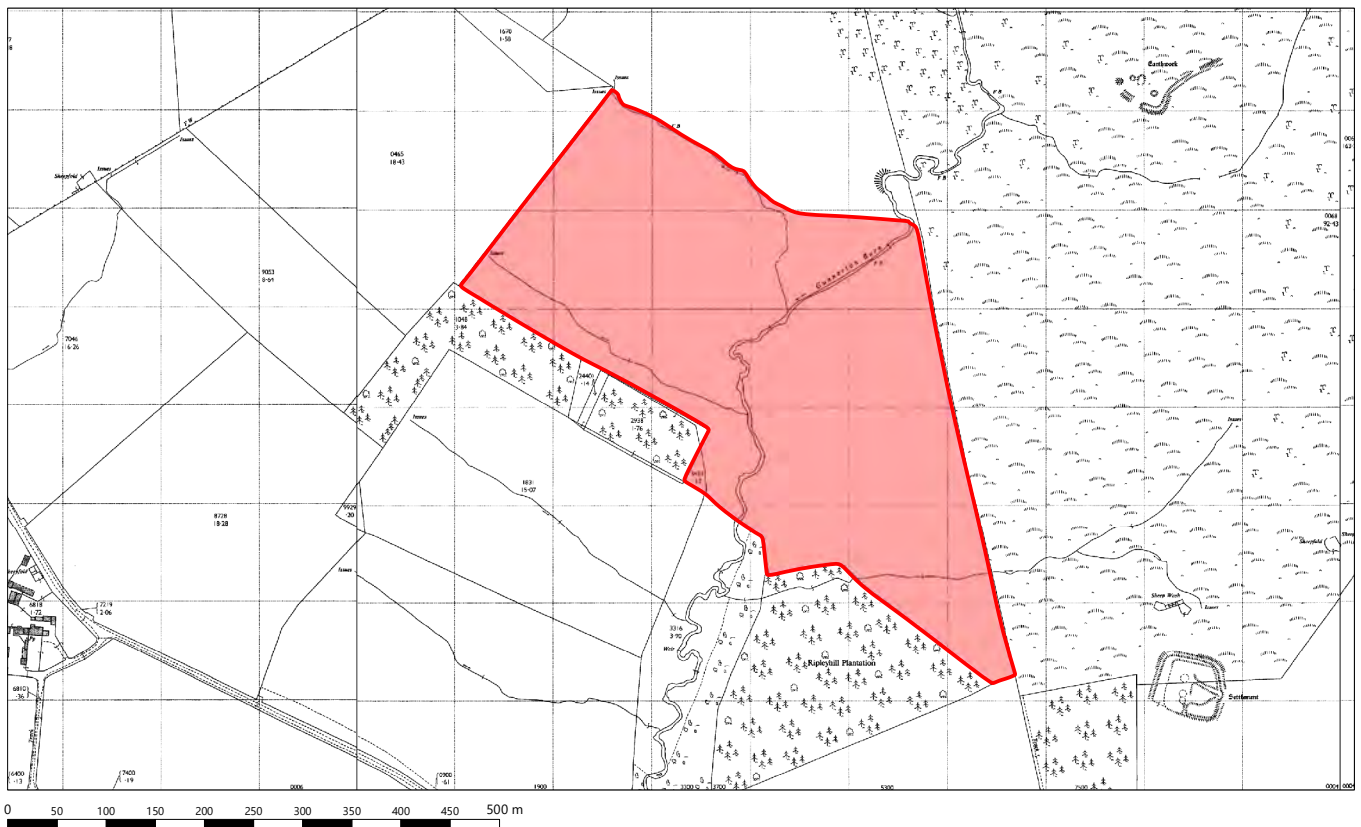
Illus. 12: Extract of the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Northumberland c.1863, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Ripley Hill.



Illus. 13: Extract of the 6" 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Northumberland c.1897, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Ripley Hill.



Illus. 14: Extract of the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Northumberland c.1922, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Ripley Hill.



Illus. 15: Extract of the c.1965 Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Northumberland, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Ripley Hill.



Illus. 16: LiDAR image of the study area at Ripley Hill.



*Illus. 17: Extract from an aerial photograph of Ripley Hill in June 1945.
(Ref: raf-106g-uk-441 fr4079 25jun45)*



*Illus. 18: Extract from an aerial photograph of Ripley Hill in April 1946.
(Ref: raf-106g-uk-1393 fr5236 10apr46)*



Illus. 19: Detailed extract from an aerial photograph of Ripley Hill in June 1945. (Ref: raf-106g-uk-441 fr4079 25jun45)



*Illus. 20: Extract from an aerial photograph of Ripley Hill in June 1949.
(Ref: raf-1541-a-485 fr3213 24jun49)*



Google Earth

© 2020 Google
Image © 2020 Getmapping plc

200 m



Illus. 21: Aerial view of the Ripley Hill Site, photographed in 2002.



Google Earth

©2020 Google
Image ©2020 Getmapping plc

Illus. 22: Aerial view of the Ripley Hill Site, photographed in 2009.



Illus. 23: Aerial view of the Ripley Hill Site, photographed in 2013.



Illus. 24: Aerial view of the Ripley Hill Site, photographed in 2019.

4. CATALOGUE

Thorough archaeological assessment requires consideration both of the area likely to be materially affected by developments and sites in the immediate vicinity whose setting may be adversely affected.

Known sites of cultural heritage significance, as recorded in the Northumberland HER within the defined assessment area (Site 01) and within a 1 km radius of the study area (Sites 02-13). Archaeological interventions and other events documented in the HER are also listed (Nos 14-19). Additional sites have been identified through the current walkover survey, plus examination of aerial photography, LiDAR imagery and historic maps (Sites 20-30). All of these sites are keyed to the map shown in Illus. 25-26.

4.1 HER SITES

4.1.1 Monuments and features within or bordering on the assessment area.

No. 01. *Earthwork in Ripley Hill Plantation. HER ID: 9196; NGR: NY91567718*

A feature apparently labelled as an 'Entrenchment' by MacLauchlan in the mid-19th century. The site location falls on a north-west slope and is covered by rig and furrow. Subsequent field surveyors noted the location was well suited for an earthwork of the 'homestead' type; but no trace of one survived.

N.B. Detailed analysis of the plans and descriptive record originally provided by MacLauchlan (1852a; 1852b, 25-6) strongly indicates that this 'site' should be discarded, with the label 'entrenchment' actually applying to **Site 02** (see 5.2.2 below for full discussion and analysis).

4.1.2 Monuments and features in the vicinity of the proposed development area.

No. 02. *Romano-British farmstead, 550m north-west of Barrasford Park. HER ID: 9182; SAM No.: 20927; NGR: NY91857710*

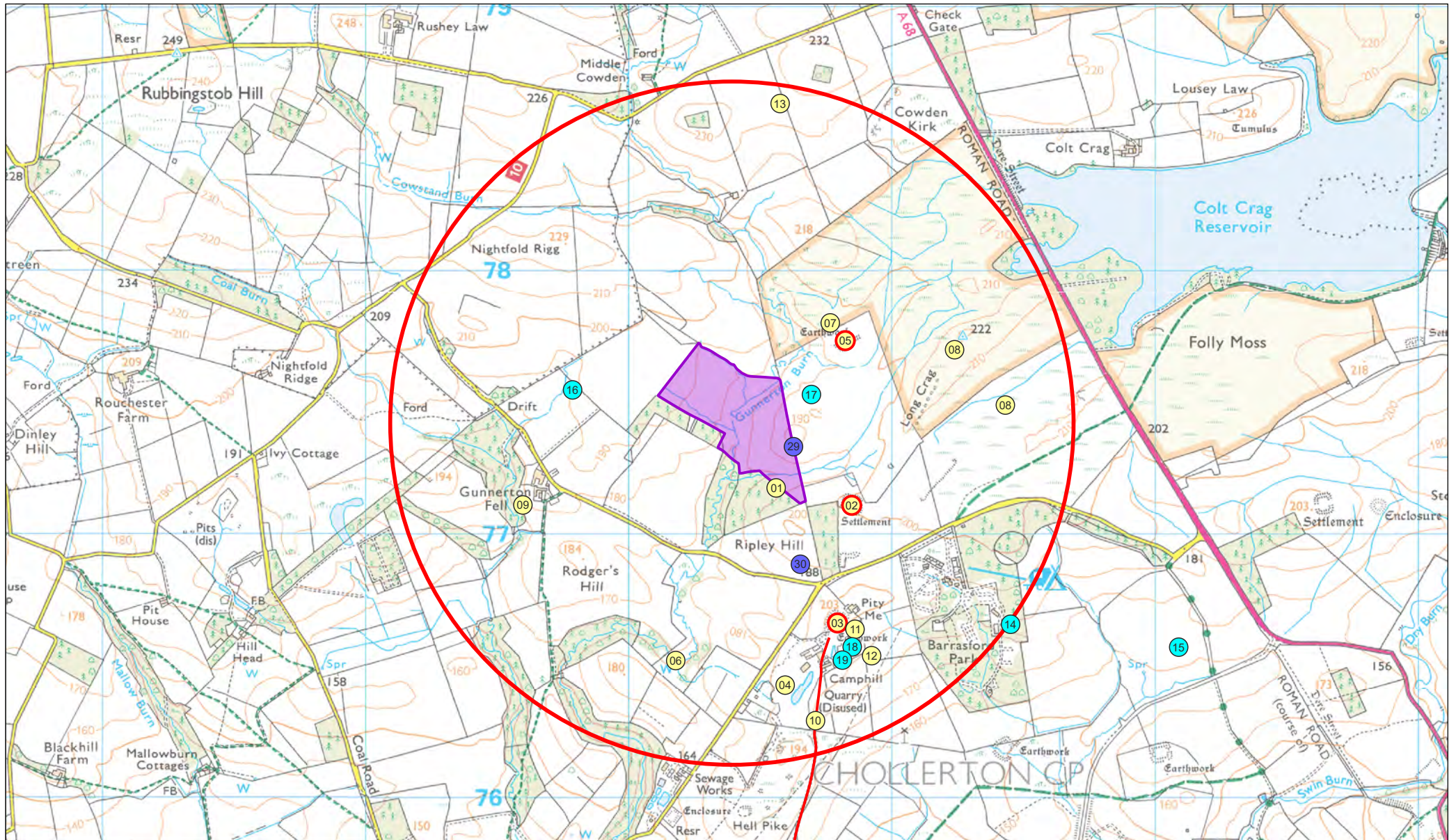
Farmstead of Romano-British date situated on a slight rise in rough grassland. The settlement is sub-rectangular in shape and measures 52m x 50m within two banks and a ditch. The outer bank is intermittent but is best preserved on the north side where it is 1.5m wide. Within this bank there is a slight ditch up to 5m wide. The outer bank and ditch cannot be traced on the south side of the enclosure. An internal bank is visible on all sides except the west and survives best on the east.

The main entrance on the east side is 5m wide and a raised causeway leads from it into the enclosure across the sunken remains of two yards either side of the entrance way. There are clear traces of internal occupation in the form of the circular depressions left by three houses. The largest of these, at the end of the raised causeway, measures 10m across.

This settlement survives reasonably well and, despite some damage to its surrounding banks and ditches, it retains significant archaeological remains. It is one of a group of similar settlements in this area and will contribute to study of the wider settlement pattern of this period.

No. 03. *Romano-British farmstead, 70m south-west of Pity Me. HER ID: 9193; SAM No.: 20929; NGR: NY91797667*

Farmstead of Romano-British date situated on the top of Camphill adjacent to a disused quarry. The former quarry has removed the south-eastern end of the enclosure. The settlement is sub-rectangular in shape and measures a maximum of 62m northwest to south-east by 77m north-east to south-west within a single bank and a ditch. The surrounding ditch is well preserved and measures 6m wide and 1.3m deep. Outside the ditch there is a bank 3.5m across. The bank and ditch are best preserved on the



Scale 1:20000



● = HER sites ● = HER events ● = Scheduled Ancient Monument ● = Other historic monuments

Illus. 25: Plan showing the distribution of sites of known cultural heritage significance within 1 km of the study area (thick red line surrounding purple area at centre) - keyed to site Catalogue, Section 4.1. Yellow dots represent HER features, blue dots represent HER events.

north and western sides. The original entrance probably lay in the south-eastern side and has been destroyed. There are no visible traces of internal occupation but the foundations of circular houses will survive beneath the ground surface.

Despite some damage by quarrying, the farmstead at Pity Me is well preserved and retains significant archaeological remains. Additionally, it is one of a group of similar settlements in this area and will contribute to the study of the wider settlement pattern of the area at this time.

No. 04. *Site of Camp at Camp Hill. HER ID: 9194; NGR: NY91617642*

An elliptical earthwork was visible on the summit of Camp Hill in the 19th century. Its diameters were about 43yds by 50yds and it had one entrance, opposite which was a ring of stones, probably the remains of a tumulus. Several cores and flint flakes were found on the summit of Camp Hill in the late 19th century. Unfortunately, all trace of this earthwork and tumulus were quarried away in the early to mid-20th century.

No. 05. *Stone hut circles and linear boundary, 750m south-east of Low Cowden. HER ID: 9197; SAM No. 20930; NGR: NY91827773*

A group of three hut circles of prehistoric/Romano-British date and a linear boundary are situated on an area of marshy ground between two tributaries of Gunnerton Burn. The huts are visible as circular foundations scooped into a slope; the two most westerly measure 6m in diameter; the third lies 20m east of them and measures 6.8m by 8.6m across. A larger scooped area, is situated between two of the circles and measures 14m by 10m across. The hut circles are bounded on the south and east by a linear boundary which comprises a ditch 3m to 5m wide and 0.3m deep, outside of which is an earth and stone bank varying between 3m and 5m wide and up to 0.3m high. LiDAR imagery suggests that this feature continues north-eastwards, with only slight interruption, for a further 500m.

Traces of a bank inside the ditch are visible. The boundary is sinuous and runs in a south-westerly direction for 85m before making a right-angled turn and running north-west for 50m. In this latter section of the boundary there is a gap in the bank 6m wide with a causeway across the ditch.

The hut circles and associated linear boundary are well preserved and retain significant archaeological deposits. The adjacent marshy area retains conditions suitable for the preservation of environmental and artefactual information. The site is one of a group of settlements in this area and will contribute to study of the wider settlement pattern at this period.

No. 06. *Holy Well. HER ID: 9198; NGR: NY91177651*

Halliwell, a chalybeate spring at the extremity of Dungill Woods (AA 1880). ['Holly Well' at NY 91177651 on OS 25 inch 1964]. No artificial structure associated with it.

No. 07. *Hut circles. HER ID: 9200; NGR: NY91767780*

Two unenclosed huts, identified in 1947. Later inspections, in 1950s and 1960s, were unable to locate the site despite ground perambulation and air photo inspection.

No. 08. *Round barrows. HER ID: 9217; NGR: NY92237769 and NY92427749*

'Tumulus' printed twice on MacLauchlan's map c.1850, alongside representations of mounds.

By 1960s there was no trace of the tumuli in the position cited. One is on the crest of a ridge, along which extensive surface quarrying has taken place. The other falls in a predominantly boggy area.

No. 09. *Neolithic axe-heads from Gunnerton Fell. HER ID: 9230; NGR: NY906771*

Gunnerton Fell [Rough-out and partially rough-out axes found away from the Lake District axe factory sites]. In British Museum, measures 6-1/4ins long. (C&W 1965)

No. 10. *Old waggonway. HER ID: 23562; NGR: NY9140275206*

Line of a disused waggonway. The southern end is preserved as an embankment with a good profile and flat top some 4m wide. In places shallow depressions can be seen where sleepers have been removed. As it approaches the northern boundary of the first field it cuts through a rock outcrop; beyond this it lies immediately east of a field wall. Small cuttings and embankments preserve a constant level on slightly undulating ground, but the surface is rutted by present use as a trackway. The waggonway is marked as a Mineral Railway on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1897.

No. 11. *Track at Camp Hill, Gunnerton. HER ID: 27545; NGR: NY9186476646*

A trackway was partly revealed and excavated within an evaluation trench (Trench 1 of the nine) excavated by Archaeological Services Durham University to the east of Camp Hill, Gunnerton, during November 2014. This revealed that the track consisted of a shallow hollow way cut into the natural ground and based upon large boulders overlain by clay and layer of cobbles. This is thought to be of early 20th century date.

No. 12. *Ditch near Camp Hill, Gunnerton. HER ID: 27546; NGR: NY9191876529*

A shallow ditch was partly excavated near Camp Hill, Gunnerton, within Trench 9 (of the nine) of Archaeological Services Durham University carried out in November 2014. The ditch was a shallow feature orientated east to west. It was infilled with a yellow-grey silty clay, but contained no artefacts. The ditch is therefore undated.

No. 13. *Middle Cowden settlement. HER ID: 28932; NGR: NY9158478645*

A rectilinear enclosure is visible as an earthwork on LiDAR imagery. It measures about 60m by 45m and has internal divisions and a possible annexe on the west side.

4.2 HER EVENTS

No. 14. *Barrasford Quarry: archaeological assessment. HER ID: 14221; NGR: NY 922 754*

Desk based assessment by the Archaeological Practice in 1992.

No. 15. *Barrasford Quarry: archaeological assessment. HER ID: 14222; NGR: NY 922 754*

Desk based assessment by the Archaeological Practice in 1995.

Barrasford Quarry includes land behind Toddle Crag where there is a zone of land which has not been cultivated since before the Middle Ages. Here remains survive from the prehistoric and Roman periods. Lower down the slope behind the crags and in front of the crags are land boundaries and plough marks from early 18th century agriculture following the enclosure of Barrasford and Gunnerton townships. The fields laid out then are in large measure still in use today and patches of medieval plough land also survive.

No. 16. *Green Rigg Wind Farm: cumulative review of landscape and visual and archaeological issues. HER ID: 14601; NGR: NY 920 820*

Desk based assessment by Northern Archaeological Associates in 2006.

Review of operational impacts of proposed wind farm turbines on the setting of designated cultural heritage sites in study area together with potential impacts on the setting of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

No. 17. *Green Rigg Wind Farm, Northumberland: grid connection route options archaeological appraisal. HER ID: 14939; NGR: NY 901 820*

Desk based assessment by Peter Cardwell in 2011.

An appraisal of two possible lines for underground cabling between the Green Rigg Wind Farm and the electricity substation by P Cardwell in work commissioned by Wind Prospects Developments Ltd during 2011. This examined lines for the cabling beneath portions of existing road and road verges of part of

the A68 road or via Chipchase. The route via Chipchase, crossing Hadrian's Wall near Black Carts, is thought the preferred option.

No. 18. *Camphill Quarry, Gunnerton: geophysical survey. HER ID: 15386; NGR: NY 91847 76581*

Geophysical survey by Archaeological Services Durham University in 2014.

Geophysical surveys were conducted in advance of the proposed extension of Camphill Quarry at Gunnerton. The works comprised detailed geomagnetic survey of three areas totalling approximately 1.86ha. No features of archaeological significance have been identified in the surveys: the remains of a former track, as shown on early Ordnance Survey editions, have been identified in Area 1; former ploughing has probably been detected in Areas 1 and 2; land drains detected in Area 2.

No. 19. *Camp Hill Quarry, Gunnerton, Northumberland: archaeological evaluation. HER ID: 15537; NGR: NY 9186 7660*

Archaeological evaluation by the Archaeological Services Durham University in 2014.

A series of nine evaluation trenches were undertaken by Archaeological Services Durham University between 5 and 7 November 2014 in work commissioned by Border Stone Quarries in advance of the proposed extension of the quarry at Camp Hill, near Gunnerton, to the east. These trenches were between 20m and 25m long and targeted over anomalies of the previous geophysical surveying of the area. They were excavated by machine to the base of the topsoil, beforehand cleaning and excavation. Only two trenches partly revealed archaeological remains in the presence of a trackway of early 20th century date and a shallow ditch of unknown date.

4.3 SITES IDENTIFIED WITHIN THE ASSESSMENT AREA BY FIELD SURVEY, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

No. 20. *Ridge & furrow; Map Coordinates: 55.089048, -2.132953*

Ridge & Furrow identified across the south-east corner of the study area extending from the summit of Ripley Hill northwards, down the slope, to the southernmost of the tributaries which flows west into Gunnerton Burn. Faint traces on the ground and evident on LiDAR show the ridge and furrow continues in the adjoining plantation to the south-west. Aligned NNW-SSE, parallel with the adjoining field wall to the east (Site 29), which forms the boundary between the Chipchase and Swinburne estates. Approximately 4 metres in width between the summit of each ridge. The original extent of the ridge and furrow can be seen on 1940s aerial photography. It has been ploughed out in the field to the south outside the assessment area. The relationship of the earthworks to the plantation and Site 29 boundary wall suggests the ploughing occurred between 1741 and c. 1850.

No. 21. *Possible Cup-Marked Rock; Map Coordinates: 55.089349, -2.132772*

Multiple possible cup-marks were identified on the westernmost rock in a cluster of small boulders on the southern bank of the most southerly tributary stream within the assessment area flowing west into the Gunnerton Burn. The stones are located at the northern edge of the ridge and furrow (Site 20 above), near the eastern crossing of the stream, and probably represents stone clearance resulting from the ridge and furrow ploughing. The cup-marks may represent 'Neolithic Rock Art' but the possibility that they are merely pitting resulting from rainwater erosion cannot be excluded.

No. 22. *Circular feature; Map Coordinates: 55.091590, -2.133584*

Very slight earthen bank composed of mossy tussocks, forming a circular feature, approximately 10 metres in diameter. No stone could be detected beneath the tussocks of the bank. The 'bank' was not evident along on the southern quadrant of the circle. Its interpretation, and even whether its formation is a result of cultural or natural processes, is uncertain.

No. 23. *Former Field Boundary; Map Coordinates: 55.092310, -2.133532 (eastern terminus), 55.092285, -2.134273 (junction with southern bank of Gunnerton Burn), 55.092241, -2.134848 (junction with*

northern bank of Gunnerton Burn), 55.092177, -2.136011 (west junction with No. 24 and turning here NW), 55.093587, -2.138712 (NW terminus).

Raised bank forming a linear boundary, visible on aerial photographs/lidar. The eastern stretch (23E) is oriented approx. west-east, running for 171 metres obliquely down the bluffs on eastern side of Gunnerton Burn before crossing the stream. It then turns NW continuing for an additional 231 metres right up to the western edge of the site (23W).

No. 24. *Former Field Boundary; Map Coordinates: 55.092177, -2.136011 (SW junction with No. 23), 55.092954, -2.134462 (NE terminus – eroded)*

Raised bank forming a linear boundary, visible on aerial photographs/lidar, aligned approx. SW-NE and running for a distance of 142 metres, extending beyond the northern limit of the study area.

No. 25. *Unknown Mound; Map Coordinates: 55.092871, -2.136627*

Mound of unknown origin or function, apparently L-shaped in plan, located east of former field boundary No. 23 (north arm). Photographed.

No. 26-28. *Probable Modern Drainage; Map Coordinates: 55.093108, -2.139145*

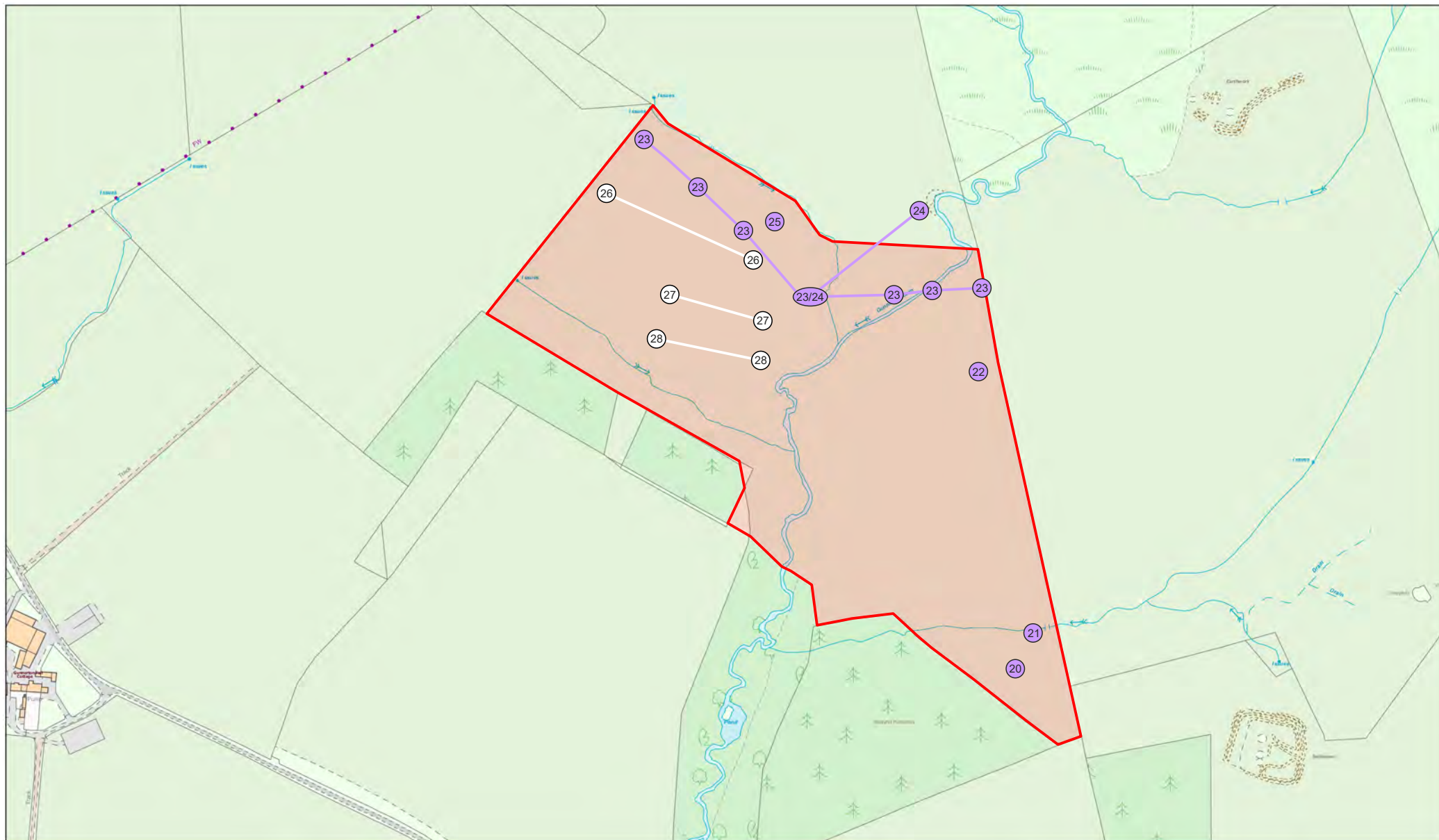
Well defined and regular drainage channels, located across the western side of the study area, upon a WNW-ESE alignment. Interpreted as probable modern drainage.

No. 29. *Boundary Wall between the Chipchase and Swinburne Estates; Map Coordinates: NY 9174 7682 – 9148 7798*

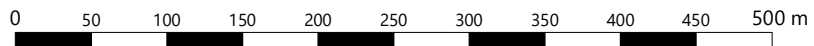
Field wall marking the eastern limit of the study area. Follows a NNW-SSE alignment. Its course is shown on the Gunnerton tithe map (DT 203 M) of 1842 and was probably laid out following the Gunnerton Township Inclosure Award of 1741-42 (NRO QRA 25).

No. 30. *Limekiln (site of) south of Ripley Hill; Map Coordinates: NY 9165 7685*

Lime kiln recorded on historic OS maps, located in the SE corner of the field south of Ripley Hill. A single circular kiln labelled 'old limekiln' with a track leading to it from the nearby road junction is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1862, publ. 1866). 'Old' signifies it was probably out of use by then. The kiln still features ('old limekiln' again) on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey but the track is no longer shown (revised 1895, publ. 1896). Not shown thereafter.



Scale 1:5000



● = Recorded Sites ○ = Probable modern drainage

Illus. 26: Map of the Ripley Hill site (highlighted in red), showing sites recorded during field survey in November 2020.

5. SYNTHESIS

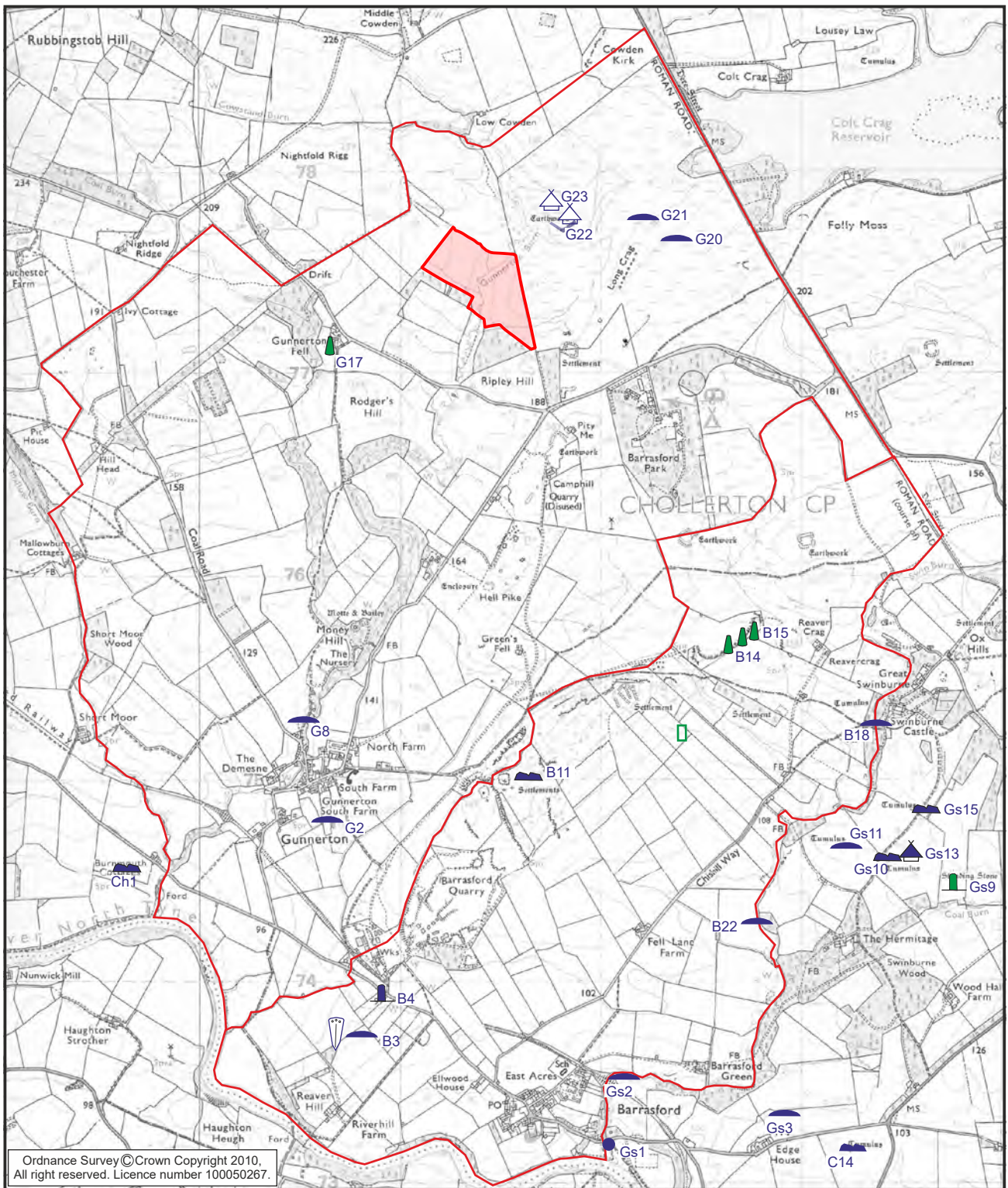
The areas included in the current assessment lie within a wider archaeological landscape, containing evidence of human activity extending back some 10,000 years. Some archaeological sites are very obvious within today's landscape, while others are more subtle; and an unknown number may remain entirely hidden and yet to be discovered. The most comprehensive study to dissect this wider contextual archaeological landscape is the *Barrasford and Gunnerton Historical Village Atlas* (Carlton & Rushworth 2011). This provides an overview of the present state of knowledge regarding the locality, encompassing not simply the 1km radius around the proposed new woodland site, but the entire area of the former historic townships of Gunnerton and Barrasford. Accordingly, its findings are drawn on extensively below.

5.1 Early Prehistoric

The earliest evidence for human presence in Northumberland dates from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age), c10,000 – 4,000BC. This was a time when people lived by hunting, fishing and gathering wild resources, moving round the landscape on an annual cycle to exploit resources in different places throughout the landscape rather than living in one place. Throughout the later Mesolithic the area would have been largely or entirely clothed in mixed woodland of oak, elm, lime, pine, birch and hazel, though perhaps with clearings on the thin soils and exposed crags of the highest hills. Mesolithic people left no structures that survive as visible features in today's landscape; evidence for their presence usually occurs in the form of lithic scatters, collections of worked stone (mostly flint) from disturbed ground. However, no finds of this date have recorded here, either within the site itself or in the wider vicinity. Nevertheless, the potential for Mesolithic occupation in the locality is quite high, with the North Tyne valley conceivably being used as a corridor of movement by groups of hunter-gatherers, undertaking seasonal migrations following the movement of deer and other wild fauna.

The Neolithic period (c. 4000–2400BC) saw the introduction of farming, known to have been underway in parts of Northumberland by about 4000BC. Neolithic communities – probably still organised in relatively small groups like their Mesolithic predecessors – practiced 'slash and burn' agriculture in what would still have been an extensively forested landscape, cutting down trees with stone axes and burning off the undergrowth, then cultivating for a number of years until crop yields began to decline through soil exhaustion when the group would move on to clear another parcel of woodland. The Neolithic period also saw the introduction of pottery and new types of stone tools including polished stone axes. As with the earlier Mesolithic period, evidence of Neolithic settlement usually exists in the form of lithic scatters, though settlement sites including timber buildings and pits containing various artefacts have been excavated in north Northumberland. This period also saw the creation of the first ceremonial sites and burial monuments, including long burial mounds (barrows) or cairns, stone circles, individual standing stones and circular embanked and ditched earthworks known as 'henges'

The most common finds of this period in the wider vicinity are polished stone axes, one being found at Gunnerton Fell (Site 09; HER 9230), only c. 0.5km south-west of the assessment site, with other axeheads being recovered at Reaver Crag (HER 9212, 9213), 1.7-1.8km south-east. It is uncertain whether such axeheads represent casual losses or deliberately deposited offerings of valuable objects made to the deities or ancestors who controlled the Neolithic farmers' daily lives, but the latter is perhaps more likely.



- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Neolithic standing stone | Neolithic Axe findspot |
| Bronze Age standing stone | Sub-rectangular prehistoric structure |
| Bronze Age barrow | Bronze Age hut circle |
| Bronze Age cairn | Possible Bronze Age hut circle |
| Bronze Age earthworks | Early Bronze Age dagger |
| Findspot | |

Illus. 27: Prehistoric sites identified on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record.

In terms of monument types associated with this period, the most commonly occurring in the wider vicinity are round cairns or barrows (often labelled 'tumuli' by early investigators). Some of these have been found to contain burials in coffin-like stone cists, though other cairns may represent simple field clearance. Like the henges and stone circles, the construction and usage of these circular mounds and cairns in fact spans the late Neolithic era and early Bronze Age. The two examples closest to the assessment site are somewhat questionable however. They take the form of two 'tumuli' (Site 08a & b; HER 9217), one situated on the ridge called Long Crag, close to the trigonometrical station (222m aOD) and the other c.350m SE, both recorded by Henry MacLauchlan during his survey of the Roman road, Dere Street, in 1850-51, and subsequently plotted on the survey map he published (MacLauchlan 1852a). All subsequent field investigation has failed to find the two tumuli, however, so their validity is difficult to evaluate. The Ordnance Survey field archaeologist noted that one of the tumuli lay in an area where extensive surface quarrying had taken place. Such quarrying might conceivably have led to the destruction of the mound or cairn.

The Neolithic period and the subsequent early Bronze Age (together extending from c. 3800 BC to 1500 BC) are also known for a somewhat mysterious rock art, which typically takes the form of 'cup-and-ring marks', circular carvings of unknown purpose on outcrops of sandstone. This type of carving shares a limited set of motifs, with numerous variations around the main themes, and is found throughout northern Europe in a wide range of contexts, from isolated natural outcrops to burial cairns and standing stones. The most common forms of motifs are the simple 'cup mark' (a shallow bowl-shaped depression a few centimetres across) and the 'cup and ring' (a cup mark surrounded by one or more concentric circular grooves). Motifs may occur singly, in small groups, or may cover extensive areas of rock surface. The exact meaning of the designs remains unknown and a wide range of interpretations have been suggested, but they appear to be abstract and held some unknown, possibly sacred meaning for those who created and observed them.

Such carvings are found in this part of Northumberland. A cup-marked standing stone is situated in the neighbouring township of Great Swinburne, some 770m SE of Swinburne Castle (HER 9290). More significantly, a large slab with possible cup markings was found in the SE corner of the assessment site, during the walkover survey. The slab was lying amongst a pile of other stones (Site 21), close to a small tributary stream of Gunnerton Burn, perhaps the result of field clearance resulting from the ridge and furrow ploughing which extended southwards from the stream. The possibility that the cup-markings are just pitting resulting from rainwater erosion cannot be excluded however.

Many of funerary cairns, barrows or 'tumuli' and cists in this part of the North Tyne valley were probably erected in the early Bronze Age, rather than the Neolithic period. This is demonstrably the case with the cist found and excavated a quarter of a mile north of Reaverhill Farm, midway between the villages of Gunnerton and Barrasford, in 1964 (HER 9303; see Illus. 27: B3; cf. Jobey *et al* 1965). This contained the incomplete skeleton of a 30-35 year-old male accompanied by a fine bronze dagger (Burgess in Jobey *et al* 1965; Page & Turner-Walker 1991), and was perhaps intended from the outset to commemorate this particular individual. Despite deep ploughing of the field (which had eventually snagged and dislodge the capstone leading to the discovery of the cist), the excavators reported there was still some indication of a mound or cairn covering the burial. This may have been the same 'barrow' or tumulus which MacLauchlan (1867) and Rome Hall (1885, 17) reported had been excavated on Kiphill in the first half of the 19th century (Rome Hall 1885, 17: 'about fifty years since') and from which five cists, each containing a funerary urn, were *perhaps* recovered. If so this could represent a commemorative burial monument erected over the grave of a distinguished individual, his relative power and status reflected in the 'prestige' grave goods interred alongside the body, with five secondary cist burials, all cremations, subsequently being inserted in the mound or cairn by members of his lineage or those seeking association with it.

However, with the exception of the two untraced tumuli noted above (Site 08; HER 9217), these monuments were all located well to the south of the assessment site, which may signify that this area lay beyond the principal zone of human occupation and cultivation in this period. It is generally considered that the Bronze Age (c. 2400 – 800BC) saw large-scale expansion of farming throughout Northumberland, but, with their poor soils, the hilltops above the east side of the North Tyne valley may still have been limited to seasonal grazing after the woodland had been cleared.

5.2 Late Prehistoric and Romano-British

5.2.1 Enclosed settlements

The most prominent type of late prehistoric settlement recorded in the vicinity of the assessment site is the enclosed farmstead of rectilinear or oval/sub-circular outline. Such sites typically contain roundhouses and paddocks or yards for livestock. Elsewhere in the Northumbrian uplands quite extensive field systems of 'cord-rig' (very narrow rig and furrow) have been also found in association with such sites. Enclosed settlements of this kind probably first appear during the Late Bronze Age, becoming especially widespread during the Iron Age (c. 800BC – AD100), and continuing on into the Roman period (c 100-410 AD).

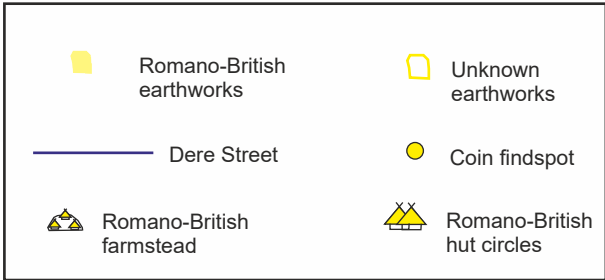
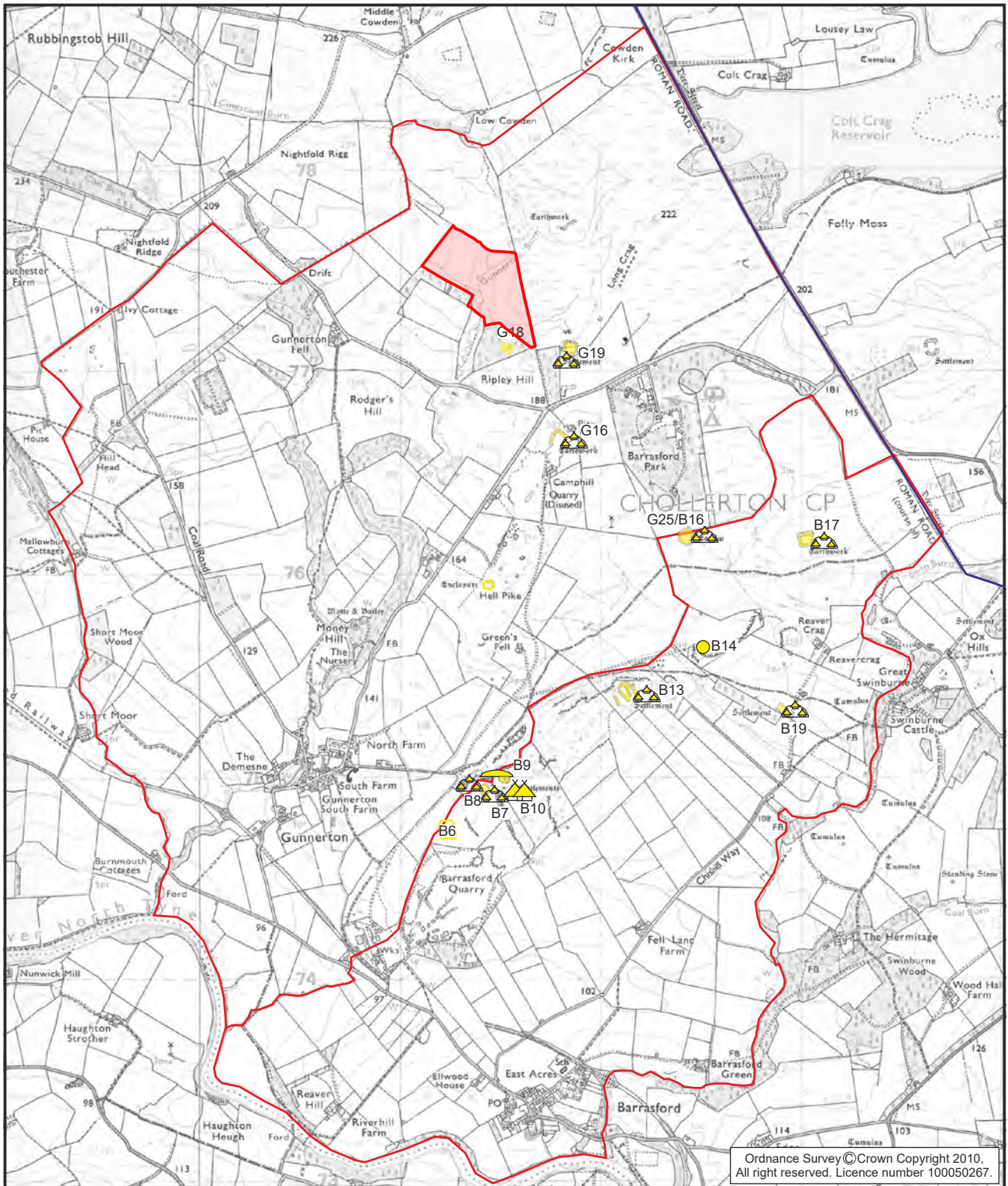
Three sites of this broad type, which have been accorded protected status as scheduled monuments, lie immediately to the east and south-east of the assessment area.

The rectilinear enclosure beside Ripley Plantation (Site 02; HER 9182; SM 20927), some 120m east of the south-east angle of the assessment area, is a classic Iron Age/Romano-British farmstead with three circular stone houses reached by a central causeway between two sunken yards leading from an entrance in the south side, all set within a squarely proportioned trapezoidal enclosure.

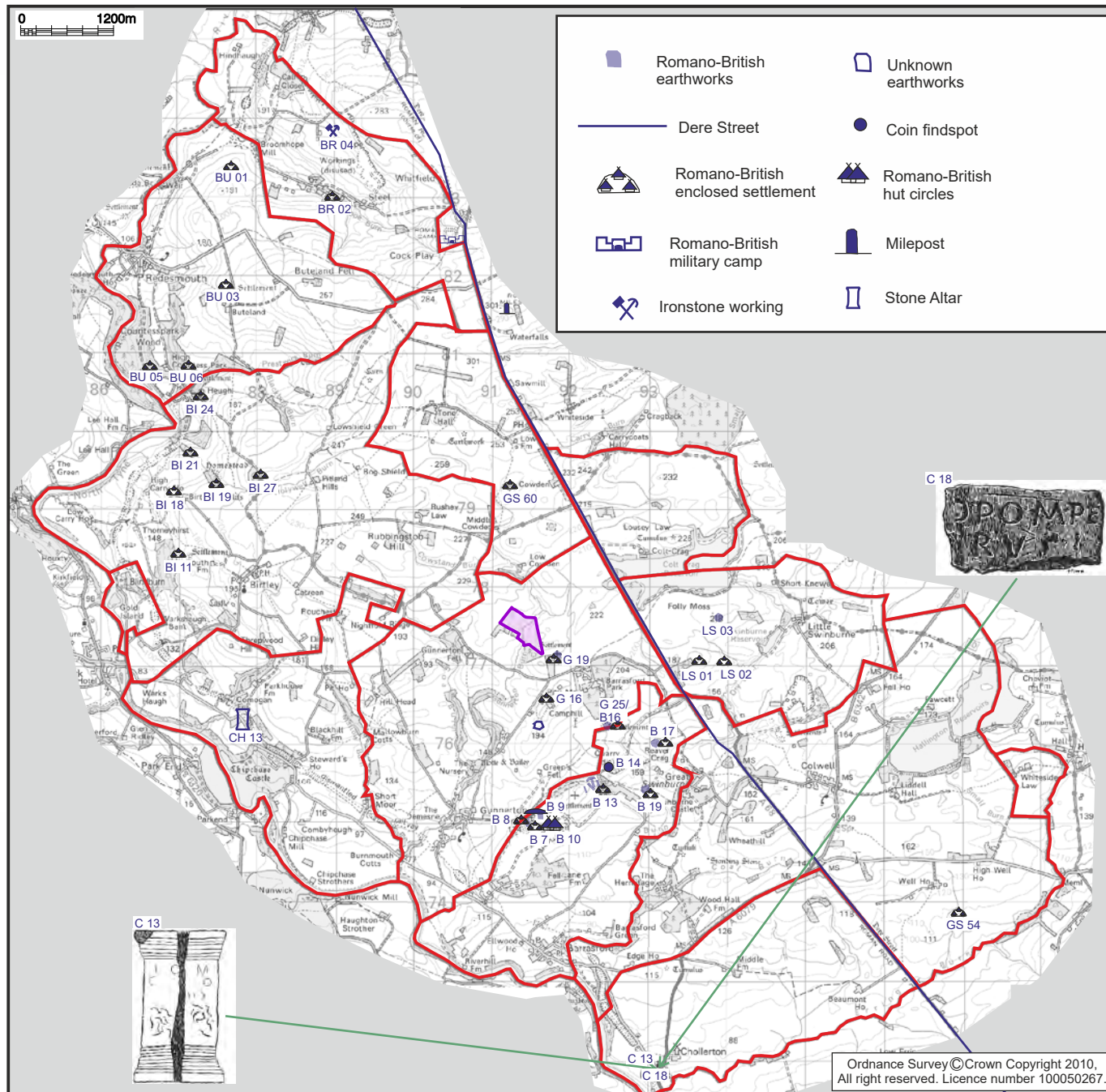
Directly to the north, c. 250m from the NE corner of the assessment area, there is a partially enclosed settlement comprised of three unenclosed round houses, each 6m or more in diameter, scooped into the slope (Site 05; HER 9197; SM 20930), with a larger scooped area, measuring 14m by 10m across, situated between two of the hut circles. These were associated with a sinuous linear boundary composed of a ditch 3m to 5m wide and 0.3m deep with an earth and stone bank on the outside, again varying between 3m to 5m wide and 0.3m high, with traces of a further bank inside the ditch. This appears to enclose the east and south sides of the settlement, having been traced running SSE for 50m before making a right-angle turn towards the north and then north-east. The linear boundary was traced on the ground running north-eastwards for a further 85m, but LiDAR imagery suggests it continues on for as much as 500m beyond that. The north and west sides of the settlement are bounded by marshy ground and perhaps no enclosure ditch and banks were considered necessary there.¹ More recently, another rectilinear enclosed farmstead (Site 13; HER 28932) has been identified through analysis of LiDAR imagery c. 0.9km further to the NNW near Middle Cowden. The rectangular enclosure measures 60m by 45m and features internal subdivisions and a possible annexe on its west side.

Located some 400m to the south of the assessment area's SE corner is a partially quarried, sub-rectangular, ditched enclosure, 70m south-west of Pity Me (Site 03; HER 9193; SM 20929). This is intriguing both for its large size and the lack of obvious round houses or other stone structures in the

¹ Note Site 05 should probably also be identified with Site 07 (HER 9200), which was described as two unenclosed huts and given a grid reference which would place them fairly near 05. The two hut circles were recorded by Hogg in 1947, but have not been located since then, whereas Site 05 was first reported in 1962. It seems likely that initially only two round houses were identified, with a fuller record and more accurate grid reference being provided by Ordnance Survey field observation from 1962 onward.



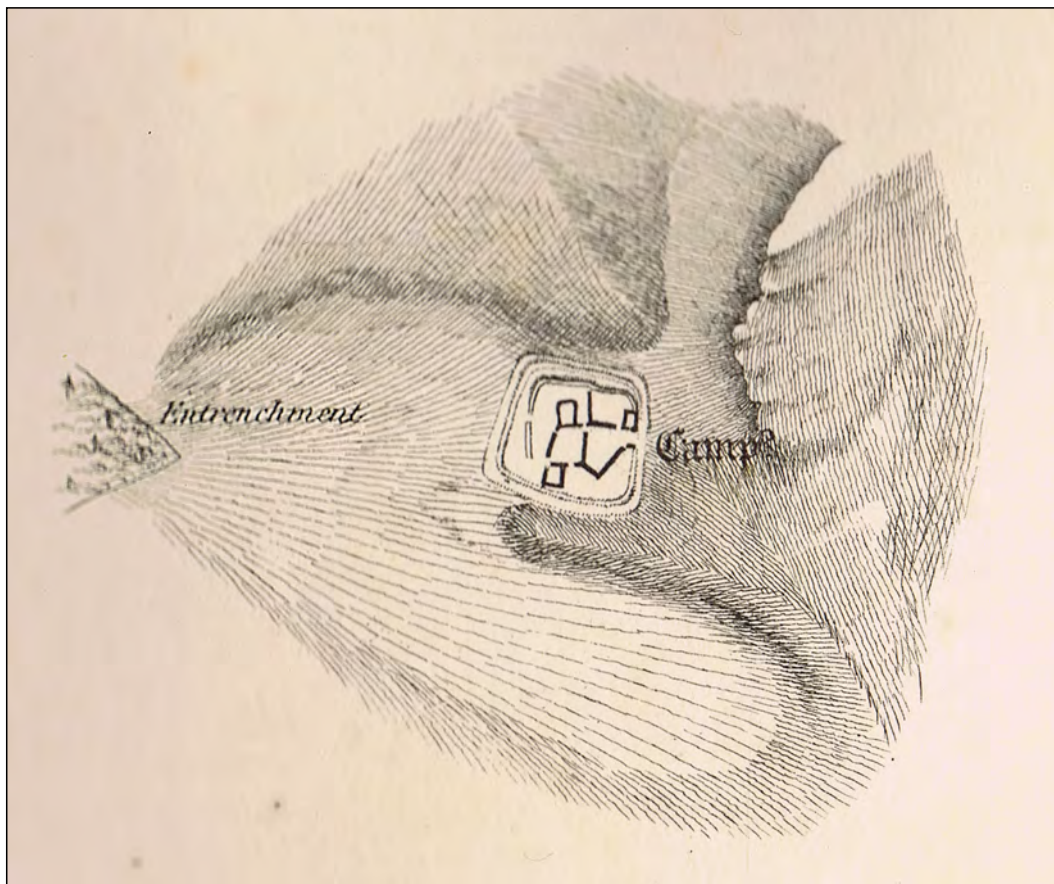
Illus. 28: Plan showing Iron Age and Romano-British sites in Gunnerton and Barrasford townships.



Illus. 29: Plan showing Roman sites identified on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) in Chollerton Parish.



Illus. 30: Detail from the main map on Sheet 5 of MacLauchlan's 'Watling Street' survey, 1852, showing the Ripley Hill Plantation and the enclosed rectilinear settlement to the east ('Camp?' = Site 02 here, HER 9182, SM 20927). The label 'Entrenchment', apparently applied to the plantation, has probably been misplaced and should also apply to the 'camp'.



Illus. 31: Extract from Sheet 5 of MacLauchlan's Map of 'Watling Street', 1852, showing the detailed plan of the enclosed rectilinear settlement east of the Ripley Hill Plantation (Site 02, HER 9182, SM 20927). The plantation, which adjoins the SE corner of the study area, can be seen at the left edge of the plan.

interior. Conceivably this could represent a settlement of earlier Iron Age date, furnished with timber round houses which are not evident on the surface today. Alternatively the remains of stone houses may simply have been robbed away during the intervening centuries.

Around 700m to the south of the Pity Me settlement is a small oval enclosure, Hell Pike or Camp Hill West (G12/13; HER 9195), however this appears to contain rectangular structures and may belong to a later period. Two further, morphologically much more typical, rectilinear settlements lie to the south (G25/B16; HER 9205) and south-east (B17; HER 9204) of Barrasford Park, on Reaver Crag farm, with yet another, at Cat's Elbow, farther to the south again (B19; HER 9211). Finally, further south still, there is a group of three well-known sites perched on the crags separating the Gunnerton and Barrasford townships, which have been the subject of repeated campaigns of excavation and survey (Gunnar Peak East and West, and Middle Gunnar Peak: B13, HER 9210; B7, HER 9285; B8, HER 9284).

There is thus a relatively dense distribution of these enclosed settlements extending from Middle Cowden in the north to Gunnar Peak East and Cat's Elbow in the south, plus another two on the crags further south (see Illus. 28). These appear to cluster on either side of Dere Street, and all occupy relatively elevated or upland locations, with no equivalent settlements having been identified in the lowland, arable-farming parts of the Gunnerton or Barrasford townships. It is unclear whether this distribution is a real one or simply an accident of survival, with more favourably positioned settlements in the fertile valley bottom, perhaps having been completely robbed out and ploughed flat by the determined efforts of medieval farmers. Indeed a second cluster of sites, generally situated on much lower ground close to the river, can be identified further north within Chollerton Parish, spread across the townships of Birtley, Buteland and Broomhope (see Illus. 29). On the one hand this shows that valley bottom locations were not necessarily avoided by Iron Age and Romano-British farmers, but also indicates that the remains of settlements in such locations could survive to the present day.

5.2.2 Site 01 – HER 9196 (see Illus 11, & 30-31)

One further site, which has previously been allocated to this category of enclosed settlements, remains to be discussed, namely the 'entrenchment' positioned at NY 9156 7718, right on the boundary between the assessment site and the main Ripley Hill Plantation to the south (Site 01; HER 9196). The site identification is based on the word 'Entrenchment' positioned a little to the west of the Site 02 Ripley Plantation settlement on Sheet 5 of MacLauchlan's Map of Watling Street (1852a) – i.e. Dere Street. The label figures both on the main map showing the course of the Roman road (see Illus. 11) and on the detailed plan of the Ripley Hill settlement (Illus. 31), inset to the left of the main map. Hogg (1947, 174) subsequently took the term entrenchment as the basis for including it as the site of an earthwork in his list of 'Native Sites of Northumberland', assigning it the grid reference NY 9156 7718. However, there is no description of the site in MacLauchlan's accompanying 'Memoir' (1852b) nor are any earthworks plotted by MacLauchlan, either on his detailed plan or main map, in contrast to his description and detailed depiction of the main Ripley Hill Plantation 'Camp' (Site 02), directly to the east. Instead only a woodland plantation is shown next to 'Entrenchment'. The partial outline of the plantation shown on the inset plan, with its eastern corner forming an acute angle, confirms that this must be the same plantation that currently stands there (it is indeed already shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey of 1863, only a decade or so after MacLauchlan's survey).

A clear explanation for the omission of any reference to or depiction of the Entrenchment site does emerge, however, once MacLauchlan's written account is examined. After describing Iron Age/Romano-British settlements further south, at Camp Hill, Reaver Crag and Pity Me, MacLauchlan goes on to describe the Ripley Hill settlement (1852b, 25-26):

*Still further north than any of these, about 450 yards north of the North House at Camp Hill, is an **entrenchment** quite unlike any of the others, approaching a square in form, and containing*

*about ¾ of an acre. Within the area are lines of division, and one circular compartment, as if it had been an **entrenched** residence rather than a regular camp.*

(emboldened emphases added here)

It is evident that MacLauchlan is using the term entrenchment here to describe the main Ripley Hill Plantation settlement. On his plans the label 'Camp?'² is positioned right next to the settlement remains, written in the Gothic script that MacLauchlan used to designate ancient sites. The likelihood is that both terms refer to the Ripley Hill Plantation settlement, but 'Entrenchment' simply became detached from the site during the process of drawing up the survey plots and field sketch plans. It is perhaps indicative that the detailed plan does not show the boundary wall separating the Chipchase and Swinburne estates, which runs north-south between the settlement and the plantation (though it is marked on the main map), suggesting MacLauchlan was less precise than usual in this case.

Hence Site 01, the only HER site entry which falls within or directly borders the assessment area, should be discarded, having no relevance to our understanding of the archaeological past of proposed new woodland area.

5.2.3 Dere Street

From the late 1st century AD the Roman army intruded into this landscape as imperial control was extended northwards. The Roman road known to us as Dere Street³ passes just over 1 km to the east of the proposed new planting, but there is no evidence of any Roman military activity in the immediate vicinity. The nearest forts lay at Haltonchesters (*Onnum*) and Chesters (*Cilurnum*) to the south, both on Hadrian's Wall, and Risingham (*Habitancum*) to the north, on the road itself. The Roman soldiers are unlikely to have been a welcome presence, though the garrisons may have provided a market for surplus produce from the farms of the North Tyne valley.

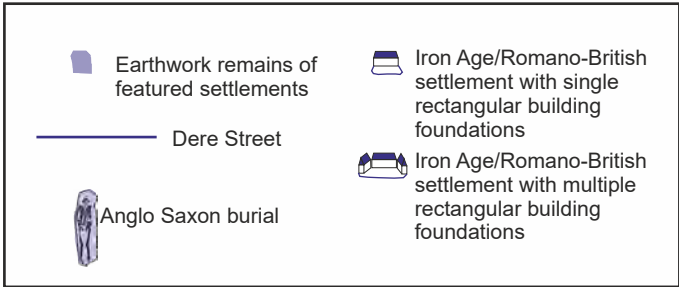
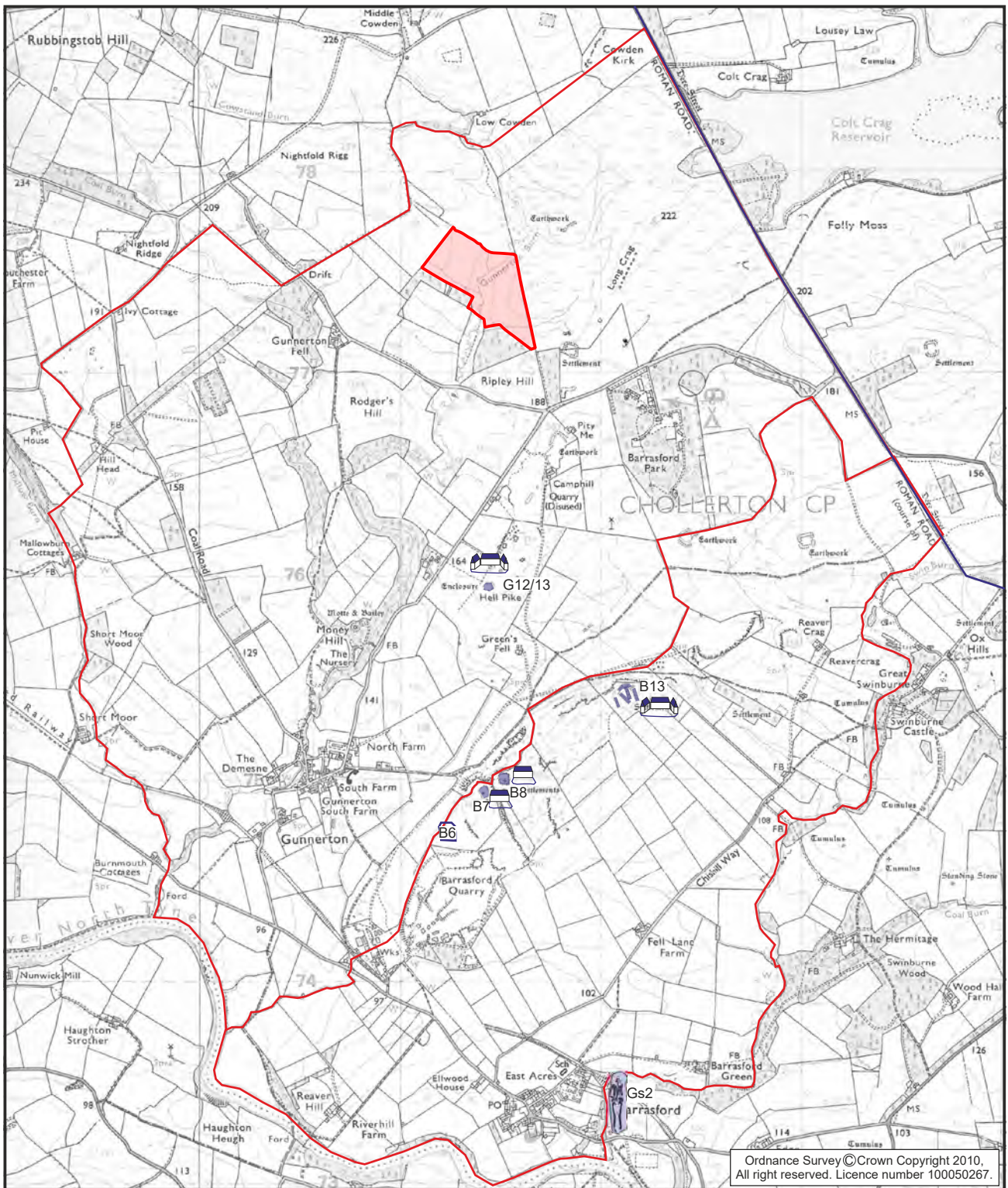
5.3 Early medieval (c410-1066)

The settlement pattern in the North Tyne valley during the centuries after collapse of Roman imperial authority is very obscure. The only definite evidence in the wider vicinity of the assessment site is provided by the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon burial on the eastern approaches to Barrasford station (HER 9302). It had been inserted in a much more ancient barrow or round cairn of the Early Bronze Age, which was disturbed by the digging of the cutting for the Border Counties Railway in 1858. The inhumation burial was that of a high status male individual, furnished with the accoutrements of a warrior – an iron shield boss, decorated with six silver discs and a number of bronze and leather discs (the remainder of the shield having rotted away), a large double-edged sword and a knife (Bruce 1880, 67, no. 67, pl xxii; Miket 1980, 290, no. 1; Sherlock & Welch 1992, 3-5, table 1; Lucy 1999, 18, 39). Miket (*ibid*) ascribed a 6th- to 7th-century date to the burial, but more recently it has been assigned a narrower, 7th-century date by Lucy. Indeed the vast majority of Anglo-Saxon furnished inhumations in Northumberland belong to the 7th century (Loveluck, 2002, 141). The existence of this burial could imply that there was an early medieval settlement of some kind somewhere in the vicinity, conceivably on or near the current site of Barrasford village.

In addition, a number of the enclosed settlements in the wider vicinity can be seen to contain rectangular buildings of the kind recognised in early medieval sites excavated in the Pennines, at Simy Folds in upper Teesdale and at Gauber High Pasture, Ribbleshead in Dentdale (Coggins *et al* 1983; King

² MacLauchlan generally referred to these enclosed settlements as 'camps', a result of his preconception that these were military posts built to protect the course of the Roman road, even though his careful analysis of the surviving remains often suggested a different interpretation, as evident in his description of the Ripley Hill Plantation 'camp'.

³ Antiquaries of the 18th and 19th centuries usually referred to Dere Street as Watling Street, as for example did MacLauchlan.



Illus. 32: Plan showing early medieval sites in Gunnerton and Barrasford townships.

1970; 1978) for example. Thus, in the case of the small, enclosed, oval settlement of Hell Pike (HER 9195, also called Camp Hill West), just south of Pity Me and Camp Hill and c. 1.2km south of the assessment area, two long, narrow, rectangular structures have been traced in the interior, set against the enclosure bank, and one just outside. Further to the south, along Gunnerton Grags, a number of rectangular and at least two distinctly sub-rectangular foundations can also be seen in the interior of the Gunnar Peak East settlement enclosure, with the two sub-rectangular structures lying in the north-east part of the settlement (HER 9210; cf Cowley & O'Brien 1989-90, 15). Middle Gunnar Peak and Gunnar Peak West (HER 9284, 9285) also have individual rectangular buildings associated with them, in the former case, attached to the external face of the west wall of the enclosure (Jobey 1981, 64-6), in the latter, right in the centre of the enclosure, abutting one of the round houses (Rome Hall 1885, 27-9, pls 1 & 3). All this may indicate continued occupation or reoccupation of these sites during the early Middle Ages. There is no direct evidence relating to the assessment area, itself, though.

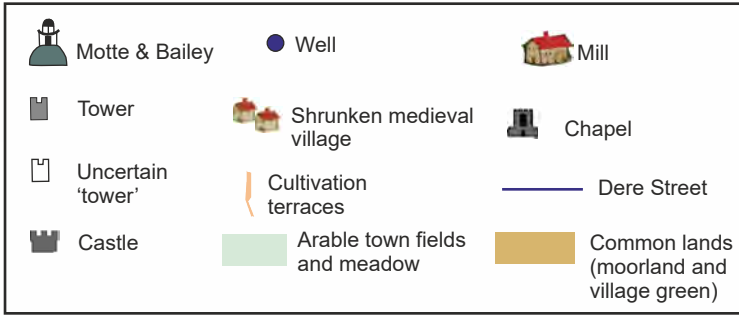
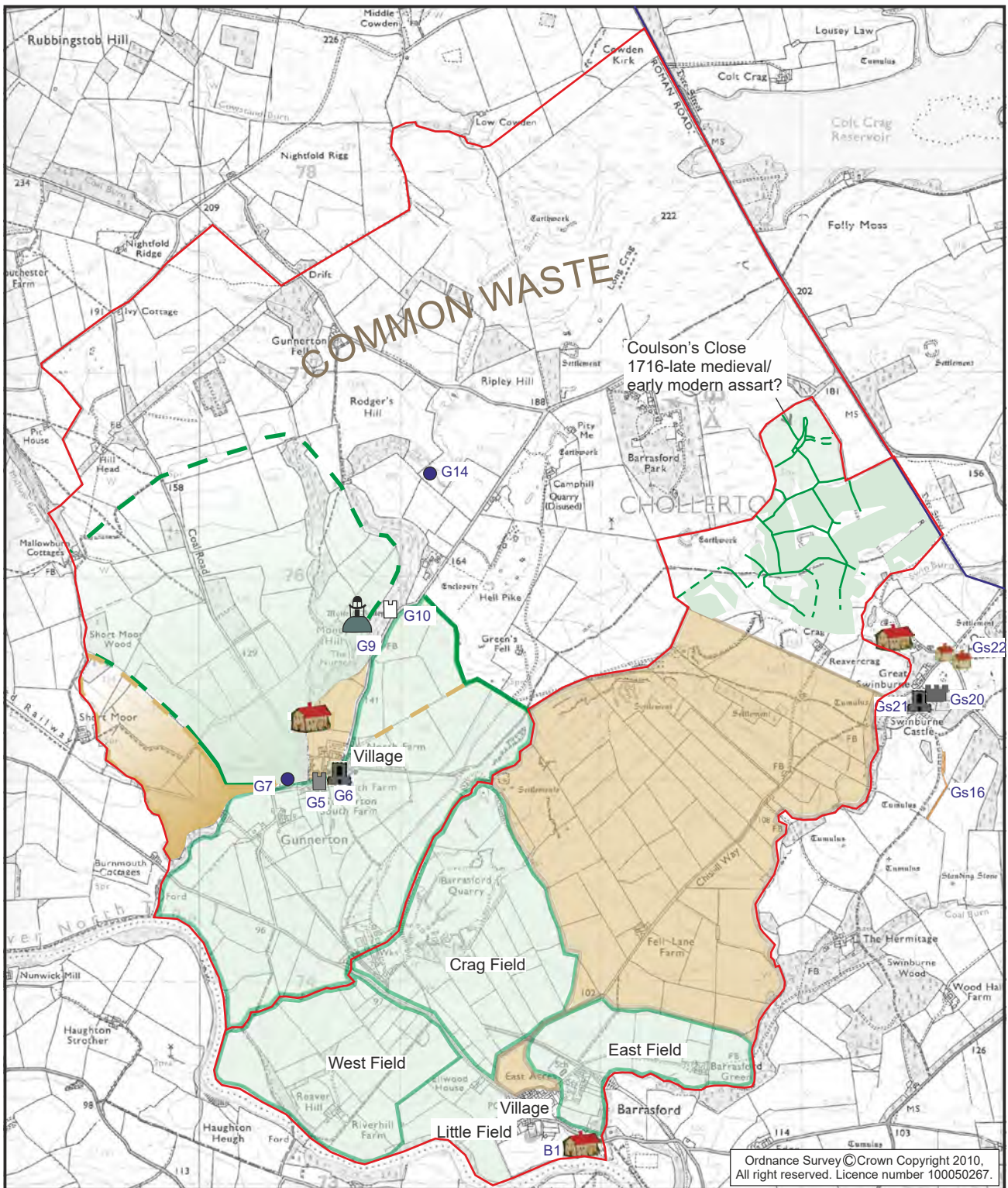
5.4 Medieval (c1066-1603)

During the High Middle Ages following the Norman Conquest the settlement pattern was transformed into one characterised by nucleated villages, such as Gunnerton and Barrasford, rather than individual farmsteads. Indeed there is no archaeological or documentary evidence for the existence of any isolated farms in the area during this period, with the exception of a group of monastic grange farms further to the north on either side of Dere Street – Colden (now Cowden), belonging to Hexham Priory, Tolland (now Tone) and Filton (Carrycoats and Colt Crag), both belonging to Newminster Abbey (cf. Carlton & Rushworth 2011, 14).

Each of these nucleated settlements had an allotted agricultural territory – a vill or township – which the villagers could exploit (*see* Illus. 33). The villages tended to occupy lower lying locations in the valley bottom, close to river, and their arable fields extended across the parts of the township closest to the village, i.e. in the southern part of the township in the case of Gunnerton. These arable lands were organised into open, common fields subdivided into named parcels known as flats or furlongs but with no fenced partitions. Each tenant held multiple strips of ploughland widely scattered throughout the fields to ensure each one had a fair allocation.

The higher ground in the northern part of the township, where the assessment site is located, formed the village community's common moor or waste, where the village tenants could graze their livestock, and exploit other upland resources, such as cutting rushes for flooring and animal bedding and digging turves of peat. Gunnerton Moor was particularly extensive, to the degree that the tenants of some neighbouring townships may have had intercommoning rights to graze some of their livestock there as well.

Extensive swathes of ridge and furrow earthworks resulting from ploughing can still be observed today in the central and northern parts of Gunnerton (with more apparent on historic aerial photographs of the mid-20th century). These extend right up to the lane which now leads to Gunnerton Fell Farm, as well as to the east of Ripley Hill Plantation and the assessment site, and even into the SE corner of the assessment area itself. However, the morphology of this ridge and furrow, as recorded/documentated by the aerial photographs, is predominantly straight and relatively narrow, features which suggest that it is more likely to belong to the early modern era – the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries – when horse-drawn ploughs were in use, whereas the ploughing with large teams of oxen typical of the Middle Ages resulted in broader ridges and furrows with a characteristic, sinuous, reverse S plan. The area of the proposed woodland would thus most likely have been used as rough pasture and is unlikely to have experienced any settlement or other intensive activity during the medieval period.



Illus. 33: Plan showing the likely medieval layout of Gunnerton and Barrasford townships.

5.5 Post-Medieval and Modern (c. 1603 – present)

Cultivation of the open ‘townfields’ continued during the 16th and 17th centuries, and there are indications that the area under cultivation may have been expanded northwards during this period. Ad hoc attempts by landowners and tenants to simplify and rationalise the arrangements may have occurred at this time, which have gone unrecorded, but real progress had to await the formal enclosure and division of the township lands which was enacted by statute in 1741.

5.5.1 1741 Enclosure

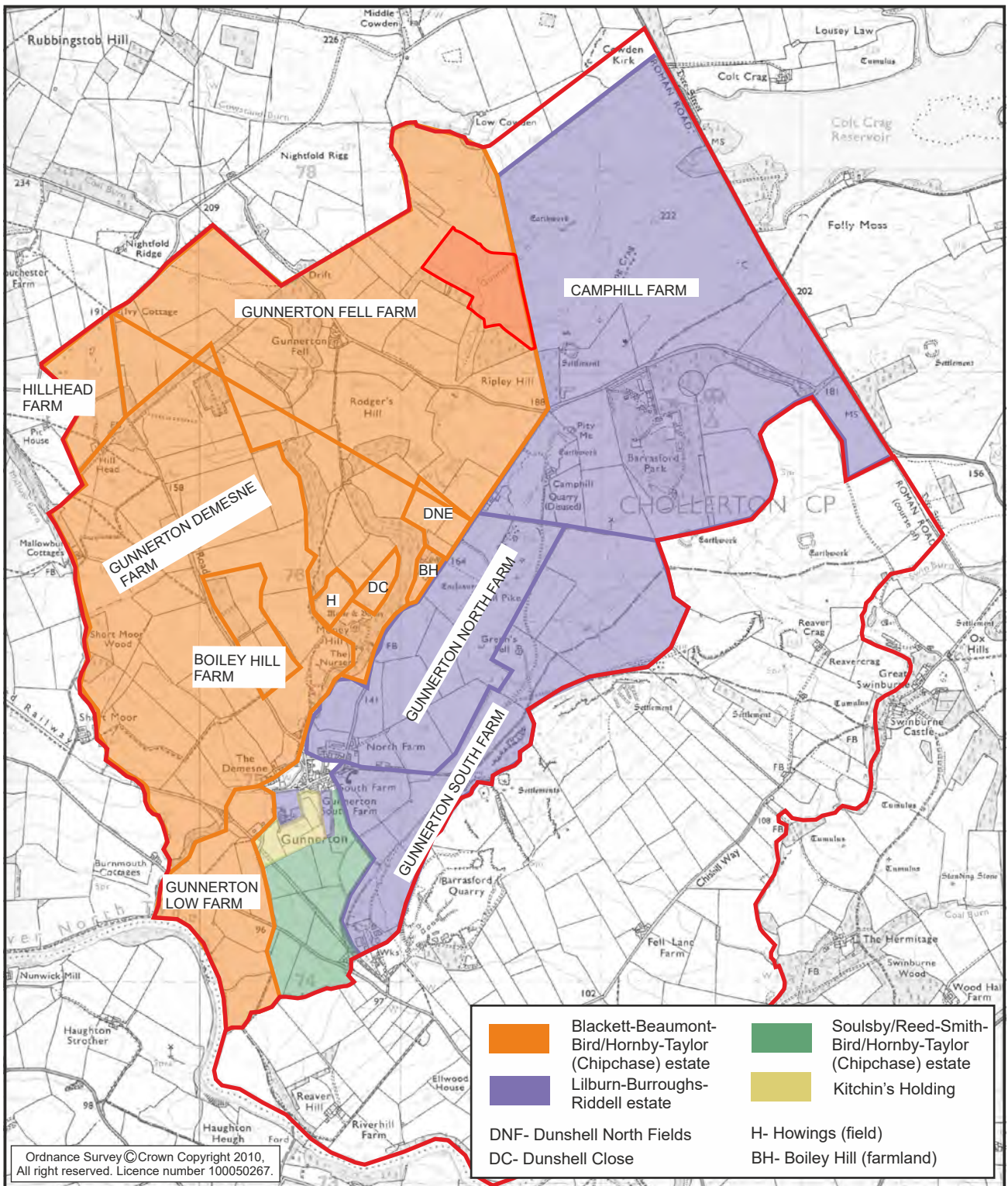
The 1741 Gunnerton Inclosure Award (NRO QRA 25) was the key step in the transformation of agriculture in the area in the modern era (cf. NCH IV (1897), 328-29). It swept away the tenants’ scattered strips, replacing them with enclosed fields or ‘closes’ laid out by surveyors, and divided the town fields and moorland common between the landowners in a coherent manner. Despite the loss of the map attached to the award, the document still provides much useful information and the holdings outlined therein can then be traced via the tithe award and estate plans through the following century.

The award provides an overview of the township prior to its transformation. The area of the township subject to allotment was calculated at 2630 acres by the Inclosure surveyors (which compares not too badly with the total of 2649 acres estimated at the end of the 19th century). There were two main categories of land – the undivided ‘common fields’, also labelled ‘infields’ or ‘townfields’, which amounted to an estimated 1300 acres, and the common pasture or waste grounds – ‘fell’, ‘outground’ or ‘outfield’ – as it was also designated, which amounted to 1000 acres. Thus the common pasture, outground or fell constituted a somewhat smaller proportion of the township than the townfields by 1740, probably as a result of the expansion of arable cultivation over the previous two centuries. In addition various closes were mentioned – e.g. Master Blackett’s Close, Usher’s Close, the Haugh and the Mill Garth – which probably represent parcels of fields previously divided off from the common arable fields in a piecemeal fashion at some earlier stage. Together with village settlement with its house plots (messuages) and crofts or garths, these closes accounted for the remaining 330 or so acres. The terms of the award are summarised in the table below.

Landowner	No farmholds	Area in acres	Notes
Walter Blackett	11	1302	*(see below) + 41 acres for his consent to enclosure as lord of the manor
Samuel Burroughs	8	1060	+ certain houses and land – 26 acres
Ralph Soulsby	1	63 in Low Field	with certain houses & closes formerly belonging to Christopher Soulsby: 10 acres
Stephen Kitching	¼	-	house, garth and allotment of 5 roods & 28 perches
			10 acres were also allocated for public roads.

* Walter Blackett also held: the mill & mill garth
 certain houses & closes (32 acres): Master Blackett’s close
 Usher’s close
 The Haugh
 part of Town Green
 that part of Gunnerton Fell called Cowden Kirk & Broad Lee (50 acres)
 N part of New Law (15 acres)

There were nominally 20¼ tenements or ‘farmholds’ at the time of enclosure, divided between two principal landowners, Walter Blackett the lord of the manor and Samuel Burroughs, and two



Illus. 34: Estates and farms postdating the 1741 Gunnerton Inclosure Award, based on information from the Inclosure Award, the 1842 Tithe Award & Map and estate plans.

freeholders, Ralph Soulsby and Stephen Kitchen, yeoman. The farmholds were the descendants of the medieval husbandland tenant holdings. Prior to enclosure they would each have consisted of numerous strips of arable land scattered throughout the common fields (in the manner outlined by the Hexham Priory tenement listed in the 1379 Black Book), although in actual fact some of these tenancies may have already been amalgamated and farmed together by the early 18th century.

5.5.2 Tenurial history

The Blackett estate was the largest in the township and contained the assessment area. Its outline, post-enclosure, is conveniently shown on the map attached to the 1842 tithe award (Illus. 11; cf. Illus. 34). The estate was held by the Fenwicks of Wallington in the 16th century and was conveyed to Sir William Blackett by Sir John Fenwick in 1689. It subsequently descended to Mr T W Beaumont who sold the manor and its associated lands to the Rev Christopher Bird in 1825 (NCH IV (1897), 329; but Parson & White's Directory 1827 II, 568, still lists Beaumont as the principal landowner). It is listed under the Rev Bird's name in the tithe award. At that stage it included most of the southern, western and north-western parts of the township comprising Gunnerton Low Farm, Gunnerton Demesne Farm, Hill Head Farm and Gunnerton Fell Farm, along with the relatively small Boiley Hill Farm, farmed by Thomas Marshall tenant of the Black Horse public house, and a variety of houses, gardens and closes. This estate was still in the hands of Colonel Hornby, a descendent of the Rev Bird, at the turn of the 20th century (NCH IV (1897), 329; Kelly's Directory 1897, 101; 1902, 105; 1906, 107), but was later sold to the Taylors of Chipchase (Kelly's Directory 1925, 107).

The second largest estate in the township, that the Samuel Burroughs, had formerly belonged to the Fenwicks of Kenton, but was in the hands of Robert Lilburn in 1732 (NCH IV (1897) 329). The estate had passed to the Riddell family by the time of the tithe award, forming part of their Swinburne estate. The full extent of the estate is detailed in the book of Riddell Swinburne Estate farm plans, and encompassed the eastern, south-eastern and north-eastern parts of the township, comprising Gunnerton North and South Farms, and Camp Hill Farm.

The larger of the two remaining, much smaller freeholds, that held by Ralph Soulsby in 1741 which corresponds to Southlands Farm, eventually came into the possession of Chipchase Estate like the Blackett lands. The Soulsbys acquired that estate by marital inheritance in 1754, simultaneously changing their name to Reed (the family from whom they inherited the estate). It was purchased by the Taylor family in 1862.

The tenurial history of the three main holdings can thus be summarised as follows:

- 1) Fenwick of Wallington (1429–1689) – Blackett (1689–after 1741) – Beaumont (after 1741–c 1825) – Bird/Hornby (1825–1906/1925) – Taylors of Chipchase (1906/1925-present)
- 2) Fenwick of Kenton (?1429–before 1732) – Lilburn (by 1732) – Burroughs (by 1741) – Riddell of Swinburne (by 1841–late C20)
- 3) Ralph de Gunnerton and Thurkill de Cadeiou (12th century) – Hexham Priory (pre-1298–1536) – Crown? (1536–?) – Soulsby/Reed of Chipchase (by 1741–1823) – Smith of Wester Hall (1823–1862) – Bird/Hornby (1862–1906/1925) – Taylors of Chipchase (1906/1925-present)

5.5.3 Dispersed farmsteads

Following enclosure, farms were established in the wider township rather than being concentrated in the village. Gunnerton Fell was probably one of the first, being shown as 'Fell' on Armstrong's 1769 map, whilst Camphill and Pity Me also figure on the map, although Pity Me is apparently positioned near Cowden, well to the north of its current position, a feature repeated on Greenwood's map of 1828. By the time Fryer and Greenwood's corresponding county maps appeared in 1820 and 1828 respectively, all the main farms had probably been established. The subsequent history and

development of these individual farms can be traced initially through the information preserved in the tithe map and the individual farm plans and schedules contained in the Riddell's Swinburne Estate plans and in auction sale catalogues. Gunnerton Fell is the most important of these farms in relation to the present assessment as it is likely that the assessment area always fell within its bounds.

5.5.4 Exploitation of the assessment area in the modern era

Detailed analysis of the assessment area, through a combination of walkover survey and the examination of aerial photography, LiDAR imagery and historic maps, has established that the majority of the surviving archaeological features in the landscape relate to the agricultural exploitation of the area in recent centuries.

Chipchase Estate boundary

A key feature is the field wall which marks the eastern edge of the assessment area (Site 29). This forms the present boundary between the Chipchase and Swinburne estates and follows a line which was probably demarcated as the boundary between the newly divided lands of Walter Blackett and Samuel Burroughs by the Inclosure surveyors in 1740/41. Its course is certainly shown on the tithe map of 1842 as well as MacLauchlan's 1852 Sheet 5 map (1852a) and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1863).

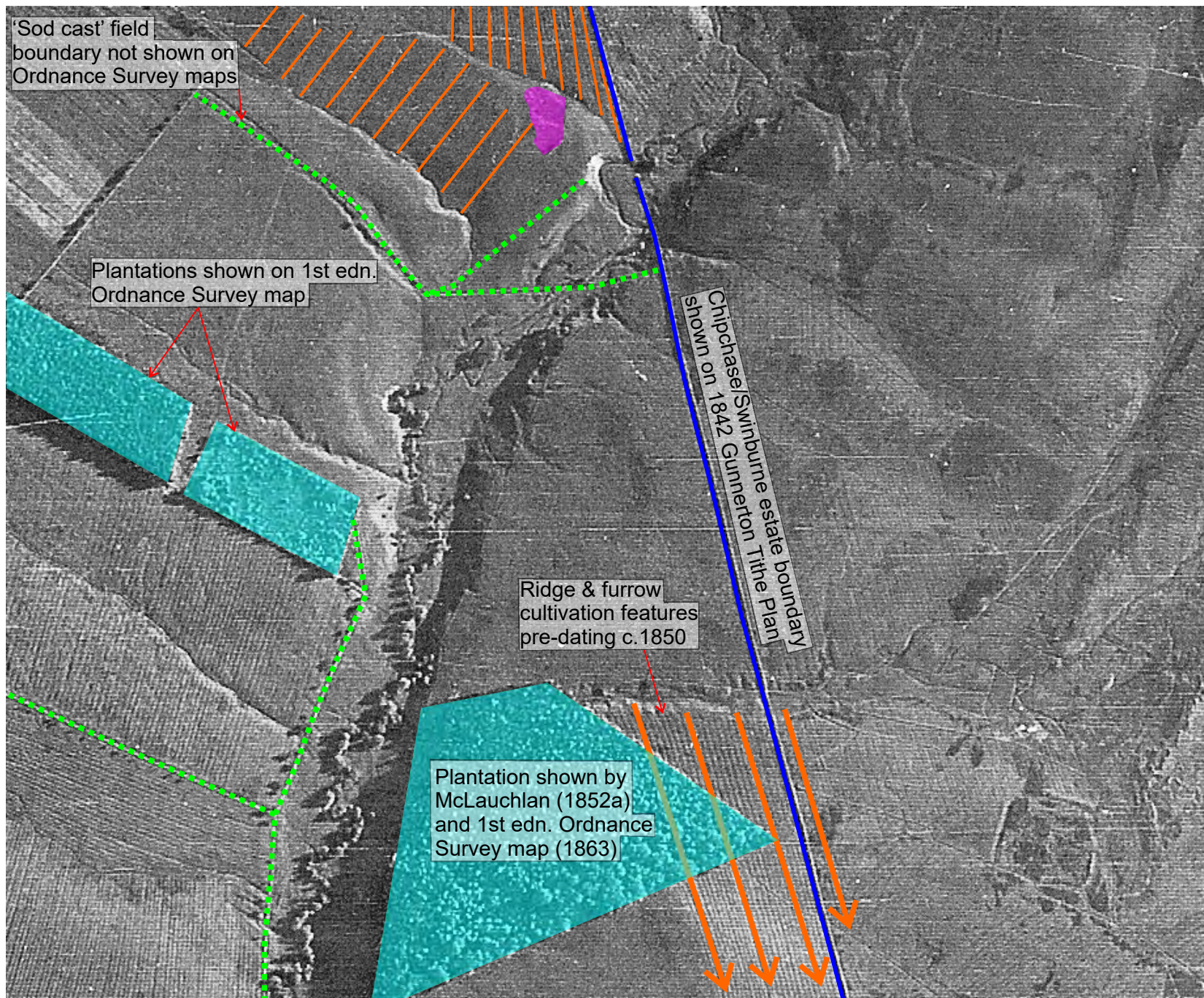
Ridge and furrow ploughing

A second clear, and relatively early feature is represented by the area of ridge and furrow which covers the south-east corner of the assessment area, extending as far north as a tributary stream which flows eastward into Gunnerton Burn. The earthworks also extended into the field to the south as can be seen on aerial photographs of the 1940s, though they have now been levelled by modern ploughing here, and can even be faintly traced on LiDAR imagery running through the intervening plantation, though they are not easy to discern on the ground there today. It is noteworthy that the ridge and furrow runs parallel to the course of the Chipchase-Swinburne boundary wall. Although similarly oriented ridge and furrow can be seen on the eastern side of the wall this does not necessarily imply that this was originally part of the same system. It is more likely that both sets of earthworks were originally created in relation to the boundary wall and therefore postdate 1741. Conversely, the plantation on Ripley Hill has clearly been set over the ridge and furrow. The plantation is shown on MacLauchlan's map and plan (see 5.2.2 above) as well as the 1st edition Ordnance Survey so the ridge and furrow must predate c. 1850. It may represent a relatively short-lived cultivation episode at some stage between 1741 and 1850, perhaps an attempt to take advantage of the high price of corn during the Napoleonic wars, or conceivably just an effort to improve the pasture, using the furrows which run down the northern and southern slopes of Ripley Hill to aid the runoff of excess rainwater.

Further areas of ridge and furrow can be seen immediately to the north of the stream forming the northern boundary of the assessment area. The first is orientated NE-SW. Immediately north of that, on the other side of another stream, a second area is orientated NW-SE, following the alignment of the estate boundary wall again. It is noteworthy, however, that the patterns of ridge and furrow evident on aerial photography and LiDAR imagery on the opposite, eastern side of the boundary wall are much more extensive and complex, following multiple different orientations. This may reflect a more determined attempt to cultivate the land here on the part of the estate owners, Robert Lilburn, Samuel Burroughs and their successors, and/or their tenants. There may even have been episodic ploughing here prior to enclosure.

Fields, pasture and rough grazing

Along the northern edge of the assessment site and, more faintly, towards the western end a network of sod-cast banks can be seen forming field boundaries (see Illus. 35). None of these boundary banks is shown on Ordnance Survey maps, implying that they must precede the 1860s. Possible drainage



Illus. 35: Historic landscape features – field boundaries, areas of ridge and furrow etc – plotted on aerial photograph raf-106g-uk-441 fr4079, taken in by the RAF in June 1945

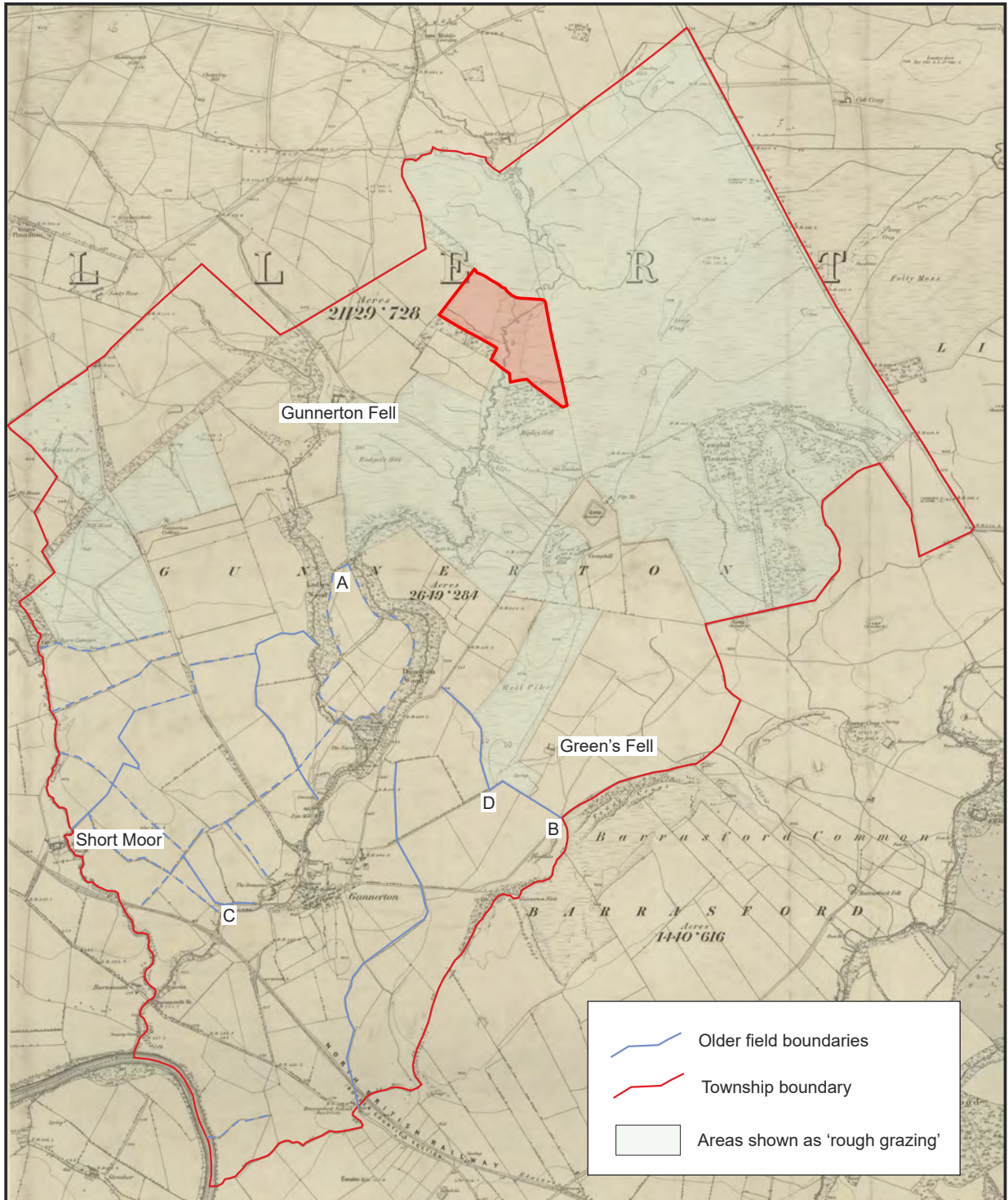
ditches can also be seen in the western half of the area. These features give the impression that at times there were efforts to manage this landscape more intensively, perhaps largely defeated by the inferior quality of the waterlogged clay soils. It is possible that following enclosure of the moor in 1741/2 there was an initial surge in investment in the landscape creating enclosed fields and even areas of cultivation. The 'old limekiln' (Site 30), shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map in the SE corner of the field south of Ripley Hill, may signify an attempt to improve and 'sweeten' the pastureland by spreading lime. The label 'old' would, however, imply the limekiln was already out of use by the early 1860s when the Ordnance Survey's mapping work was undertaken, suggesting that even this effort may have been abandoned by then. Overall it appears unlikely that any attempt at intensification lasted beyond the early 19th century, and indeed it is doubtful that the area can ever have seen sustained use as anything other than as rough grazing in the modern era (or in the medieval period for that matter). It falls within the large expanse depicted as rough grazing on the 6 inch Ordnance Survey First Edition, which encompassed the more elevated, northern and especially north-eastern parts of Gunnerton township (see Illus. 36).

Quarrying

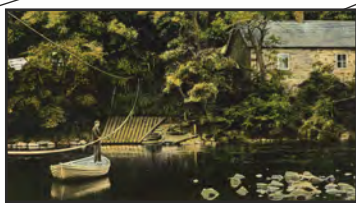
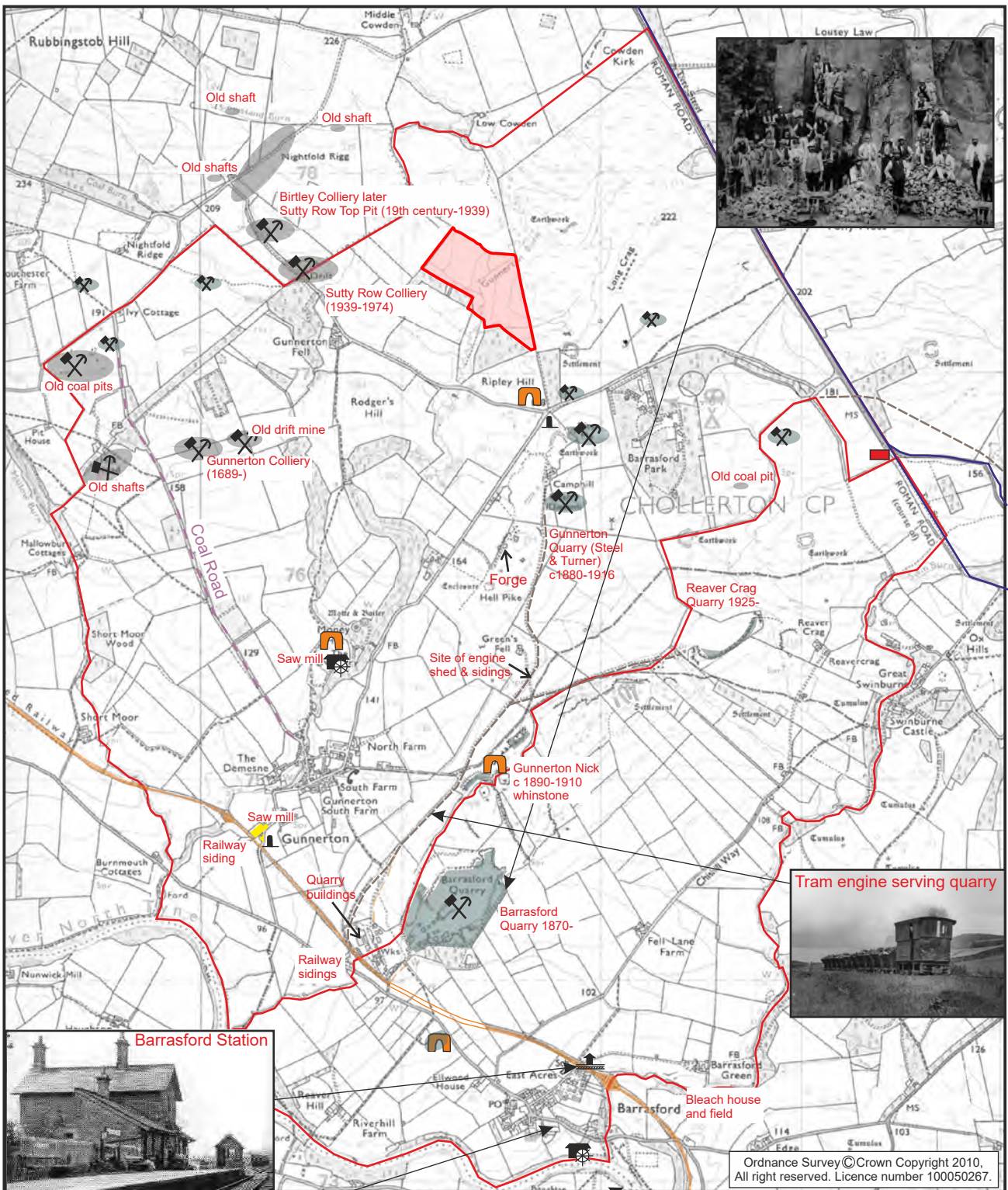
A number of small quarries are shown on Ordnance Survey maps in the fields to the east of the assessment site, which all fall within the adjoining Swinburne Estate and its predecessors. This activity appears to fluctuate over time. More extensive quarrying can be noted to the south, around Pity Me and Camphill, from the end of the 19th century onwards, forming Steel and Turner's Gunnerton Quarry, which operated between 1880 and 1916 (Carlton & Rushworth 2011, 252-53; cf. Illus. 37). There was even a tramway mineral line (Site 10; HER 23562), which is shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey, connecting these quarries with sidings on the Border Counties Railway. This resulted in the destruction of the SE quadrant of the enclosed (and perhaps defensible?) Iron Age/Romano-British settlement next to Pity Me (Site 03; HER 9193; SAM 20930) and entirely removed the smaller, elliptical, enclosed settlement and tumulus to the south, on Camp Hill (Site 04; HER 9194). However nothing similar can be observed in the assessment site or neighbouring parts of Chipchase Estate on the equivalent Ordnance Survey maps, though two small quarry scars, which do not figure on the maps, can be seen on aerial photographs and LiDAR images, just to the north of the site close to the estate boundary wall and Gunnerton Burn.

Woodland plantations

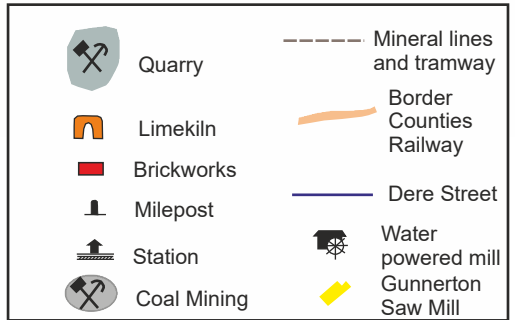
Finally, one should note the forestry plantations scattered through the wider landscape. Ripley Hill Plantation was already in existence by 1850/51, whilst the two linked plantations further west, running along the southern edge of the assessment site, figure on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey and may well have been planted at roughly the same time as Ripley Hill. The creation of these plantations represents a diversification of land use, and might coincide with the abandonment of ridge and furrow cultivation and attempted pasture improvement noted above. More have been planted since, and it must be recognised that these have now become a traditional element of this agricultural landscape.



Illus. 36: 6 inch First Edition Ordnance Survey (1865) with the extensive area of rough grazing in Gunnerton township highlighted.



Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2010, All right reserved. Licence number 100050267.



Illus. 37: Plan showing sites of industrial importance and those linked to transportation in Gunnerton and Barrasford.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL & IMPACTS

6.1 Archaeological Potential

The assessment site appears to be lacking in significant archaeological remains. The area presently consists of enclosed moorland utilised as rough grazing and this form of land use appears to have persisted throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and perhaps longer. The only indication of more intensive exploitation is represented by the expanse of narrow ridge and furrow covering the south-east angle of the study area. It is conceivable that this represents a relatively short-lived episode.

The surviving remains, which have been identified within the assessment area through a combination of aerial photography and LiDAR imagery analysis and walkover survey, mostly comprise features associated with the management and exploitation of this enclosed moorland, principally during the 18th and 19th centuries. These visible surviving remains – ridge and furrow earthworks and field boundary banks (e.g. 23E, 23W and 24) – are not in themselves of more than very local archaeological significance. They do, however, appear to precede the earliest Ordnance Survey mapping.

Only a single HER site entry falls within or immediately adjoins the study area (Site 01; HER 9196), a site apparently labelled an ‘entrenchment’ on survey plans by MacLauchlan in the mid-19th century and subsequently interpreted as a possible enclosed farmstead, though no traces have ever actually been identified. Here, however, careful analysis of MacLauchlan’s drawings and accompanying description has determined that this ‘site’ is simply the result of the misplacing of the word ‘entrenchment’ on the published plan and map. The term actually applies to Site 02, the enclosed settlement 120 m to the east of the assessment area (HER 9182; Scheduled Monument 20927), which is specifically described by MacLauchlan as ‘an entrenchment’ and as resembling an ‘entrenched residence’ (see 5.2.2 above).

In addition, features of uncertain significance identified in the area include the small circular feature (Site 22), the cairn incorporating an irregular stone slab with possible cup markings (Site 21) and the L-shaped linear bank (Site 25).

Significant sites and monuments associated with other periods of activity do survive in the wider vicinity. During the Middle Ages the assessment site and its wider environs formed part of Gunnerton Moor, an extensive common waste attached to the village township of Gunnerton. The area would predominantly have been used for grazing livestock at this stage and there is little potential for features associated with settlement or other intensive activity to survive within the assessment site or its vicinity. Monuments associated with other periods are more conspicuously represented in the wider area, however, most notably barrows, cairns or ‘tumuli’, interpreted as burial mounds of probable late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date and enclosed settlements of the Iron Age/Romano-British era. None of the three ‘tumuli’ (Sites 08, 04) previously identified within 1km of the assessment site survive, or at any rate can be located today, and all lay more than 0.5km away in any case. However much more prominent are the enclosed settlements. Five of these are known within 1km of the assessment site, forming a line from north to south (Sites 13, 05/07, 02, 03, 04), part of a larger cluster of such sites distributed on either side of Dere Street. Three, in particular, lie relatively close by, being less than 0.5km from the assessment area (only c. 120m east of it in the case of the nearest, Site 02). All three now have protected status as scheduled monuments in recognition of their importance. The settlements are largely surrounded by the remains of later ridge and furrow cultivation. This later cultivation will have removed any obvious traces of field systems and cord-rig cultivation contemporary with the settlements. However it is conceivable that some remains of this kind might survive as buried archaeological deposits or features and there is potential for such remains to extend into the

assessment site, particularly any that might be associated with Site 02, though the degree to which this likely is obviously very uncertain.

6.2 Impacts on the Survival of Archaeological Remains

Most of the sites and areas of potential archaeological significance discussed in this report are potentially at risk of damage or destruction through creation of the proposed new woodland.

The principle danger is through ground preparation – scraping and mounding – although there is also a risk from subsequent changes in the land management regime – for example if sites are left in clearings but not grazed then natural regeneration will occur leading to damage through root penetration, windblow or other agencies.

In order to minimise the impact of the proposed WCPG scheme on the local historic environment, it is important that all known sites and areas of high potential are accurately plotted on a large-scale map, enabling informed decisions to be made about which areas should be left unplanted and how these should be best managed in future. Section 7 of this report sets out some specific recommendations.

6.3 Indirect Impacts

A further significant issue is the potential impact of the proposed planting on the setting of monuments, specifically the three scheduled ancient monuments located to the east, north-east and south-east of the site.

Site 02 (SAM 20927) is the closest of these monuments to the proposed planting, which will have an impact on its setting, by partially closing off views to the north-west and creating a closer and more extensive block of woodland on that side (*see* Illus. 38). However, the open aspect of the site is already compromised by the existing Ripley Hill Plantation and even more so by the smaller adjoining rectangular plantation, which extends right up to the SW corner of the monument. This plantation has been clear-felled very recently, but will doubtless be replanted.

The setting of Site 03 (SAM 20929) will only be very minimally impacted by the proposed woodland. Viewed from the monument there will be a slight eastward extension to the length of the existing Ripley Hill plantation on the ridge line to the north (*see* Illus. 39).

Site 05 (SAM 20930), like 02, will experience a greater alteration to its setting with the enlargement of the visible planting to the south-west, closing off some distant views in that direction and bring the woodland edge closer. Nevertheless, the edge of the new woodland will still lie at some distance from the monument and its setting is already characterised by blocks of existing plantations, particularly in this direction (*see* Illus. 40-41).

Scheduled Monument Settings (20927 & 20929)



Illus. 38: View looking N towards the site of the proposed woodland from SAM 20929 (Site 03; HER 9193), with the projected form of the proposed planting marked.



Illus. 39: View looking NW towards the area of the proposed planting from SAM 20927 (Site 02; HER 9182), with the projected form of the new woodland marked.

Scheduled Monument 20930 Setting



Illus. 40: View looking SW towards the area of the proposed planting from SAM 20930 (Site 05; HER 9197), with the projected mass of the new woodland shown schematically.



Illus 41: View looking WSW towards the western part of the proposed woodland from SAM 20930 (Site 05; HER 9197), with the projected mass of the new woodland shown schematically.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Advice on the form of any evaluation or mitigation strategy should be sought from the Northumberland County Archaeologist, but the following recommendations are provided on the basis of the current assessment.

1. The impact to one cultural heritage feature will be mitigated by avoidance in the scheme as currently proposed. Possible cairn/cup-marked slab 21 lies next to the tributary stream which forms the course of an unplanted ride and the feature should be included in the unplanted zone.
2. Traces of previous, historic landuse should also be preserved by avoiding planting on the relict, linear field banks (23E, 23W, 24) located towards the northern limit of the proposed woodland.
3. In the case of Features 22 and 25, the interpretation of which is uncertain and which fall within the main blocks of planting, there may be scope for leaving small, unplanted clearings within the overall planting scheme, located around archaeological sites in line with Forestry Commission guidelines (note that sites in such clearings may require some ongoing management if they are not grazed).
4. The creation of the new woodland will impact visually on the setting of the three scheduled monuments to the east (SAMs 20927, 20929, 20930), to some degree. However, this impact is only very marginal in the case of SAM 20929 and is not considered to be of critical significance in the other two cases.

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APPENDIX 1: THE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Views and features captured during field survey November 2020

The Landscape of the Assessment Area 1



Photo 01: View looking NW from the eastern part of the assessment area.



Photo 02: View looking SW along the eastern side of Gunnerton Burn.



Photo 03: View looking SE towards Gunnerton Burn and the bluffs on the eastern side.

The Landscape of the Assessment Site 2



Photo 04: NW corner of the assessment site. View looking E along the stream forming the site's northern boundary.



Photo 05: The historic field banks along the southern limit of the site. View looking S.



Photo 06: View looking SE along the site's southern edge towards Ripley Hill Plantation with Gunnerton Burn in the middle ground.

The Boundary wall between Chipchase and Swinburne estates - Feature 29



Photo 07:
*Looking NNW,
along the wall,
from the site's
SE corner.*



Photo 08:
*The W side of
Wall 29 in the
SE corner of
the assessment
site.*



Photo 09:
*The E side of
Wall 29.*

Ridge and Furrow 20 in the SE Corner of the Site



Photo 10: View of Ridge & furrow (Feature 20), looking W.



Photo 11: View of Ridge & furrow (Feature 20), looking WNW. The shadows mark the position of the furrows.



Photo 12: View of Ridge & furrow (Feature 20), looking NW.

Cairn and Possible Cup-marked Slab 21



Photo 13: The cairn and possible cup-marked slab viewed from the west.



Photo 14: The cairn viewed from the west.



Photo 15: Detailed view of the possible cup-marked stone (21) from the NW.

Circular Feature 22



Photo 16:
Looking W
across the
N and E
sides of
Feature 22.



Photo 17:
Looking E
across the
N half of
Feature 22.



Photo 18:
Looking SE
at the feature's
northern arc.

Quarry scoops on the south scarp overlooking Gunnerton Burn



Photo 19:
*Quarry scoops
and/or possible
erosion scars or
slumping on the
scarp above the
burn.*



Photo 20:
An oval quarry scoop on the S scarp above Gunnerton Burn.

L-shaped linear
bank 25



Photo 21:
*L-shaped
linear mound
25, looking S
towards the
angle.*



Photo 22:
*Linear mound
25, looking S.*

Field Boundary Banks



Photo 23: Field boundary bank 23E, running east obliquely up the scarp above the E bank of Gunnerton Burn.



Photo 24: Field boundary bank 23E on the west side of Gunnerton Burn, looking W.



Photo 25: Field boundary bank 24 climbing the slope W of the burn. View looking N.

Field Boundary Banks



Photo 26: Field boundary bank 23W in the western part of the assessment site, seen descending towards Gunnerton Burn. View looking E.



Photo 27: Field boundary bank 23W in the western part of the assessment site. View looking W.



Photo 28: Former boundary bank at the E end of the SW plantations. View looking S.

Ridge & Furrow in the environs of the Assessment Site



Photo 29: View looking S from the slopes of Ripley Hill towards Pity Me.



Photo 30: Ridge and furrow to the W of the lane leading S to Gunnerton village.



Photo 31: Ridge and furrow to the W of the Pity Me settlement, looking N.

Scheduled Monument Settings (20927 & 20929)



Photo 32: View looking NW towards the area of the proposed planting from SAM 20927 (Site 02; HER 9182).



Photo 33: View looking N towards the site of the proposed woodland from SAM 20929 (Site 03; HER 9193)..

Scheduled Monument 20930 Setting



Photo 34: View looking SW towards the area of the proposed planting from SAM 20930 (Site 05; HER 9197).



Photo 35: View looking WSW towards the western part of the proposed woodland from SAM 20930 (Site 05; HER 9197).