



Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group

The Hagg - A Project Plan for 2017

supported by:



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority
Sustainable Development Fund

1. Introduction and Background

SWAAG has been exploring the Hagg site since 2009. It has undertaken topographic and geophysical surveys and has excavated several areas, although recent focus has centred on site 103. Reports of the work carried out to date are on the SWAAG web site at www.swaag.org under Fieldwork Reports.

During the period 2014 - 2016, SWAAG organised and reported on “The Swaledale Big Dig” an extensive test-pitting programme in the local area. No excavation work was carried out at site 103 during that time, although work progressed to draw together the results of previous years’ excavations with the aim of developing a unified interpretation as a basis for further work. Also, several opportunities arose where the findings to date were discussed with local, professional archaeologists. Although there was no common view, there were several common themes:

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

Bearing those comments in mind, in 2016 a new excavation programme for site 103 was developed and a research document “The Hagg - A project plan for 2016 and beyond” prepared (available on the SWAAG website). The Plan includes a complete, prioritised, list of evaluation trenches and their locations, each trench designed to answer very specific questions about features already seen on the site with the intention of providing data to inform much larger open excavations from 2017 onwards.

In October 2016, 6 of those evaluation trenches were completed and the methodology, results, finds and interpretations are recorded in a report entitled: “Hagg Site 103 Excavations, 7th -15th October, 2016”, a draft of which is on the SWAAG web site.

This Project Plan, describes the details of the 2017 proposed activities (the “Project”) and has been approved by the SWAAG Trustees.

2. Research Questions and Objectives

The results and interpretations of the evaluation trenches excavated in 2016 were examined in the context of previous work on the site and were also discussed with Tony Liddell of Vindomora Solutions, the site archaeologist for the 2016 dig. It was concluded that the evaluation trenches had each achieved the objectives set out for them and that to gain a better understanding of the site the next step should be to undertake a large open area excavation.

Figure 1 shows a composite plan of work on the site to date. It also shows the 2016 trenches together with suggestions as to the locations of features such as walls, enclosures and trackways. The 2017 excavation will explore the area in Figure 1 more fully, in particular it will explore the areas between previous evaluation trenches in order to

develop a unified plan of the site. As the extent of the excavations will be limited by the available staffing, the site has been divided into three separate but adjacent zones, see Figure 2. Zone 1 will be the excavation focus for 2107 but the area will be expanded in to the next zone(s) if adequate staff are available.

The 2017 explorations will be directed towards providing information to help answer the following research questions:

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

Although the primary purpose of the Project is to answer the above archaeological research questions, the Project is a community project and will involve SWAAG members and members of the public who will have varying levels of archaeological skills. Accordingly, the Project will also strive to meet the following objective to provide all participants with:

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

3. Excavations and Finds

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

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

The approximate locations of the planned excavations are illustrated in Figure 2 in relation to previous excavations which have been carried out at site 103. The initial focus will be on Zone 1, and may extend into Zones 2 and 3 depending on staff numbers, weather and overall progress.

The limits of Zone 1 will be marked out using GPS and possibly a Total Station. The Zone will be de-turfed by hand and sub-divided into smaller work areas, the size of each area will take into account the number of volunteers available and will be excavated by, as far as possible, a dedicated team.

All of the work areas will be excavated by hand. In the first instance the excavation will go down either to the top of the archaeological deposits, or the natural substrate, whichever is observed first. Subject to guidance from the SA, certain of the work areas will then progress down through the abandonment phase to investigate and sample earlier archaeological deposits.

The work areas will be cleaned down and all features investigated and recorded as deemed appropriate by the SA.

The site will be recorded using single context recording. All excavated contexts will be recorded in plan and section and recorded on stratigraphic matrices. Plans and sections will be drawn at appropriate scales (generally 1:10 or 1:20, to be defined by the SA). The excavations will be accurately tied into the OS national grid and accurately levelled relative to the OS datum, using traditional survey techniques with GPS and/or a Total Station.

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

- stake-holes: 100%
- post-holes: 50%
- pits up to 1.5 diameter: 50%
- pits over 1.5m: 25% but with full profile excavated
- linear features up to 5m in length: 20%
- linear features over 5m in length: up to 10%,
- linear features: all intersections and terminus areas to be investigated
- human burials: 100%

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

During the excavations, turf, soil and stone will be stored in separate piles. As far as possible the spoil from each work area should be stored adjacent to that work area and not impinging on areas to be excavated.

When deemed appropriate excavated soil will be sieved and, as far as possible, scanned using a metal detector.

Upon completion of fieldwork, trenches will be backfilled and the ground surface reinstated as close as reasonably possible to its original profile.

A comprehensive digital photographic record of the excavation will be made. The record will include 'people shots' of excavations in progress as well as standard shots. All images will be retained in the site archive, with an appropriate selection included within the project report.

A comprehensive, daily, site diary will be maintained for the overall site as well as for each excavation area. In addition to site and excavation details the diaries will include details of personnel present each day. The SA shall be responsible for ensuring that all teams complete the daily diary entries for their work areas.

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

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

Any material from secure contexts deemed potentially suitable for environmental analysis and dating purposes will be recovered and stored in appropriate conditions. Advice regarding the analysis and dating will be sought from appropriate testing laboratories.

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

4. Surveying

Geophysical (resistivity and magnetometry) and topographic (e.g. GPS, Total Station) surveys will be carried out as necessary. Surveying may be carried out at times other than those reserved for the excavation work.

5. Post Excavation, Archiving and Report Production

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

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

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

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

The matter of an archive for this and the 2016 excavation is under consideration. Initial indications suggest possible local archives to be: the Yorkshire Museum, Richmond; and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Museum, Hawes.

6. Supervision and Management of the Project.

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

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

- Project Manager and liaison with land owner - Phillip Bastow
- Logistics - Rob Nicholson/Rod Flint
- Surveying - Mike Walton
- Finds - Rob Nicholson
- Staffing, Communications and H&S - Andrea Dixon
- Project Plan - David Brooks
- Budget - Mike Keenan
- Schools - Sue Nicholson
- Site Welfare Co-ordinator - Graham Smith
- Publicity/Press - Rod Flint

7. Health and Safety

Health and Safety on the site is paramount and it is the responsibility of everyone to work in a safe manner and to look out for the safety of his or her co-workers.

A risk assessment has been carried out and will be circulated to all who will work on the site. The SA will be responsible for supervising health and safety across the site and will give briefings and guidance as needed.

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

Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the responsibility of those working on the site. We suggest that everyone digging should wear strong, protective gloves. We insist that all those working on site must, as a minimum, wear strong, robust footwear and anyone using a large mattock must wear footwear with steel, or its equivalent, toe caps. The SA and/or Project Manager will check the adequacy of PPE, especially footwear, and their judgement in this matter will be final.

SWAAG maintains comprehensive insurance through Insignia Underwriting. The policy covers all of the activities in the Project Plan and all people, working on site, whether SWAAG members or not. A copy of the current Policy Schedule, is attached Figure 3. The current policy will expire during the term of the project. However, the Trustees of SWAAG have already committed to its further renewal with the same level of cover, through Insignia.

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

SWAAG has appointed a Site Welfare Co-ordinator to whom all new site staff should in the first instance report. He/she will ensure and record that they have been given appropriate briefings and ensure that, before they begin work, they have read and signed the SWAAG Safety Policy, and if appropriate the SWAAG Safeguarding and Protection Policy. The Welfare Co-ordinator will also ensure that visitors to the site are appropriately supervised.

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

8. Training

SWAAG is a community archaeology group made up entirely of volunteers with varying levels of archaeological expertise. Members of the public may also participate in the dig and it is assumed, until proven otherwise, that they have little or no knowledge and experience of archaeological techniques.

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

Training will be offered on site during the dig and will be provided by the SA as part of his/her scope of work, or by appropriately skilled SWAAG members

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

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

Participants are also encouraged to visit the following web sites:

www.jigsawcambs.org

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

9. Site "rules"

The site will be open to members of SWAAG and the public. There are no fees for participation in this Project

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

The site will be open from 5th to 19th July and the normal working hours will be from 9.30am to 4pm, daily.

All participants and visitors to the site must sign in on arrival and notify the Welfare Co-ordinator and the SA of their presence. All participants and visitors must sign out on departure. The Welfare Co-ordinator and the SA will wear high visibility vests to help identification.

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

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

10. Site Archaeologist - terms of reference

The Site Archaeologist will be an experienced archaeologist but may not be the same person each day. He/she will have the following responsibilities:

- There will be an SA on site each day between the hours of 9.30am to 4pm.
- In the event that the appointed SA cannot be on site, then he/she must provide an appropriately skilled stand-in. In case of an emergency/unexpected absence, the appointed SA must make arrangements for the site to be able to contact him/her for advice.
- The SA will supervise and control all of the required archaeological activities.
- The SA will provide daily briefings.
- The SA must agree with the Project Manager (or his nominated deputy) any variations to the activities as set out in this Plan.
- As the site workers are expected to be volunteers with little or no previous experience of archaeology, the SA will be required to provide training and guidance as necessary.
- The SA will provide support and advice to the post excavation finds management.
- The SA will provide input and editorial support to the writing of the excavation report.

11. Ownership and Permissions

The land at the Hagg is owned and farmed by the Clarke family of Fremington, in Swaledale. The landowner has given specific permission for the work contemplated in the Project Plan to go ahead, Figure 4. The landowner has advised us that there are no requirements to approach any other authorities for permission to excavate.

The site is not a scheduled monument.

Finds from the site are owned by the land owner.

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

12. Budget and Financial Authorities

The budget for the Project is £9449.

The SWAAG Trustees have delegated control of the budget to the Project Manager, and members of the Hagg Steering Group.

The Project funds are to be recorded in the SWAAG accounts as restricted expenditure. The SWAAG Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining an account of the use of the Project funds.

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

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

13. Acknowledgements

SWAAG wish gratefully to acknowledge support for the Project of Mr David Clarke and his family and for their permission for us to carry out these excavations on their land.

SWAAG also wishes to acknowledge the support and generosity of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund and for the grant they have awarded us, which has made this Project possible.

The Sustainable Development Fund is open to individuals, businesses, community groups or voluntary sector bodies. It provides an accessible source of money for a range of projects that result in positive benefits for the National Park's environment, economy and communities, while enhancing and conserving the local culture, wildlife and landscape. Further details of the Fund may be found at: www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/sdf

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Figure 1: Site 103 showing excavated areas and features

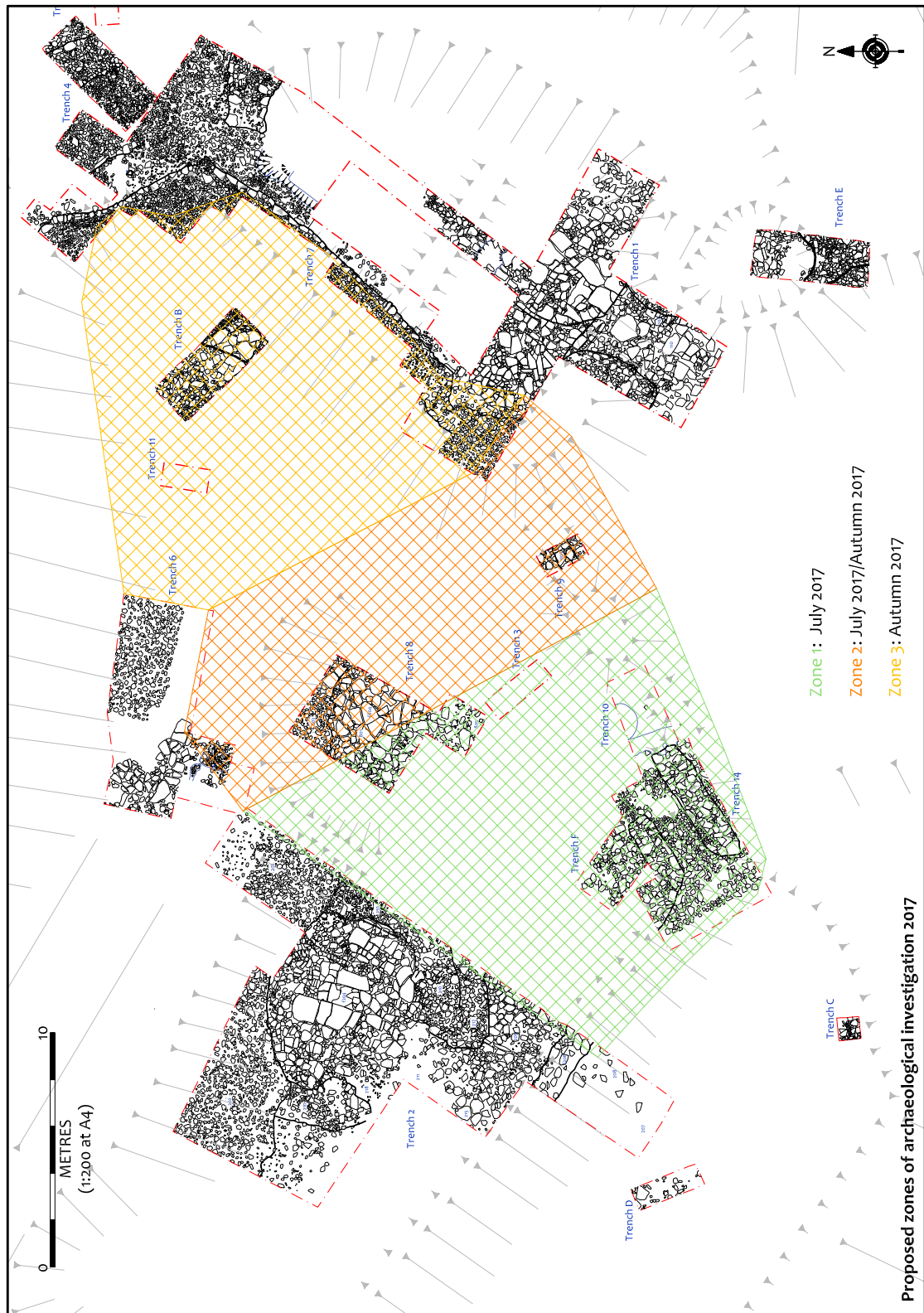


Figure 2: Site 103 showing the proposed excavation zones.

Hagg Farm
Fremington

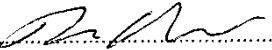
To: SWAAG, c/o Mr Philip Bastow.

Dear Philip,

Re: SWAAG Archaeology Research on West Hagg Farm

I pleased to confirm that SWAAG has permission to carry out on West Hagg Farm land such Activities as they believe necessary to reach a full and detailed understanding of the archaeological heritage of the Farm. Such Activities may include landscape surveying, geophysical surveying, excavations and all associated techniques and skills. This permission is subject to the following conditions:

1. Before any Activities are started, SWAAG shall discuss them with me to ensure that they fit in with Farm plans for land and stock management.
2. All Activities carried out in accordance with this permission must at all times be managed by SWAAG members.
3. SWAAG may bring visitors on to the work site providing they are accompanied throughout their visit.
4. SWAAG shall ensure that appropriate third party liability insurance is in place and covers SWAAG members and visitors.
5. Cars shall be parked in the bottom field near the main entrance gate, although one or at the most two cars may be taken to, or near to, the work site for the purpose of transporting equipment, and anyone who needs help.
6. If a temporary toilet is to be used, it shall be positioned in the bottom field near to the main gate and parked cars.
7. Dogs, other than guide dogs, shall only be allowed on site by exception (permission to be given by SWAAG) and any such dogs as are on site shall be restrained at all times.
8. All and any finds discovered on the Farm remain the property of West Hagg Farm and must be returned to the Farm after they have been processed and studied. However, should any of the finds be of national significance, West Hagg Farm will consider allowing them to be exhibited, and retained in a museum(s).
9. West Hagg Farm reserves the right to cancel this permission at any time.

Signed 

Date 1/3/2017

Name: David Clarke
Hagg Farm.

Figure 4: Permission to undertake the Project