Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation at Drumburgh Castle Farm, Drumburgh, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 5DW

August 2025

List Entry Number: 1014699

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1.0 Background

1.1 Site Location

The Cumbrian village of Drumburgh occupies an elevated position on the southern side of the Solway Firth. The topographic location of the village, on a glacial Drumlin in otherwise low-lying terrain, provides for good visibility over the Solway Firth and surrounding marsh and farmland. The village lies between the settlements of Easton, 1.5km to the east, and Glasson 1.5km to the west. The closest large settlement is the city of Carlisle 16km to the east.

1.2 Context of the Project

This community archaeology project is carried out at the request of the landowners of Drumburgh Castle Farm, Messrs RH and AH Hodgson. In 2024 the landowners approached Grampus Heritage to explore the possibility of developing a community archaeology project to better understand the archaeology on their land. This followed the dissemination of previous work undertaken by Grampus with community volunteers under the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) Scheme at High Tarns.

In 2024 Grampus successfully applied to the Solway Coast National Landscape DEFRA funded FIPL scheme to undertake a geophysical survey with community volunteers of land at Drumburgh Castle Farm to the north and east of the village. A Section 42 License was obtained from Historic England prior to survey work as the area included part of the scheduled monument of Hadrian's Wall: List Entry Number: 1014699. '*Drumburgh Roman fort and Hadrian's Wall between Burgh Marsh and Westfield House in wall miles 76 and 77*'.

The geophysical survey was completed using both magnetometry (Geoscan FM256 Gradiometer) and electrical resistance (Geoscan RM85 dual system) between November 2024 and February 2025. The enthusiasm and commitment of local volunteers to complete the survey over the winter months demonstrates the strong local interest in learning more about the history and archaeology of the area.

The geophysical survey report (Graham, 2025) should be read in conjunction with this WSI for a full description of results. Throughout the survey, the whole survey team had time to consider the past archaeological interventions at the site and to discuss in detail what we know about the course of Hadrian's Wall in this area, the position and alignment of the fort of *Congavata* and the location of Milecastle 76. We were then able to compare the geophysical survey results to the proposed location and alignment of these features and look for correlations.

The survey results showed no correlation with the proposed arrangement, alignment and extent of the fort of *Congavata* as proposed from the 1947 excavations (Simpson & Richmond, 1952).
A faint linear positive anomaly was detected in the magnetometry survey which may be the course of Hadrian's Wall and is on a similar alignment to the scheduling. Two potential magnetic anomalies are highlighted on this alignment as possible locations for milecastle 76, though these are far from certain. Figures 1 – 5 which accompany this WSI show the proposed trench locations as overlays to the geophysical survey. The easternmost trench location (Area 3, Fig 5) targets anomalies forming a roughly square arrangement and these represent the best candidate for Milecastle 76. To the west of this we can see an arrangement of positive linear anomalies (Area 2, Fig 5) which may also be Milecastle 76. The scheduled area leads to a degree of 'confirmation bias' in offering Hadrian's Wall and Milecastle 76 as an interpretation for these anomalies.

Without gaining further evidence through excavation, both features could also be interpreted as drainage activity and area 3 may be related to construction of the canal which lies immediately to the east of these features.

Above: Volunteers Conducting Geophysical Survey at Drumburgh

The scheduled area defining the fort of *Congavata* follows the arrangement given in the report of the 1947 excavations (Simpson & Richmond. 1952). The 1947 excavation report supports the interpretation given in 1899 (Haverfield 1900) that the village of Drumburgh and Hadrian's Wall and *Congavata* are on two very different alignments. The survey results over the scheduled area of *Congavata* do not show any correlation with this arrangement. A much clearer arrangement of linear anomalies is visible on the line of an old orchard hedgeline, on the same alignment as the current village. Of course, geophysical survey does not show all archaeological remains, but the complete absence of evidence for the proposed fort arrangement is puzzling, given the clarity of the results in showing other features.

Following completion and dissemination of the geophysical survey report it was decided to apply once again to the FIPL scheme to run a community archaeology project which aims to clarify the nature of some of the key archaeological anomalies discovered. Working with local volunteers, this project seeks to investigate the old orchard hedgeline (Fig 4, Area 1) to see if this seals Roman remains relating to Hadrian's Wall and the fort of *Congavata*. Areas 2 and 3 seek to confirm if the course of Hadrian's Wall runs across this field, up to the marsh edge, and whether Milecastle 76 is located in this field. That Hadrian's Wall runs across this field is far from certain. If it does, and if we can then find milecastle 76, we may also be able to discern whether the wall continued to the east across Burgh Marsh, or turned to the south to follow a more inland route, or simply stopped. We stand to learn a great deal from these carefully targeted excavations.

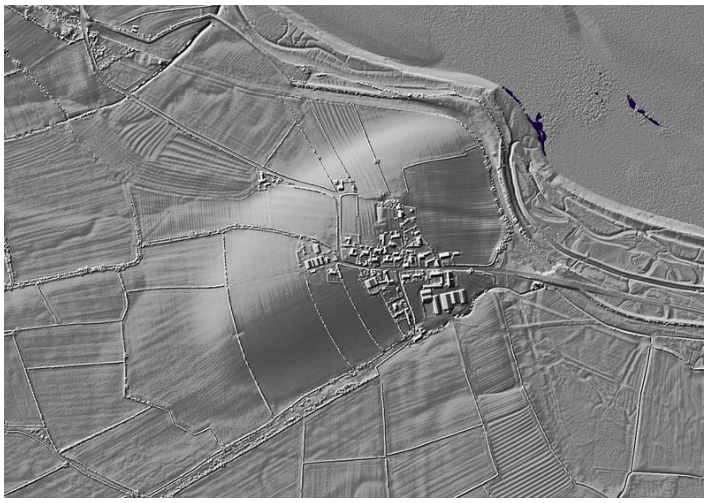
1.3 Timetable

The excavations will take place over a three-week period from 6th to 25th October 2025. All post excavation work and reporting will be completed by 28th February 2026.

2.0 Site Information
2.1 Site description

The trench locations covered by this WSI are shown in Figure 1. The work will take place in two separate fields. Area 1 is located in a field to the north of the Grange and areas 2 and 3 in a field to the east of the grange known as 'The Croft'. Both fields are currently laid down to pasture and

both show clear evidence of historic ploughing. This can be seen in visible ridge and furrow, in Lidar data and in the geophysical survey results.



Above: Lidar image of Drumburgh

2.2 Site-Specific Questions and Archaeological Potential

The area is considered to have high archaeological potential. Excavation may reveal evidence of Hadrian's Wall and the fort of *Congavata* in area 1. Areas 2 and 3 may reveal evidence of Hadrian's Wall and Milecastle 76. In addition, there is a high potential for medieval remains in the area. Haverfield (1899) concluded that a visible L-shaped ditch earthwork in the field behind the Grange is medieval in origin and part of a Grange Farm.

Drumburgh Castle is of medieval origin and lies 110m to the southwest of area 2. It is possible that some of the anomalies detected in the geophysical survey are medieval in date and associated with occupation of the castle. Some early references suggest that the castle was built within the ruins of a Roman fort or, more certainly, out of stones taken from the wall and Fort. William Camden writes in 1586 that "*At Drumburgh is a fort about five chains square, whose ramparts are large, and the ditch very deep. Out of this fort abundance of stones have been taken. It is very probable, that the house and garden walls have been built with the stones of the wall and station, and that it has the name of castle (as Whitley castle) from the old Roman fort; for the seat is not built in the form of a castle*". This description suggests a fort with dimensions of around 100m X 100m.

Several archaeological anomalies were detected outside of the scheduled area (List Entry Number: 1014699) which may be the focus of evaluation with community volunteers in future projects.

Historic mapping of Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh consistently shows Drumburgh Castle sitting to the north of Hadrian's Wall. Although the accuracy of early maps should be treated with caution, this is an interesting observation as the early maps also consistently place the western extent of the wall to the north of Bowness on Solway, which we know to be correct (Austen. 1988). It is not therefore simply a matter of convenience or perspective that Hadrian's Wall is depicted running to the south of Drumburgh.

Saxton 1579 (Wall is Dotted Line)

Mercator 1595

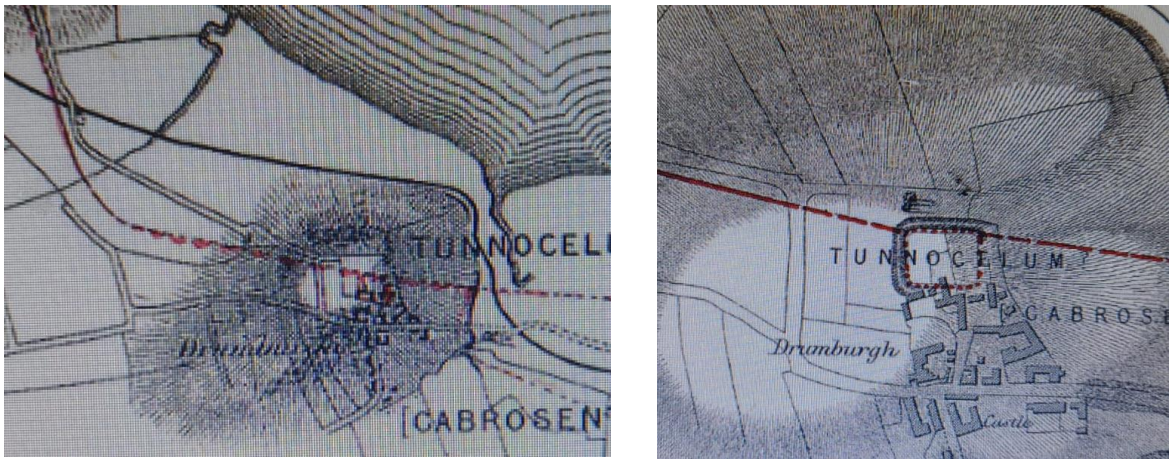
Speed 1611

Morden 1695

Bowen and Kitchin 1760

(Above) Donald 1774 – Hadrian's Wall in Dark Solid Line

As illustrated above, the mapping up to and including Bowen and Kitchin in 1760 shows the wall running to the south of Drumburgh Castle. In 1774 however, the Donald map shows a different arrangement. Here, for the first time, we see the wall marked as a dark line coming from the marsh to the east and running parallel to the main road through the village on the north side of the castle.



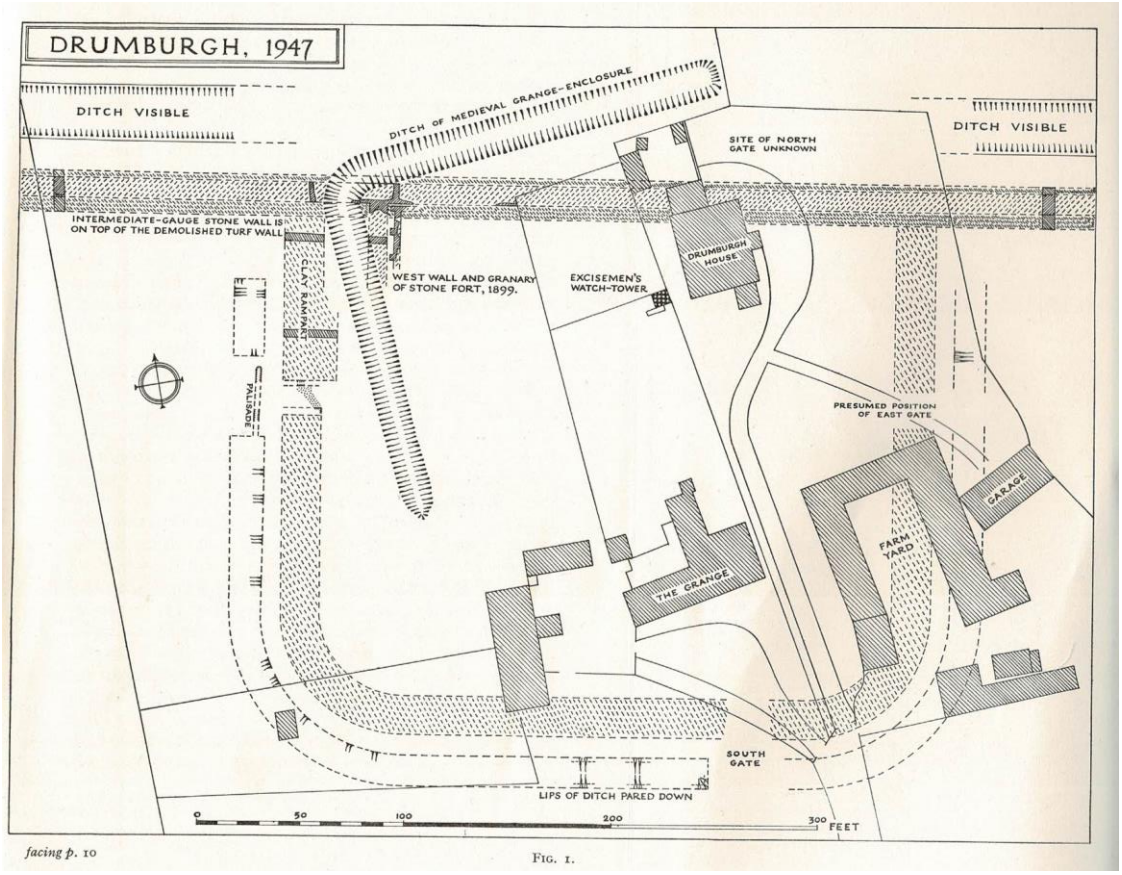
(Above) Henry MacLauchlan Maps 1850s (in Collingwood Bruce)

In the 1850s Henry MacLauchlan (in Collingwood Bruce) also draws the line of the wall to the north of Drumburgh Castle and connects it to the visible, now 'L-shaped', earthwork.

Our current understanding of the Roman remains at Drumburgh come from two main phases of excavation. The first systematic archaeological excavation at the site was conducted by Francis J Haverfield in 1899. The main result of these excavations was the identification of the course of the wall on a different alignment to the L-shaped ditch. Within the L-shaped ditch, Roman building foundations were discovered and interpreted as a Roman granary due to the presence of burnt material. These are the only footings of Roman buildings to have been found at Drumburgh and it may be significant that they lie within and close to the corner of the L-shaped ditch. The 1899 excavation concluded that the visible 'L-shaped' ditch earthwork was of medieval origin and on a different alignment to the Roman fort and Hadrian's Wall. This interpretation means that, unlike the fort of Maia and village at Bowness on Solway (Austen 1988), where the current village

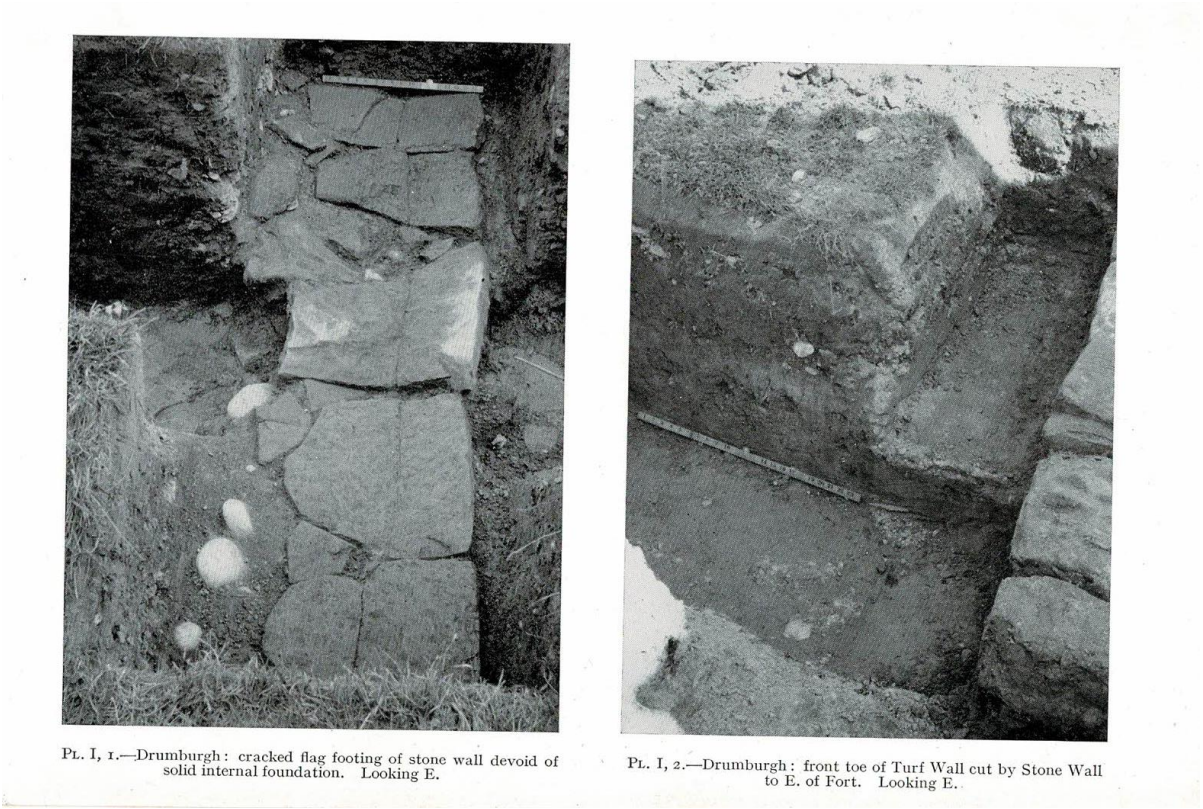
arrangement significantly corresponds with the Roman Fort, the village of Drumburgh was considered, for the first time, to completely disregard Roman alignments.

The second excavation, upon which the current outline of *Congavata* and the extent of scheduling is based, took place in 1947. The excavations at Drumburgh by Simpson and Richmond formed part of a larger programme of works carried out between 1947 and 1949. The trenches at Drumburgh sought to clarify the alignment and extent the fort of *Congavata* and its relationship to the wall (as identified in 1899).



(Above) Plan of the fort of *Congavata* from 1947 Excavations (Simpson and Richmond 1952)

The 1947 excavations at Drumburgh attempted to trace the outline of the fort. It is difficult to be sure exactly how many narrow trenches were excavated but sections of a clay rampart and ditch were encountered and interpreted as the western extent of the fort. Two of these are marked on the published plan (Simpson & Richmond 1952). The excavation report concludes that an earthwork fort was constructed 'plainly earlier than the Stone-Wall fort' and that both are considered 'abnormal' in their alignment and arrangement.



Pl. I, 1.—Drumburgh: cracked flag footing of stone wall devoid of solid internal foundation. Looking E.

Pl. I, 2.—Drumburgh: front toe of Turf Wall cut by Stone Wall to E. of Fort. Looking E.

(Above) Photographs of Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh. 1947 Excavations (Simpson & Richmond 1952)

The excavation also investigated the course of Hadrian's Wall, as interpreted in 1899, and the report includes two photographs of Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh (above). We can assume that these images were chosen by the excavators as the best evidence with which to visually illustrate their findings, but they also raise some questions.

The image on the left shows Hadrian's Wall to the west (?) of the fort of *Congavata*. Two trench locations across the line of the wall are shown in the report plan, located in the top left and top right of the plan respectively. The caption reads "*Drumburgh -cracked flag footing of stone wall devoid of solid internal foundation. Looking E*". Using the 2-foot ruler in the image we can see that the width of the flags is around 1.5ft (apx 45cm). The report description and interpretation is given as follows "*The thin footing-flags, unprovided with adequate foundation, had almost everywhere snapped on the line of the face of the Wall, where its superincumbent weight cracked them*". The report goes on to say that "*a strip of laid turf-work 3ft 4in lay to the north of the foundation flags and a 7ft strip to the south of them*." This is interpreted as evidence for the stone wall being constructed on top of the turf wall but set forward (north) within the demolished turf and so bringing "…the rampart-walks of the successive works into the same relative position."

The image on the right shows a trench to the east of the fort and the location is likely that shown in the top right of the report plan. The caption reads "Drumburgh: front toe of Turf Wall cut by Stone Wall to E. of Fort." The turf-work is unclear in the image although this may be due to the quality of the photograph. It is a shame, and somewhat surprising, that the stonework of the 'Stone Wall' on the right of the image is only just clipped in the right of the image.

It is perhaps an important point to note that the 1947-49 excavation programme went on to have great success in identifying and excavating other turrets and milecastles and, in particular, Milecastle 79 (Solway House) where substantial Roman foundations were encountered and a

wealth of Roman material recovered. The excavation and ceramics report from Milecastle 79 makes up the majority of the article. This seems strange as we might expect the fort of *Congavata* to be archaeologically more substantial and richer in finds than a milecastle. It is clear the excavators were also surprised by the ephemeral nature of the archaeology encountered at Drumburgh when they write of the Stone Fort phase "*It was hoped that its defensive wall might be founded upon a deep bed of clay and cobbles, but this was not so. Its foundations were of the slightest, devoid of effective packing below the footing-flags*". Regarding the recovery of dateable stratified cultural material, or built structures within the fort, they go on to state that "*Their site was occupied by a scatter of broken stone and Roman and medieval pottery, indicating that stone-robbers had been at work as early as the twelfth century.*" (Simpson & Richmond. 1952)

As previously stated, throughout the course of the geophysical survey the survey we have had time to consider the evidence provided by previous excavations whilst conducting our work. This has been a valuable process of working with the local community to engage with Hadrian's Wall, discuss what we know, how we know it, and what evidence is this knowledge based on. This has served to help us interpret the survey results but also to consider, as potential excavators of the site, what previous excavations encountered, how they interpreted their finds and how this has led to the scheduled monument area we see today.

As archaeologists it is sometimes important to consider how we may interpret features from past excavations if we encountered them in our trenches today. When considering the two photographs from the 1947 excavations, would we now confidently interpret these as Hadrian's Wall? If we encountered a line of cracked sandstone slabs 1.5ft wide and unbonded with clay, as shown in the report image, then our first interpretation would be that this is a slabbed drain or water culvert as might be constructed from the Roman through to the post-medieval period. There is no mention in the report that the slabs were lifted or any suggestion that this may be related to water management, and yet, the course proposed for the wall here meets the corner of the L-shaped ditch, which is shown as a pond in early OS maps, and would be a convenient place for such a culvert to outflow.

The interpretation that the Stone Wall at this point was comprehensively robbed of all stone and foundation apart from a neat line of flat sandstone slabs, which lay only beneath the facing stones of the wall, also warrants further questioning. The excavators admit that they had hoped to find a thick foundation of clay and cobble beneath the stone fortifications of Hadrian's Wall and the Stone Fort. They went on to discover such foundations at Milecastle 79 (for example) where the heavy clay and cobble footings for the walls are substantial and diagnostic of Roman military construction. We do not know of another example where Roman military fortifications were built on such 'slight' foundations as described in 1947 and shown in the photograph.

It is important to recognise that building stone is a scarce and valuable resource on the Solway Plain, where no natural source of stone exists apart from occasional glacially transported granite. As such, the reuse and recycling of stone from historic structures in the area into later buildings is well documented. We would expect any accessible sources of Roman stonework to have been thoroughly 'robbed' which, with subsequent heavy ploughing, contributes to our difficulties as archaeologists. And yet, we must question why such meticulous stone robbers would take all other stone and leave only such a neat line of sandstone slabs?

This information is presented to illustrate some of the many questions we can seek to answer through our fieldwork at Drumburgh. Without the 'confirmation bias' of the 1899 excavations telling us the course of Hadrian's Wall, would the 1947 excavators have interpreted their findings as they did and, furthermore, how would we interpret these findings today?

3.0 Project Details
3.1 Aims and objectives of the project

The overall objectives of the project are to:

1. Engage the local community in active and valuable archaeological research on Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh.
2. Search for evidence of the fort of *Congavata* at Drumburgh (Area 1)
3. Investigate the course of Hadrian's Wall to the east of *Congavata* (Areas 2 and 3)
4. Search for evidence of Milecastle 76 to the east of *Congavata* (Areas 2 and 3)
5. If Milecastle 76 is identified, determine if the wall continues to the east into Burgh Marsh, terminates or turns to the south to take a more inland route across slightly higher ground (fossil marsh edge).

Engage the local community in active and valuable archaeological research on Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh:

This project is instigated as a result of the great enthusiasm from the landowners and local community to participate in active research on Hadrian's Wall at Drumburgh. Local volunteers have worked with Grampus Heritage throughout the Winter of 2024/25 to complete a geophysical survey of the research area and are keen to learn more. We have discussed at length the evidence from past archaeological excavations, some of which has been presented in this WSI. It is clear that there is much work still to do, and much more to learn, about the course of Hadrian's Wall and fort of *Congavata* at Drumburgh. Through our funding from the Solway Coast National Landscape's DEFRA funded Farming in Protected Landscapes Scheme, Grampus will work with the local community to increase our understanding of the Roman archaeology at Drumburgh. This community archaeology project is in line with the stated aims of the Hadrian's Wall Management Plan as outlined below:

Policy 10f: Wherever possible, opportunities should be sought to engage local people and visitors in the research process.

Action: Identify and initiate opportunities for further community archaeology programmes, and to break down barriers to participation in archaeological research, throughout the World Heritage Site.

Engaging with Communities
Objective 14: To enable local and special-interest communities to be engaged with the World Heritage Site and develop the contribution that the Site can make to community life and wellbeing. (SDG 10, 13 & 16)

Policy 14a: Opportunities for greater participation in, and engagement with, the World Heritage Site by local individuals, by supporters' groups, and by communities, should continue to be developed and implemented.

Search for evidence of the fort of Congavata at Drumburgh (Area 1):

The non-invasive survey techniques of magnetometry and resistance conducted by community volunteers both worked well on the site and revealed several archaeological anomalies of interest. Of equal significance is the fact that the results do not show a correlation with the fort of *Congavata* as interpreted from the 1947 excavations.

The Hadrian's Wall Research Framework says of the fort that "*Although its name is absent from the Rudge Cup and Amiens Skillet, the Staffordshire Pan records it as Coggabata, while it enters the Notitia Dignitatum as Congavata.*" (Symonds 2009). This project questions whether the current outline of the fort, as drawn from the 1947 excavations, is actually the outline of a Roman Fort, significant enough to be named. The Hadrian's Wall research Framework acknowledges that "*The stone fort also remains poorly understood*." (Symonds 2009) and David breeze notes that "the size of the fort as known precludes it being occupied by a complete unit" (Breeze 2006, 361).

The clay rampart and ditch recorded in 1947 may well be of Roman origin, although the report does not state if any stratified dateable cultural material was recovered from the ditch. The only Roman building foundations found on the site were encountered in 1899 within the L-shaped ditch. The rationale for concluding that the visible L-shaped ditch is not of Roman origin is stated as follows: "*The lines of walling thus ascertained do not in the least agree with the lines of the ditch now visible on the surface, which is the open ditch mentioned above. As Plan II. shews, they run obliquely to it, and measurements demonstrate that their foundations are too deep to be reasonably connected with it*." (Haverfield. 1900)

The 1899 excavations mark the starting point for all later interpretations of the Roman remains at Drumburgh, including those made in 1947. It is important to note, however, that the 1899 excavation only excavated very small trenches and these were not without difficulty. "*Our work was beset with many difficulties. The long drought of July and August had hardened the ground to a terrible obstinacy. The ground itself, clay and rubble for the most part, with a clay sub-soil, would at any time have been troublesome ; as it was, we were practically quarrying, and since the Roman remains were found to lie at the unexpected depth of 5 or 6 feet, we were compelled . to content ourselves with the minimum necessary for our purpose*." (Haverfield. 1900). It is important to note that the only Roman building foundations found at Drumburgh are those encountered in 1899 within the L-shaoed ditch below 6-8ft of clay and rubble. No such depth of clay and rubble was recorded in the excavations to the west of the ditch in 1947.

Our trench in Area 1 targets a clear arrangement of linear anomalies identified from the geophysical survey. The scheduled area at this point broadly follows the outline of *Congavata* as drawn in 1947 and, although our trench lies within this area, we are not targeting anomalies on this alignment. Figure 3 shows our trench location as an overlay to the magnetometry results and Figure 4 shows the location as an overlay to the resistance survey results. Early ordnance survey mapping shows a boundary in this location, and we refer to the feature as the 'orchard wall', although it was actually a hedgeline which existed until the 1950s or 60s. The feature may simply be the base of an orchard wall, now removed. However, in seeking to identify evidence of Roman fortification within the survey results, the linear anomalies targeted by Area 1 are the best candidate. The resistance survey in particular shows a straight and clearly defined line of high resistance bounded by lines of lower resistance on the north and south face. The whole feature measures some 3m in width and is much more defined than other removed hedge lines which appear in the survey results. Some 5m to the north of this line we can see a parallel line of low resistance. All of these may be the result of agricultural activity, with an old hedge line and parallel drainage or ploughing. However, it is also possible that the hedgeline is on a Roman

alignment and has preserved the line of a Roman defensive wall, with a corresponding parallel ditch 5m to the north. The high resistance core of the wall (black in resistance) could be bounded by lower resistance (white) to the north and south where facing stones have been removed. If this were to be the case then trench 1 will transform our understanding of the Roman activity at Drumburgh, placing the current village plan and Roman activity once again in alignment.

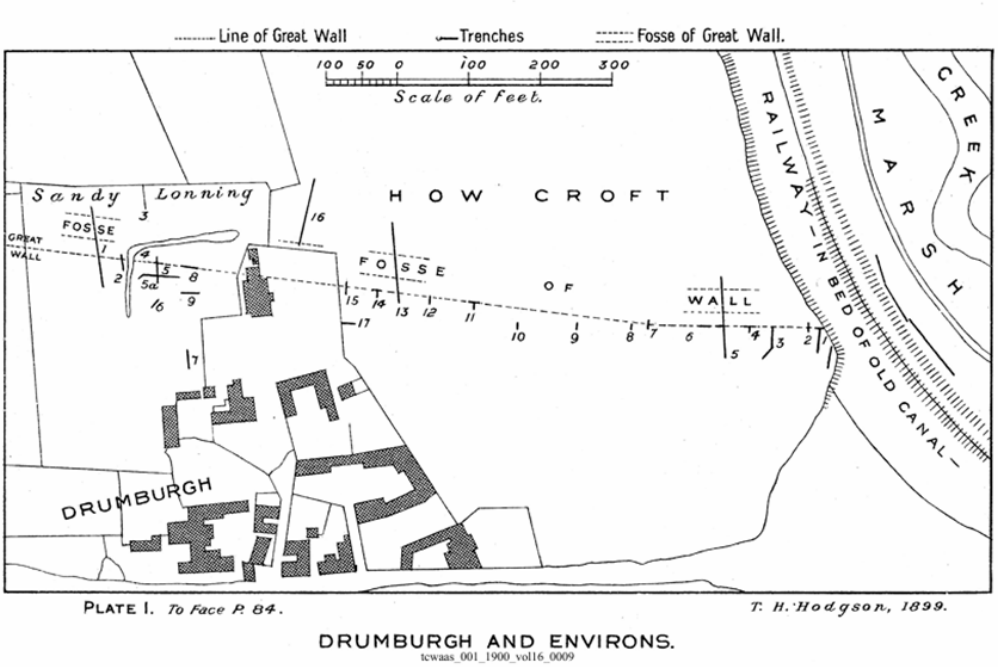
Above: Donald map of 1774 (left) and extract from resistance survey data (right) showing area 1 in green. Note that the line of Hadrian's Wall on the Donald map takes a route to the north of Drumburgh but largely parallel to the main road through the village. This has some similarity with the course of the old orchard hedgeline targeted in area 1.

If the trench in area 1 simply finds the base of an old hedgeline and some associated drainage or ploughing then we have successfully answered the question and eliminated this 'anomaly of interest' from our investigations. No damage will have been caused to the monument of Hadrian's Wall or the Fort of *Congavata*. We stand only to gain from this intervention.

Investigate the course of Hadrian's Wall to the east of Congavata (Areas 2 and 3):

Areas 2 and 3 are located over a faint linear anomaly identified through magnetometry which broadly corresponds to the scheduled line of Hadrian's Wall. The results are far from conclusive and a small excavation is proposed to confirm the course of the wall in this location. This research aim is linked to the aim of identifying Milecastle 76, the location of which is projected but has never been proven.

Search for evidence of Milecastle 76 to the east of Congavata (Areas 2 and 3)



Above: Plan of 1899 excavations in 'The Croft'.

Areas 2 and 3 target the two most likely candidates for Milecastle 76 as interpreted from the geophysical survey. As we can see in the 1899 trench location plot, some of the anomalies identified may actually be the result of digging in 1899. Or they may be related to drainage of the field or even, in the case of Area 3, related to the construction of the canal.

If Milecastle 76 is identified, determine if the wall continues to the east into Burgh Marsh, terminates or turns to the south to take a more inland route across slightly higher ground (fossil marsh edge).

This research aim requires the successful identification of Milecastle 76 which, in turn, requires us to identify the course of Hadrian's Wall. If we can find Milecastle 76 then we can attempt to answer the long-standing research question of whether Hadrian's Wall continues east into Burgh Marsh from this point, or turns to the south to follow a more inland route on slightly higher ground (possibly on a sea bank). The areas highlighted in blue in the attached figures are designed to ensure that this question can investigated, should the milecastle be discovered.

3.2 Relevance to the Hadrian's Wall Research Framework

The project research aims described above address the following elements of the Hadrian's Wall Research Framework:

Agenda A.3 The Wall,

3.1 Locating the Resource – identifying the precise location of the Wall and its associated structures3.2 Existing Data – testing the quality of existing data

3.2.2, addressing the imbalance of research between the western and eastern sectors.

3.5 Structures

3.5.2 this project will focus particularly on the chronology of the Wall and its associated structures in this area

3.5.5 This focus on Milecastle 76 will address questions around the position and nature of structures located along Hadrian's Wall, particularly in the western sector where this information can be poorly understood.

Agenda A.6 Procurement

6.3 Imports – the study of pottery and other artefacts which might be recovered from the sit would allow an insight into the trade and exchange mechanism that operated along this sector of Hadrian's Wall.

This project will also address some of the Key Universal Priorities outlined in the Hadrian's Wall Research Framework:

S1, II. Risk Assessment for Hadrian's Wall – a key part of the management of the resource is the identification of the key archaeological remains. Without this knowledge threats from agricultural activity or inappropriate development remains. This also includes an understanding of the preservation conditions at different sites on the Wall and how these may be impacted by threats such as landuse change or climate change.

S1, V. Communicating knowledge, raising awareness and improving public understanding – the project aims to address key archaeological research questions for this site and include members of the public in the investigation and the co-creation of knowledge with these communities.

S1, VI. Access to knowledge – a key aim of this project is to produce data which is useful for future academic research, as well as information in accessible formats for non-academic audiences

S4, 4.1 Understanding the Wall – the Wall in the western sector generally, and along the Solway specifically, presents a number of unanswered questions as to its nature, extent and position. This project will address these issues for this area around Drumburgh.

It is also anticipated that material generated by this project will be of interest to a range of researchers. These may in turn address other aspects of the Hadrian's Wall Research Framework. Additionally, the project will further understanding the post-Roman life of the Wall (Agenda 8, Strategy S9), through an understanding of medieval activity and how it may have impacted on Hadrian's Wall.

3.3 Excavation rationale

We have already worked with the local community to undertake an archaeological survey of the site using the non-invasive techniques of magnetometry and resistance. Both techniques worked well and have revealed anomalies of archaeological significance, but the results also raise some questions as discussed in this WSI. Each trench is located to precisely target anomalies identified through the geophysical survey and to answer specific research questions with minimum ground disturbance. Area 2 will only be investigated if area 3 does not reveal milecastle 76.

3.4 Outputs and dissemination

An excavation report will be completed by the end of February 2026. Project activity will be disseminated through cooperation between Grampus Heritage, Solway Coast National Landscape and the Solway Firth Partnership. This will include advertising opportunities for local volunteers to participate in the project as well as disseminating our findings. An article will be produced and submitted to the Hadrian's Wall journal if sufficiently interesting results are achieved. We will liaise with Historic England throughout the project and welcome any opportunities to disseminate project activity through their channels. The completed excavation report will be submitted to Historic England and the Cumbria Historic Environment Record.

4.0 Fieldwork Methodology

4.1 Method Statement

Prior to excavation Grampus Heritage will liaise with the landowners and gather information regarding the presence of services, any ecological constraints, the presence of Public Rights of Way, any areas of potentially contaminated land and any other known risks to health and safety. A full risk assessment will be produced prior to excavation and will remain on site for the duration. All staff and volunteers will be required to read and sign the risk assessment, which will be continually updated as and when additional risks are identified.

Topsoil will be removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to maximise the chance for identification of any archaeological remains. The initial mechanical strip will be undertaken to the top of the first potentially significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever is higher. This will be determined by a qualified archaeologist with suitable, direct experience working on Roman archaeology in North Cumbria and Hadrian's Wall specifically, who will monitor and control all works. Once exposed all surfaces will be cleaned, inspected and potential features/deposits excavated to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual material, as well as determine their character, significance and date. It is anticipated that once the site is exposed the Historic England Science Advisor will visit for a pre-excavation meeting. This has been agreed and discussed with Don O'Meara, Science Advisor for Hadrian's Wall.

All archaeological contexts will be recorded and numbered individually on context sheets which enable all relevant data such as drawings, photographic images, finds, environmental samples, height values to be recorded and cross-referenced. Context sheets will be primarily completed by the archaeologist excavating the feature/deposit. All features will first be recorded in plan using a Leica TCR Total Station (or equivalent). Features that require more detailed illustration will be drawn by hand at an appropriate scale on polyester based drafting film. Plans are usually drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at 1:10.

If appropriate, photogrammetry will be used to create a high resolution 3-dimensional model of the archaeology encountered in each trench using Polycam software. This versatile technique

can be invaluable in recording complex archaeological features and will enable the creation of rectified plan images which can be georeferenced within a digital Ordnance Survey basemap.

All trench locations will be accurately related to the National Grid and georeferenced to digital ordnance survey mapping. All plans and sections will be levelled in respect to AOD. A full digital photographic record of the work is to be kept. All archaeological features of note and potential publication quality images will be photographed using a digital high resolution SLR camera (Nikon D3200). The photographic record is part of the site archive. Grampus Heritage will ensure that the complete site archive including finds and environmental samples is kept in a secure place throughout the fieldwork.

All work will adhere to the archaeological contractors Health and Safety Manual and will be carried out according to the relevant Health and Safety legislation. This includes the following regulations

- Health and Safety at Work 1974
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994
- The Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

4.2 Finds and environmental Samples

All stratified finds / cultural material will be recovered from the evaluation and will form part of the site archive. Finds will be bagged and labelled with site code and context number. Sensitive artefacts may be sent for conservation ass appropriate. Such artefacts will be stabilised and securely packaged in order to avoid further material deterioration.

Any finds that are considered potentially significant will be provided a unique artefact identification number (Small Finds Number), and recorded in the 'Small Finds' artefact register which forms part of the site archive.

Finds falling under the statutory definition of treasure (as defined by the Treasure Act of 1996 and its revision of 2002) will be reported immediately to the relevant Coroner's Office and landowner. A treasure receipt will be completed and a report submitted to the Coroner's Office and the FLO within 14 days of determining that the find is treasure.

The paleoenvironmental strategy and methodology for the sampling of deposits will be in accordance with Historic England Centre for Archaeology Guidelines "Environmental Archaeology – A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation" (2011).

All samples will be provided a unique identification number and accompanied with an appropriate sample sheet, kept with the site archive, which will provide details on the feature being sampled and reasons for taking the sample. Sample size will depend upon the feature being sampled but usually in the range of 40-60 litres per context (usually minimum 20 litres) or 100% of smaller contexts.

Environmental samples will normally by processed by floatation following the fieldwork and the residues will be sorted to retrieve small bones, small finds and charcoal. The project funding allows for four radiocarbon dates to be obtained, if suitable material is recovered. Grampus Heritage will liaise with Historic England Science Advisor Don O'Meara to identify the most appropriate and effective use of this resource.

It is not anticipated that human remains will be encountered during these works. However, if such remains are identified (either inhumations or cremations), the Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments and the Historic England Science Advisor will be contacted in the first instance. All approaches to human remains will follow best practice (as set out in Historic England 2018, and associated documents), and any legal requirements as set out by the Ministry of Justice.

The Historic England Science Advisor will be consulted before, during and after the project to ensure sampling and process of materials adheres to best practice.

5.0 Reporting

Upon completion of the archaeological fieldwork Grampus Heritage will produce an excavation report. The report will include a written description and interpretation of features observed. The main body of the report will be preceded by a non-technical summary containing the essential elements of the fieldwork results. The excavation report will include any post-excavation specialist reports (as appropriate) which will be summarised and discussed within the main body of the report. In addition to the discussion the report will include figures showing digitised and georeferenced plans and sections.

Copies of the report will be sent to the County Historic Environment Record and Historic England. An additional copy will be kept with the archive.

6.0 Archive

Grampus Heritage will make provisional arrangements for the deposition of the site archive with a suitable local museum such as the Senhouse Roman Museum or Tullie House. The site archive will include all project records and cultural material produced by the archaeological excavation and will be prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (Brown 2011), and the Standard Guide to Best Practice for Archaeological Archiving in Europe (Perrin et al 2014). During the course of the archaeological fieldwork a site code will be added to all documents, artefacts and any other items that may be associated with the project.

7.0 Staffing

The project will be directed by Mark Graham BA, BSc, MA of Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd.

We will liaise with the Historic England Science Advisor North East and Hadrian's Wall, Don O'Meara, throughout the course of the project.

The excavation phase of the project will be supervised by Mark Graham and Kevin Mounsey.

Post excavation specialists will be appointed to assess material as required and may include the following:

Roman Coins – Frank Giecco
Roman Pottery – Andrew Peachy, SLR Consulting
Medieval and Post-Medieval ceramics – Sue Thompson -
Environmental Samples – John Summers, SLR Consulting
Human Remains – Megan Stoakley, SLR Consulting
Artefact conservation – Initial conservation assessment by SLR Consulting artefacts specialists
Radiocarbon Dating - SUERC

It is anticipated that other specialist input may be required depending on the nature of the artefactual assemblage. Other specialist work will be co-ordinated between Grampus Heritage, SLR Consulting and the Historic England Science Advisor.

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