HADRIAN'S WALL VILLAGE ATLAS: HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL

AN HISTORIC VILLAGE AND TOWNSHIP ON HADRIAN'S WALL

Edited by Alan Rushworth with text and illustrations by Alan Rushworth, Richard Carlton, Marc Johnstone, Adam Leigh and Peter Ryder (The Archaeological Practice Ltd), Kerry Shaw (WallCAP), Ian Kille and Les Turnbull

THE HEDDON VILLAGE ATLAS

THE HISTORY, GEOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY OF
A COMMUNITY ON HADRIAN'S WALL

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Heddon Village Atlas

This booklet is designed to provide an accessible summary of the history, archaeology and geology of Heddon-on-the-Wall. It is one of six devoted to villages along the length of Hadrian's Wall (the other settlements being Benwell, Byker, Gilsland, Walton and Bowness). The Hadrian's Wall Village Atlases project was one of many devised and undertaken by Newcastle University's Hadrian's Wall Community Archaeology Project (WallCAP), with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to involve local communities in the investigation of their section of Hadrian's Wall. The Archaeological Practice Ltd, with its long experience of producing village atlas studies, was engaged to provide expert supervision, whilst members of the local community have contributed information, maps, photographs and recollections, as well as digging test-pits throughout the village to provide a sample of the material culture buried beneath its surface.

Amongst the material contained within the report are summaries of the geodiversity and source materials for the study of each village, including the sites listed in the Historic Environment Record (HER), documentary and historical sources, and the key historic maps, plus a snap-shot view of the significant buildings, along with treatment of a wide range of historic topics. The maps and illustrations included here provide a detailed graphic portrayal of the village's historical development. One overriding theme of all the village atlases is the way in which Hadrian's Wall and its various associated components may have influenced (or not) the layout and development of the settlements. This aspect is explored more fully in the combined report where the development of all six villages is compared.

The Landscape Setting

Rural communities, like Heddon, are not simply dots on a map, places of residence disconnected from their surroundings. Historically they were farming and fishing communities which exploited the surrounding agricultural landscape and natural resources. Accordingly, the village atlas doesn't simply examine the built-up settlement, but instead seeks to place the latter firmly within its wider landscape context. Helpfully, this landscape area has been explicitly demarcated, in the form of a long-established territory known as a **vill** or **township**, which, historically, was integral to the village community and exploited by it. Townships represent consistent territorial units which can be analysed over long periods of time, eventually being transformed into the **civil parishes** of today.

In the case of Heddon, the township territory, amounting to some 1190 acres, extended from the Tyne northwards beyond the village as far as the course of the present A69 dual carriageway road, with a further extension to the north-west towards the separate township settlements of East and West Heddon. The topography comprises a narrow flood plain or haugh land beside the Tyne, the ground then rising steeply to the village with the Church of St Andrew sitting at the summit of a ridge at over 130m above sea level. The terrain then falls away a little immediately to the north of the village before rising more gently further north.

Historically, the village clustered tightly around the ancient parish church quite tightly, extending as far north as the line of Hadrian's Wall. During the High Middle Ages settlement was probably almost entirely confined to the village itself with the peasant farmers walking out to their scattered holdings in the open 'townfields'. In the aftermath of the enclosure of Heddon's common lands in 1717, farms were established throughout the wider township, during the 18th and early 19th centuries, to provide more coherent holdings. Coal pits were also sunk, in the south-east corner of the township in particular, and extensive quarrying undertaken to the west of the village. More recently, in the second half of the 20th century, large new housing estates have been erected to the east and west of the original village, more than trebling the size of the settlement.

Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 25-inch series, c.1859, showing Heddon on the Wall village-core.

Scale 1:2500

0   20   40   60   80   100   120   140   160   180   200 m

Scale 1:20000

0   0.2   0.4   0.6   0.8   1 km

Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series, c.1864 (published), showing the Township of Heddon on the Wall (bound in red).

2. METHODS AND SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

How do we know what we know? A variety of source material provided the evidence used to compile the Heddon Village Atlas, including:

- Northumberland County Histories and other historical syntheses
- Historic maps
- Old photographs, prints and documents
- Archaeology – known sites & monuments
- LIDAR Imagery
- Analysis of Historic Buildings
- Sites of Geological Significance

A summary gazetteer was compiled, listing all the sites of significant cultural heritage interest in the Heddon Atlas Study Area, derived from the Northumberland Heritage Environment Record (HER) held in the Archaeology section at County Hall, Morpeth. The HER is also searchable online through *Keys to the Past* (www.keystothepast.info). The sites are shown on the accompanying map here.

Site visits were undertaken to examine and photograph archaeological or historical features of interest in the village and wider township area. All the components of the ancient village core, in particular, were subject to detailed analysis, as were features of especial interest such as St Andrew's Church. All buildings of note were examined and photographed in the course of site visits.

A map showing the field names around Heddon in the 1935/6 Rural Science Exercise Book of Stan Hall, aged 11, pupil at Heddon-on-the Wall school, photographed during the Ingathering event.

Atlas activities: An **'Ingathering'** event, with a display on the history, archaeology and geology of Heddon, was held in the Women's Institute Hall in May 2022 to encourage villagers to bring old documents, photographs and other relevant material in to be photographed. Guided walks around the village and the neighbouring hamlet of Houghton were undertaken to examine historic buildings, notable archaeological monuments and sites of geological significance (former quarries). A day of **test-pitting** was organised in June 2022 to obtain a sample of finds across the built-up area of the present-day village.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST-PITTING IN HEDDON

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▲ *Locations of test pits in Heddon-on-the-Wall.*
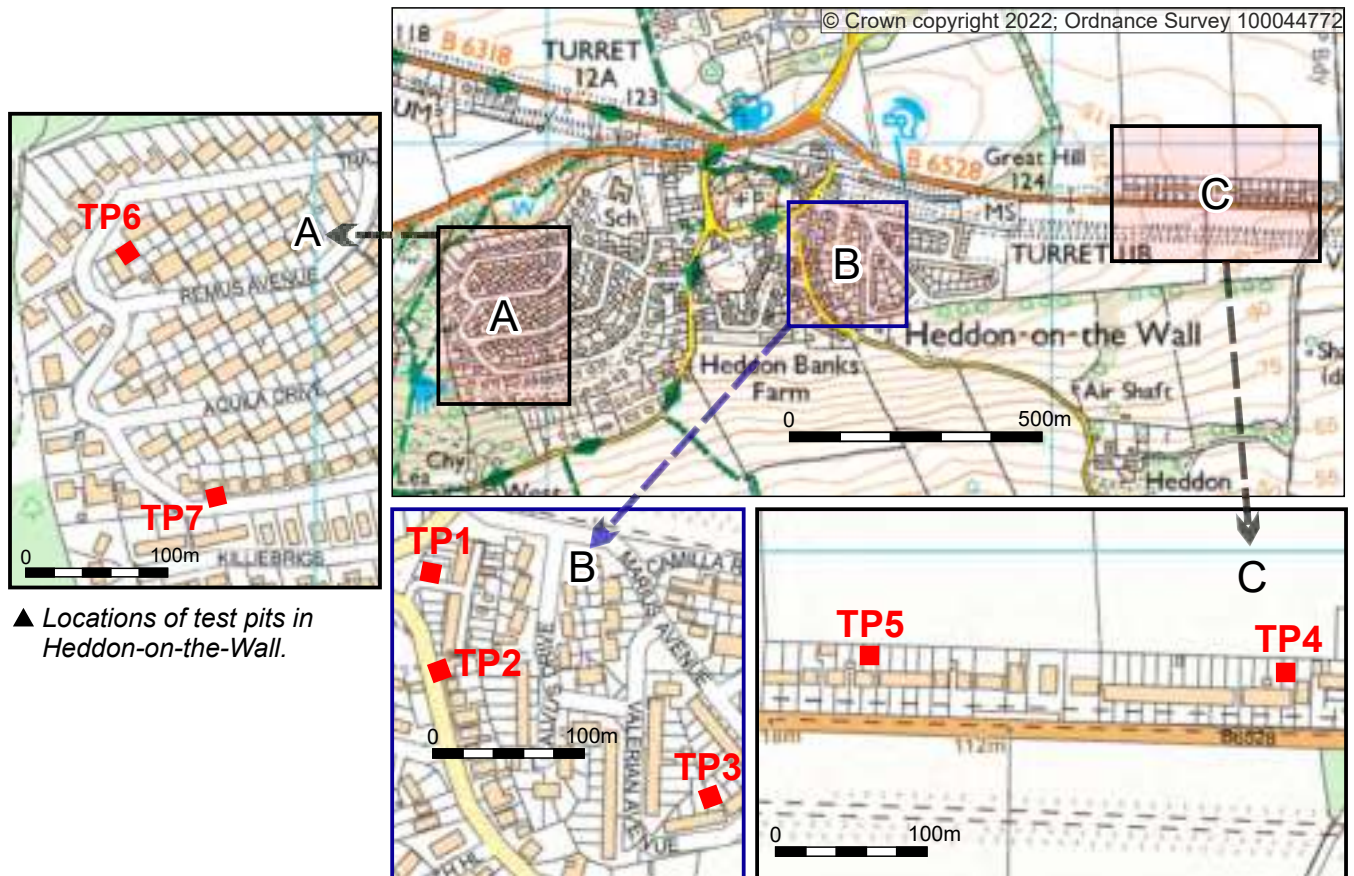
▲ *Volunteers digging Test Pit 5.*

▲ *Volunteers working in Test Pit 2.*

▼ *Volunteers digging Test Pit 4.*

▲ *Volunteers in Test Pit 3.*

▼ Finds from TP1.

▲ TP1 after completion.

In June 2022, volunteers from the local community and beyond conducted a day of test-pitting as part of WallCAP in Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. The programme of test-pitting was one of six carried out in communities along the line of Hadrian's Wall. Volunteers excavated a series of one square metre test pits in gardens, supervised by members the Archaeological Practice.

As is to be expected when digging in gardens, a good deal of modern material was encountered, alongside the odd piece of medieval pottery. More importantly, volunteers learnt how to dig an archaeological test pit systematically, and even more importantly, had a fun and social day.

◄ Finds from TP7 (left) and TP3 (below left) including a sherd of medieval pot (top row, centre).

▼ Excavating TP6.

3. THE GEODIVERSITY OF HEDDON *by Ian Kille*

The history and development of Heddon-on-the-Wall is intertwined with its underlying geology and landscape. From the real-estate enhancing view from Heddon's high seat overlooking the Tyne Valley to the deep coal mines which had an important role in generating Heddon's wealth, geology and landscape are defining factors. Hadrian's Wall which cuts through the village, is here made from sandstones quarried next to the village and hewn into the stones from which this barrier was constructed. The very name of the place is tied to rock and stone.

In this chapter these relationships will be explored, starting with the geological history of the rocks that lie beneath the village and how geological processes have shaped the landscape that we see today. Some of the more important buildings will be explored from the perspective of the geological materials used in their construction. Finally, there will be a look at the industries – coal mining, quarrying and brick making – which are fundamentally dependant on raw materials won from the ground.

The landscape and geology of Heddon

Heddon is centred on one the highest spots on the north bank of the Tyne, with its south facing aspect making it a desirable place to live. The highest point is now occupied by St Andrew's church and the Roman Milecastle 12 must have lain close by, perhaps under Tank House.

The LIDAR image shown in figure 1 not only highlights details of human intervention in the land surface – the trace of Hadrian's Wall is particularly clear in this image – but also gives clues to the geology as well as to the geological processes which have created the landscape we see now.
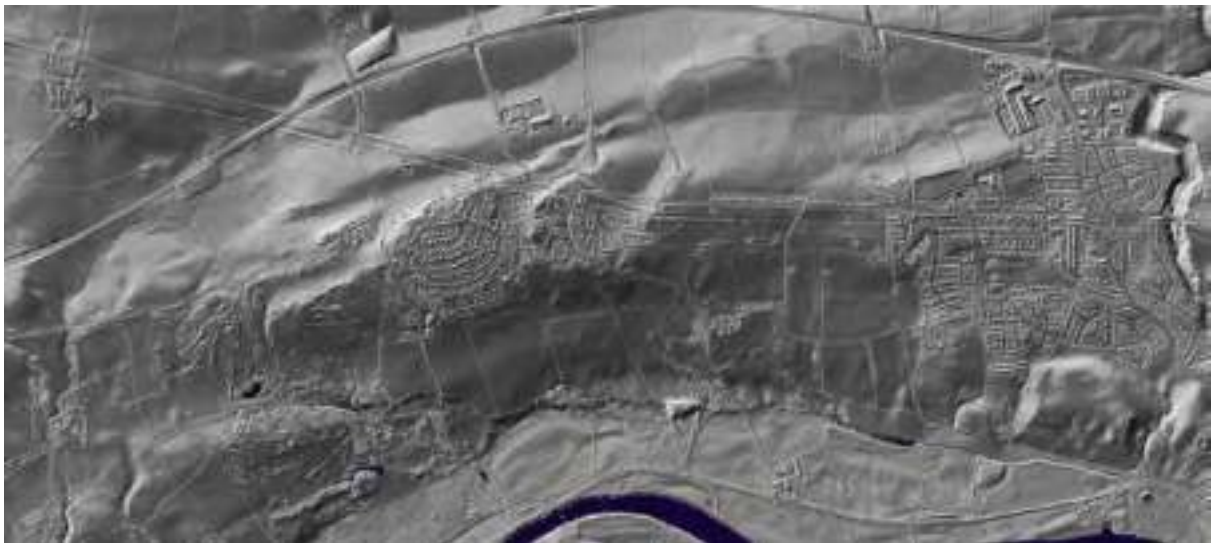
Figure 1: LiDAR image of Heddon and Throckley. Whilst mantled in glacial till, the form of underlying rock layers can be seen with harder sandstone layers more prominent.

Ice

The most recent of geological processes sculpting this landscape was the movement of ice. Over the last 2.5 million years there has been cyclic climate change triggered by cyclic changes in the way the earth orbits the sun. In turn this has caused changes in the amount of CO_2 in the earth's atmosphere. On an earth which, at this period in geological history, has two ice caps the consequence of this climate change has been for the ice caps to repeatedly grow and then shrink. For Heddon, at a northerly temperate latitude, this has meant that when the arctic ice-cap was at its

fullest extent, its ice flowed over its landscape to considerable depth. The repeated advance and retreat of the ice had a major impact on the way that the landscape was shaped.

Firstly, many tens of metres of ice, mixed in with rock sand and gravel (which ice inevitably carries with it), moving over the landscape is very effective at grinding away the rocky substrate. The effect of this erosion would be greater for the softer rocks – shales, siltstones and coal – and less for the harder rocks – sandstone and limestone and particularly the extremely hard igneous Whin Sill. The effect of this differential erosion varies depending on the direction of movement of the ice relative to the orientation of the rock layers and on the state of the glacier. The glacier movement v rock layer orientation can be thought of as rather like trying to brush clean the muddy soles of a shoe, where the tread is deeply incised in straight lines side to side across the sole. If you brush side to side the brush will be effective in cleaning out the mud in both the ridges and indents. However, if you brush along the length of the shoe the tops of the tread will be very effectively scrubbed whilst the indents will remain uncleaned. A similar thing happens with ice moving over rock. If the ice movement is parallel to the layers of rock those layers will be picked out by the ice. This can be seen in the central part of the Wall around Housesteads. If the ice movement is perpendicular to the layers of rock it will scour away at the tops of ridges but leave deposits of sand, clay and boulders in the valleys and dips between.

When the ice is flowing over more level surfaces it will smear the land surface with a mixture of clay, sand, gravel and boulders. This material is known as glacial till. The ice-sheet will also rework this material through a combination of sub-glacial waterways and the continued flow of the glacier. These processes leave behind pear-shaped hillocks of material richer in sand and gravel known as drumlins.

The differential action of the ice can be clearly seen in Heddon. In the highest parts of the village, notably on the crest of the Hill in line with the Wall and its remains under the Military Road. Here the underlying Carboniferous sandstones are so close to the surface that they have been cut into and exposed by up to 1.5m to make the roadway here (see figure 2). In comparison borehole data shows that a few hundred metres west along, and just north of the Hexham Road there is glacial till to a depth of about 4m. East of the village towards Throckley other boreholes show that the glacial till varies in thickness from between 5m and 20m.

Figure 2: Cross bedded sandstone near the highest point in Heddon, cut to make a roadway.

As the ice melted, clay, sand, rock and boulders entrained in the ice were left behind and huge volumes of water was created. The flow of water forms glacial meltwater channels, which have huge

erosive power creating outsized valleys and reworking the glacial till to create large deposits of sand and gravel. The Tyne Valley was created in this way. During the last glaciation ice flowed from west to east exploiting and deepening the Tyne gap through the Pennines. When the ice receded, the valley would have become a channel for meltwater steepening and deepening the valley, opening out the magnificent views now available in Heddon. This meltwater river also left behind huge volumes of sand and gravel in the floodplain above the course of the river. At Heddon these reach up to the edge of Clayton's Wood and along the course of the Reigh Burn at the bottom of the slope across Station Road.

The Rocks Beneath Heddon
Having explored how the underlying rocks have been carved by ice, what do these rocks consists of?

Heddon is entirely underlain by sedimentary rocks from the Carboniferous Period (360-300 million years ago). These consist of layers of sandstone, siltstone clay and coal. These sediments were laid down as part of a large deltaic system that extended across the whole of northern Britain up to the Midland Valley of Scotland and down across the Pennines. Deltas are complex systems with interweaving river channels, floodplains and where the river and the sea interact, there are tidal lagoons, interdistributary embayments and shorelines. Flooding events, when the river breaks into its floodplains, also create another range of silty deposits known as crevasse and splay. In addition, this deltaic complex contained extensive swamps between the river channels, and it is within these that huge amounts of plant matter were deposited and which over time compacted to form coal. This plant matter would have been from giant lycopods (*Lepidodendron and Sigillaria*) as well as seed ferns (pteridosperms such as *Neuropteris*) and the ancestors of our modern ferns (pteridophytes such as *Pecopteris*) including the giant horsetails (*Equisetales*). The roots of the giant lycopods, known as *Stigmaria*, can quite commonly be found in the sandstones and siltstones underlying coal seams.
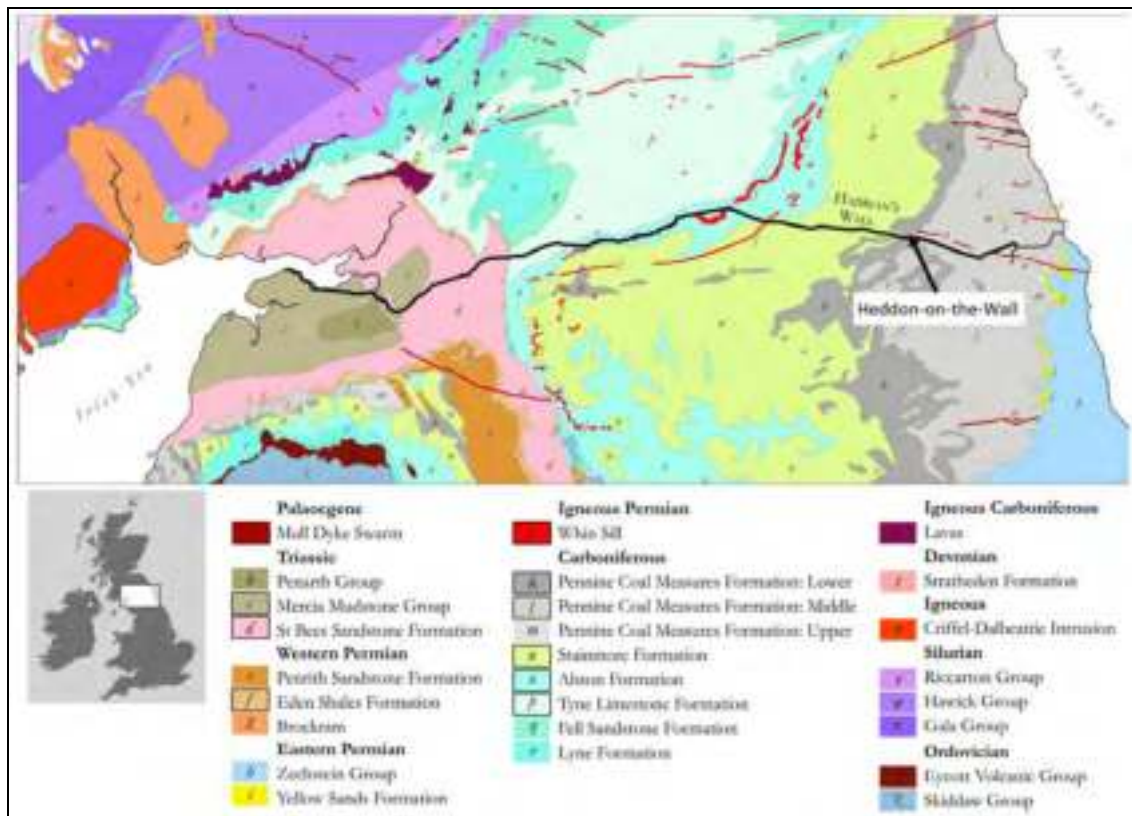

Figure 3: Geological Map of Hadrian's Wall. Illustrated by Matilde Grimaldi, copyright Newcastle University, Hadrian's Wall Community Archaeology Project.

The variation we see in the layers of sedimentary rock are a consequence of two things. The first is the progressive changes within the deltaic system. Sediment moves and accumulates within river channels and over time they meander and change course and lagoons silt up over time. The second is an interaction with changes in global climate. As in the recent ice age described above, the Carboniferous was a time when the earth had polar ice caps. During the Carboniferous the same cyclic changes in the earth's orbit also influenced the global climate such that the ice caps grew and contracted. In the Carboniferous Period, the UK was located just north of the equator, so that the changes in the size of the ice caps were recorded as significant changes in sea level.

The rocks underneath Heddon are next to a significant boundary (see figure 3) within the Carboniferous period between the Pennine Middle Coal Measures formation (318-310 million years ago) and the Stainmore Formation (329-319 million years ago). The bulk of Heddon sits on the Pennine Coal Measure Formation, but just to the W of the village, in a triangle roughly delineated by the Hexham Road and the Military Road, there are rocks of the older Stainmore Formation. This transition marks a change in the types of rock which in turn record a change in the degree of influence from global climate change. The Stainmore formation contains multiple layers of limestone interleaving the sandstones, siltstones and shales of the deltaic complex. These limestones were laid down in a shallow tropical sea, which marks a global rise in sea level brought about by melting of the earth's ice caps. In the later Pennine Coal Measures formation, the sea is further away and has only a minor influence on the sedimentary sequence in the form of thin shell-rich bands formed in brackish water conditions. As the name suggests it is also a period in which swamps became much more extensive resulting in the formation of thicker and more extensive layers of coal.

It should be noted that the reason why the Carboniferous climate was temperate, and the earth had ice caps at this time was through the extensive colonisation of the land surface with large and fast-growing plants. Their ability to turn atmospheric CO_2 into plant material which was then captured within the layers of coal as carbon, reduced CO_2 levels to that equivalent to modern pre-industrial levels. Whilst the extraction and burning of these fossil fuels was a crucial drive of the industrial revolution it also, unsurprisingly, reverses the movement of CO_2, placing it back in the atmosphere and is a major cause of the climate emergency we now have.

The Coal Industry

The area to the south-east and east of Heddon has been extensively mined for coal. In addition, the area around Bays Leap Farm and Heddon Mill, to the north and west of the village, was bought by the National Coal Board in 1953 and worked as an opencast mine until 1965 when was returned to farmland [Andrew Curtis]. Figure 4 shows a borehole in this area recording the presence of 'shuny coal' beneath this land.

As at in other coal mining areas such as Benwell, coal seams would have cropped out at the surface or close to it on the valley side leading down to the River Tyne. This made the coal easy to locate and extract and Heddon was an early producer of coal, with an approximately 400-year history of doing so.

There were a plethora of relatively small pits which exploited Heddon Colliery from the 17th up to the mid-19th century (see Chapter 12 below), but from the 1860s the seams were worked by one much larger colliery complex, Margaret Pit. From the abandoned mine plans in figures 5 and 6 it is possible to see the way in which the two collieries were interconnected, which not only gave the benefit of coal reserves but also made it easier for Throckley Colliery to manage water drainage.

Figure 4: borehole data for Bays Leap Farm.
From the British Geological Survey Onshore Geoindex]

Whilst some coal was sold locally, the most profitable market was that for domestic fuel in London and the South-East, which required the coal to be taken down via a waggonway to the Lemington Staithes on the River Tyne, making a connection with the Wylam Colliery Railway. At the end of the 19th century, after the opening of Margaret Pit, the waggonway was replaced by a link to the NER Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam branchline, which followed the same route as the Wylam Way. By this stage, coal intended for local use was taken up to a depot at the top of Station Road, just below the village, by means of a tramway, hauled by a steel cable powered by a stationary engine at the pit.

Coal was extracted from numerous named seams over 1m thick with some reaching thickness of over 2m. These include, in order of depth and starting nearest the surface, the Engine, Tilley, Hodge, Three Quarter, Main, Black, Clay and Brockwell seams. The shallowest, Engine seam is recorded at a depth of 8m in Margaret Pit and the deepest, the Brockwell seam, at nearly 90m, well below sea level.

The abandoned mine plans in figures 5 and 6 give a sense of the scale of underground working. Bearing in mind that each of these plans is for only one of the eight seams which were worked the extent to which this area has been riddled with workings is quite staggering.

Figure 5: Detail of the abandoned mine plan for the Three Quarters Seam in the Heddon and Throckley collieries, overlaid on a 2nd edition 6 in Ordnance Survey base map(1895/1899). Copyright Coal Authority. All rights reserved 2022.

Coal was not the only resource that was extracted from these mines. Associated with coals are bands of shale/clay that are ideal for making bricks and tiles. It is not surprising therefore that brick and tile works were commonly associated with coal mines. Heddon was no exception (see figure 7).

Quarrying

The hard layer of sandstone sculpted by ice which gives Heddon its prominence on the bank of the Tyne also provided the village with a valuable economic resource. The Heddon sandstone is one of the highest quality sandstones to be found within the Tyne Valley and it has been extensively worked. Quarries extended west of the village between the St Andrew's Primary School and the farms at Houghton. Working also extended around Heddon Common and down into Slacks Plantation. Many of the quarries have now been infilled so that just a small part of the top of these

quarries is visible (see figure 8). One of the quarries within Slacks Plantation and inaccessible still maintains its abandoned quarry faces at approximately 35m in height.
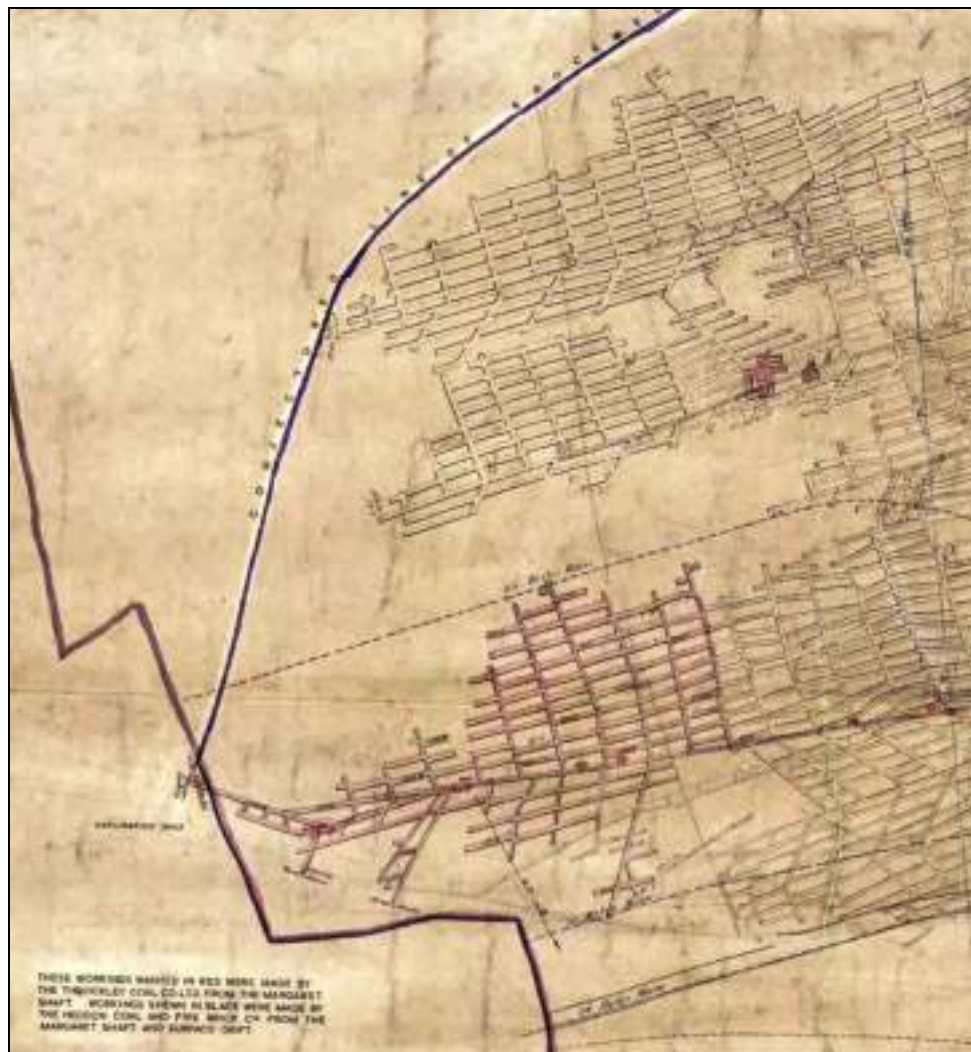

Figure 6: Detail of the abandoned mine plan for the Brockwell Seam in the Heddon and Throckley collieries. The Margaret Pit building can be seen in the middle of these plans. Copyright Coal Authority. All rights reserved 2022

Figure 7: one of the bricks made at Heddon Brick & Tile works. Photo © Andrew Curtis (cc-by-sa/2.0)

Figure 8: small remaining face of one of Heddon's many quarries.

The main economic use of stone started in the late 19th century with Killibrig Quarry cut into the hillside next to Slacks Plantation in 1878. Stone from this and other Heddon Quarries was used extensively in the North-East. This included high status buildings such as the Theatre Royal, the High Level Bridge, Newcastle Railway Station (see figure 9) and Greys Monument. It was also exported more widely in the country with blocks of Heddon Stone finding their way into the Ouse Valley Viaduct and the Woolwich Arsenal in London.

Figure 9: Newcastle Railway Station façade, built of Heddon Stone. Photo © Andrew Curtis (cc-by-sa/2.0)

Heddon's Built Environment

It is not surprising, given the immediate availability of high-quality stone that Heddon's built environment is remarkably consistent. From Hadrian's Wall through to the 20th century almost all of the stone-built buildings in and around Heddon use Heddon Stone. The only remaining question might be about the route by which the stone found its way into those buildings.

Figure 10: The remains of Hadrian's Wall at Heddon

Figure 11: detail of one of the stones in Hadrian's Wall at Heddon

The stretch of Hadrian's Wall still standing (see figure 10), extending from the north end of Towne Gate towards Throckley is made exclusively of the distinctive Heddon Stone (see figure 11). This coarse gritty sandstone with moderately poorly sorted angular grains of quartz is pale yellow when fresh and weathers to a pale white/grey. Very large amounts of the original Wall stone have now gone. Given the quality of this stone and its durability it is highly likely that stone has been taken from the Wall and reused. Given that Heddon Stone is ubiquitous it makes it very hard, just looking at the type stone, to be able to know whether stone used in a building has been taken directly from

one of the quarries or if it has spent time on the Roman Wall. It should be added that whilst there is no direct evidence for Roman quarrying in the Heddon sandstones, the type of stone in the Wall strongly supports this being the case. Any Roman quarries in the area would have long since been obliterated by the extensive subsequent quarrying activity.

The only way of gain some insight into Wall-stone reuse is to look at the size and shape of the stones, the degree of weathering and to look at its context. St Andrew's Church (see figure 12) is a good example. There are many stones used in the building which have the dimensions typical of Wall-stones and are suitably weathered (see figure 13). We also know that other churches with medieval origins have Roman stone in them. For example at Corbridge and Bywell this includes altars and other definitively Roman stone which strongly corroborates Wall-stone reuse in these buildings. This allows for a speculation that many of the stones used, particularly in the older parts St Andrews church may be Roman stones. We cannot however be certain of this.

Figure 12: St Andrew's Church, Heddon

Figure 13: Detail of stone in St Andrew's Church

Wall-stones may well also have been used in other buildings as well as in boundary walls (see figures 14 and 15). Many of the other buildings in Heddon are also made of Heddon Stone such as the Knott Memorial Hall, the Three Tuns, the Swan, the library building and the farm-houses and associated buildings at Houghton. For these latter buildings much of the stone appears too cleanly cut and not sufficiently weathered to suggest that they are reused Wall stone and it is more likely that the stone was taken directly from the nearby quarry.

Figure 14: Field wall next to the Military road leading into Heddon

Figure 15: Field wall behind the Towne Gate in Heddon

4. THE HISTORIC MAPS

The earliest commonly available maps were the **county maps** which appeared from 1576 onwards and are very numerous. A sample of these has been reproduced in the Village Atlas.

Extract from Saxton's map of Northumberland, 1576, showing Heddon and surrounding settlements.

The first county map of Northumberland was produced by the Yorkshireman, Christopher Saxton, in 1576. The rural settlements shown are all villages forming township or parish centres, with very few of these being omitted (one such is West Heddon). They are depicted by three different symbols – a church with tower and spire, a gabled building with what appears to be a wheel attached (signifying a watermill as a mark of township status?), or a crenelated tower. Larger castles are depicted with a symbol showing two linked towers, whilst parks attached to lordly residences are depicted as palisaded enclosures, but roads are only indicated by the occasional bridge.

This was followed by John Speed's County map of 1610, which was incorporated in his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, published in 1611. Speed's maps were very popular and went through many subsequent editions, but they were based on Saxton's survey and incorporate the same errors such as occasional erroneous misspellings of place-names.

Both Saxton and Speed depict a rural world characterised exclusively by nucleated villages or hamlets. This was perhaps still broadly accurate in lowland Northumberland and Tyneside in the 16th and early 17th century. Over the course of the 17th and early 18th centuries the county maps provide relatively little additional information, since they largely recycle earlier material, although the reality of rural settlement was changing rapidly, but some roads are shown from the beginning of the 18th century onwards, benefiting from Ogilby's itinerary maps.

The next step forward in the level of detail depicted is represented by Armstrong's County map of 1768. This responded to the initiative launched by the newly founded Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce which was offering premiums for the production of maps at a more detailed scale of around one inch to one mile (Butlin 2003, 247). Armstrong's map provides a clearer impression of the road layout, but it implies settlement within the township still largely comprised a single nucleated village with no other farmsteads or hamlets. Fryer's map of 1820 and Greenwood's of 1828 present a much fuller picture, however, showing a great many isolated farms.

Estate maps and farm plans
Much more detail regarding the new farms and their associated holdings is provided by the plans of the various constituent estates and farms in Heddon township, which were produced during the 18th and early to mid-19th century for their respective landowners.

Maps of Hadrian's Wall
The desire amongst antiquarians to reveal and better understand the Roman Wall led to the production of a specialised type of map documenting the corridor of Hadrian's Wall with ever increasing accuracy. The series of maps produced by **John Horsley**, showing successive stretches of the Wall, which were included in his seminal work, *Britannia Romana* (1732), not only record what was then known of the Roman Wall and Vallum and its component forts, milecastles and turrets, but also depicted more settlements along its course than are shown on contemporary county maps. With these may be grouped the *Survey of the Country between Newcastle and Carlisle*… by Dugal Campbell and Hugh Debbeig (1749), which charted the line of the proposed Military Road along the course of Hadrian's Wall and was thereby instrumental in the destruction of a great portion of the monument. This depicted the landscape and settlement of the area in greater detail than ever before, even down to representing local cultivation patterns, however impressionistically.

Coalfield maps
A further class of specialised map is that relating to coal mining. A remarkable map of South-East Northumberland, held at Alnwick Castle (AC: O.XXXII.1) and dating to the late 1590s, shows coal pits and wainway tracks connecting them to staithes along the River Tyne. John Gibson's 1788 Plan of the Collieries on the Rivers Tyne and Wear, which used Armstrong's County maps as its base, shows coal pits in the area and the waggonways connecting them to riverside stathes. The spectacular *Plan of part of the Newcastle Coal District* (Robinson Library, Newcastle University), published in 1847 by J T W Bell, again shows the location of collieries operating at the time and the early railways serving the pits. It also depicts all the settlements, including individual farms, then in existence, plus the land ownership patterns across the landscape, though not the full field pattern - field boundaries being marked only when they coincided with individual estate boundaries. This plan was one of a series produced by Bell, between 1843 and 1861, depicting the entire Great Northern Coalfield.

The *Tithe Map* for Heddon, dating to 1848, provides the earliest full record of the layout of the entire township, including the complete field pattern, as well as the location of all the dispersed farmsteads, with a detailed inset showing the layout of the historic village settlement. Very similar is the slightly later *Enlarged plan of Heddon-on-the Wall* (1856) by Thomas Bell and Sons (SANT) which reveals how the common green areas and broad lanes were steadily being encroached upon.

Ordnance Survey
The *1st Edition Ordnance Survey*, published at 1:2500 and 6 in to 1-mile scales about 10-15 years after the tithe map, marked a further step-change in the level of detail recorded, enabling the village, surrounding farmsteads and industrial sites to be subjected to yet deeper scrutiny. The cartographic assemblage for Heddon is completed by later editions of the Ordnance Survey, which provide a record of detailed changes in the village core and the settlement's eventual expansion across part of the previously rural township.
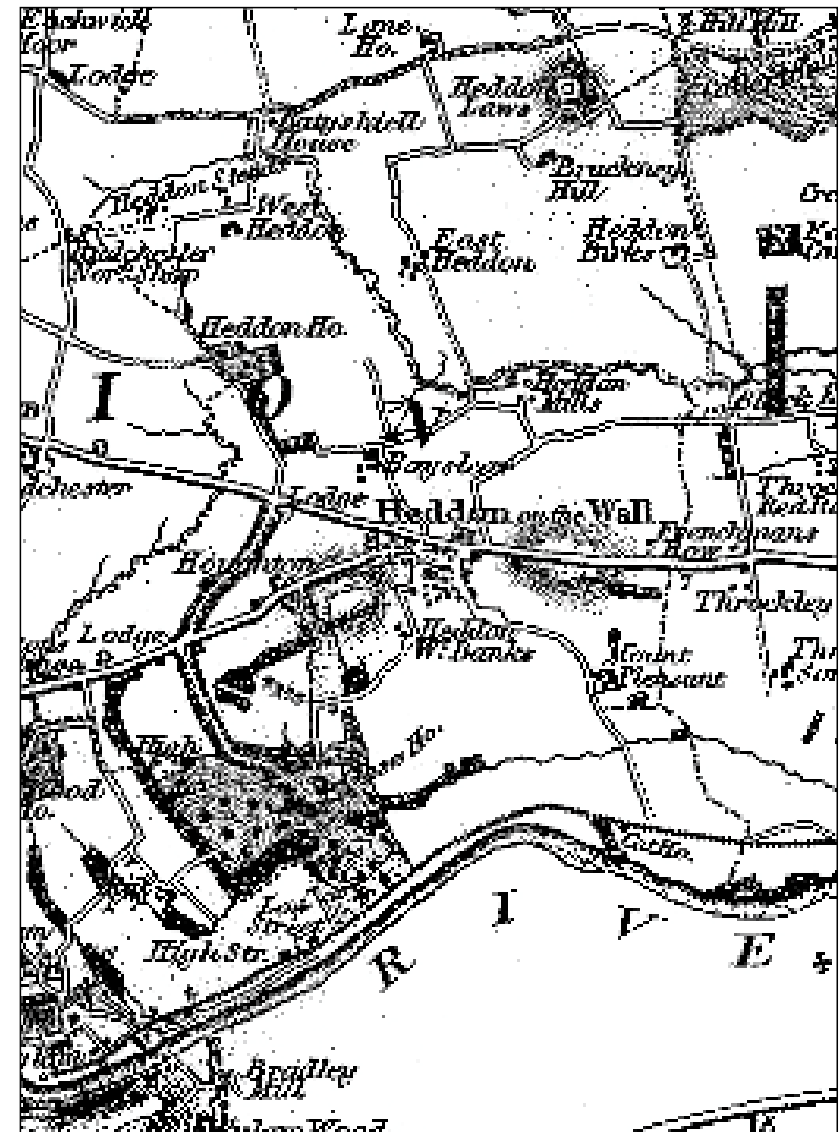
Extract of Speed's map, c.1610, showing Heddon.
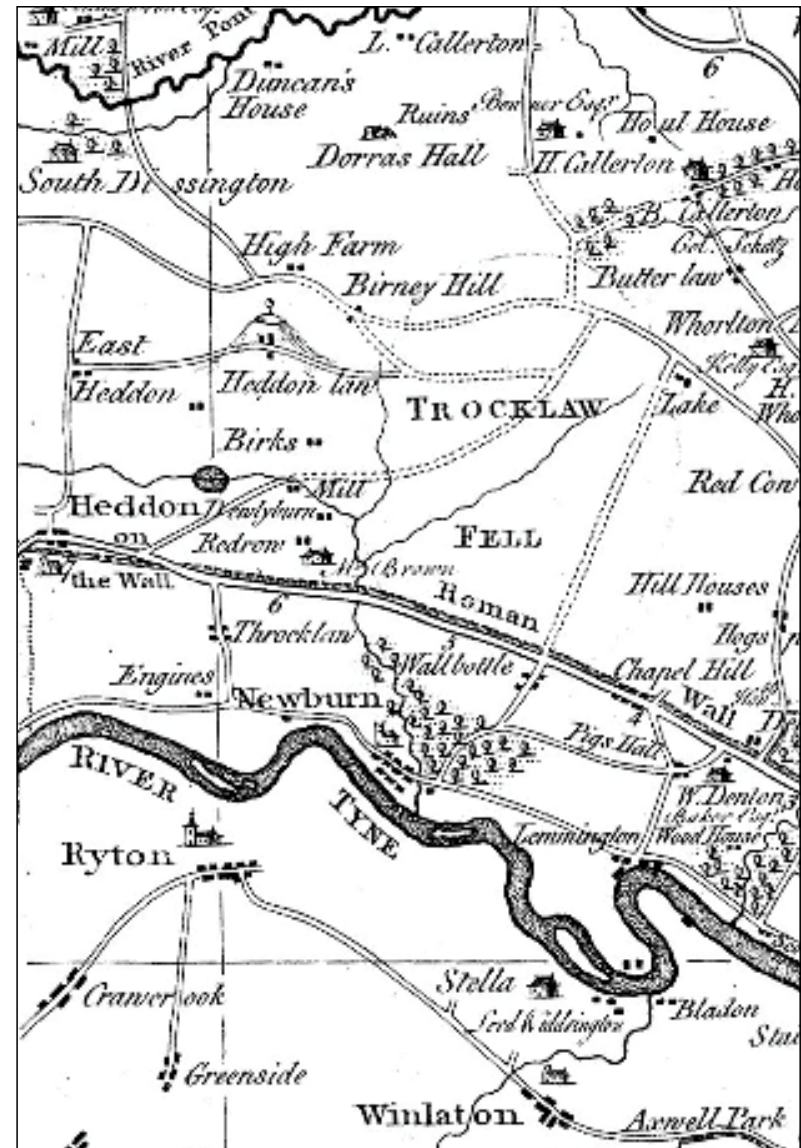
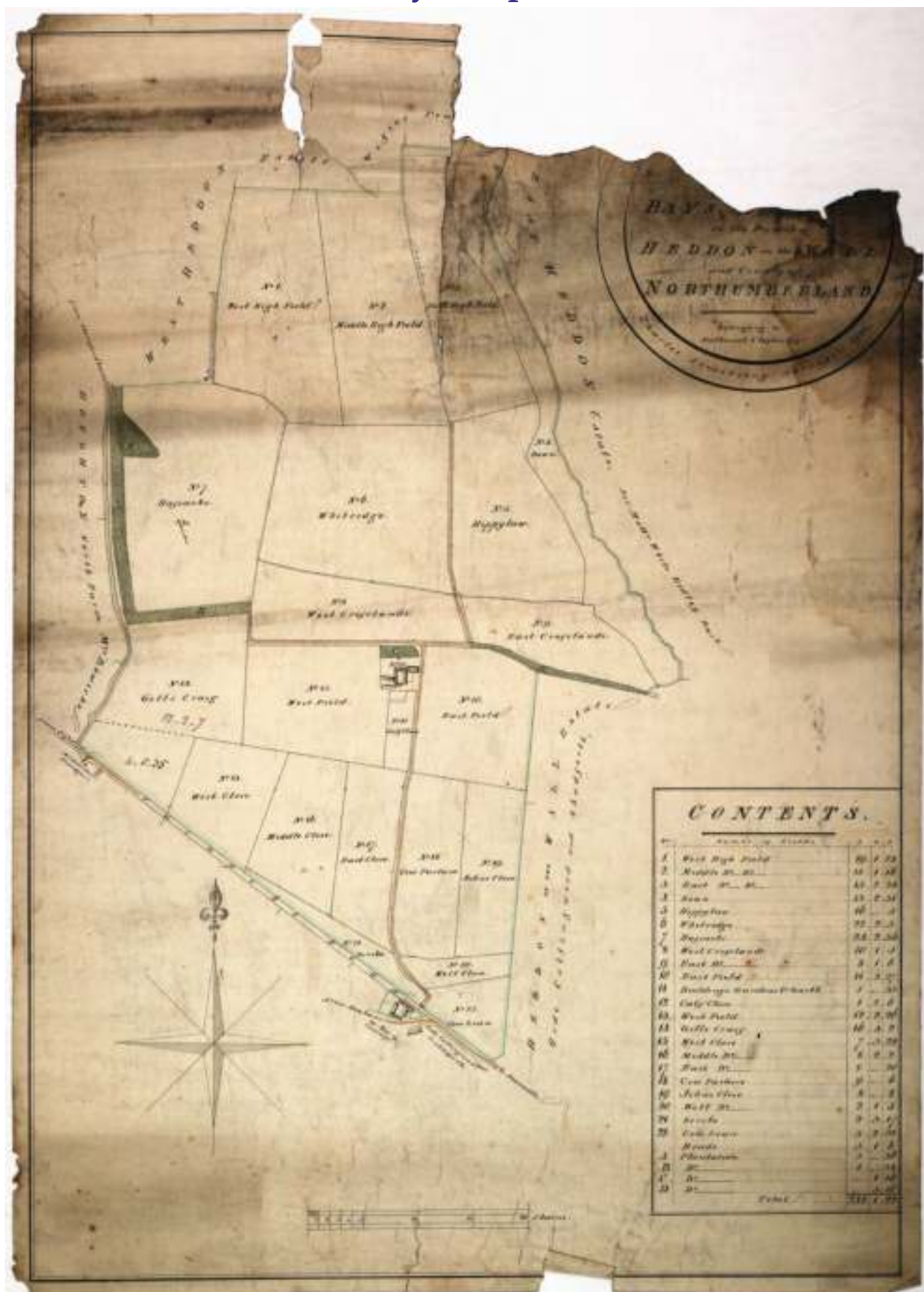*Extract of Armstrong's map, c.1769, showing Heddon.*

Extract of Fryer's map, c.1820, showing Heddon

Extract of Greenwood's map, c.1828, showing Heddon
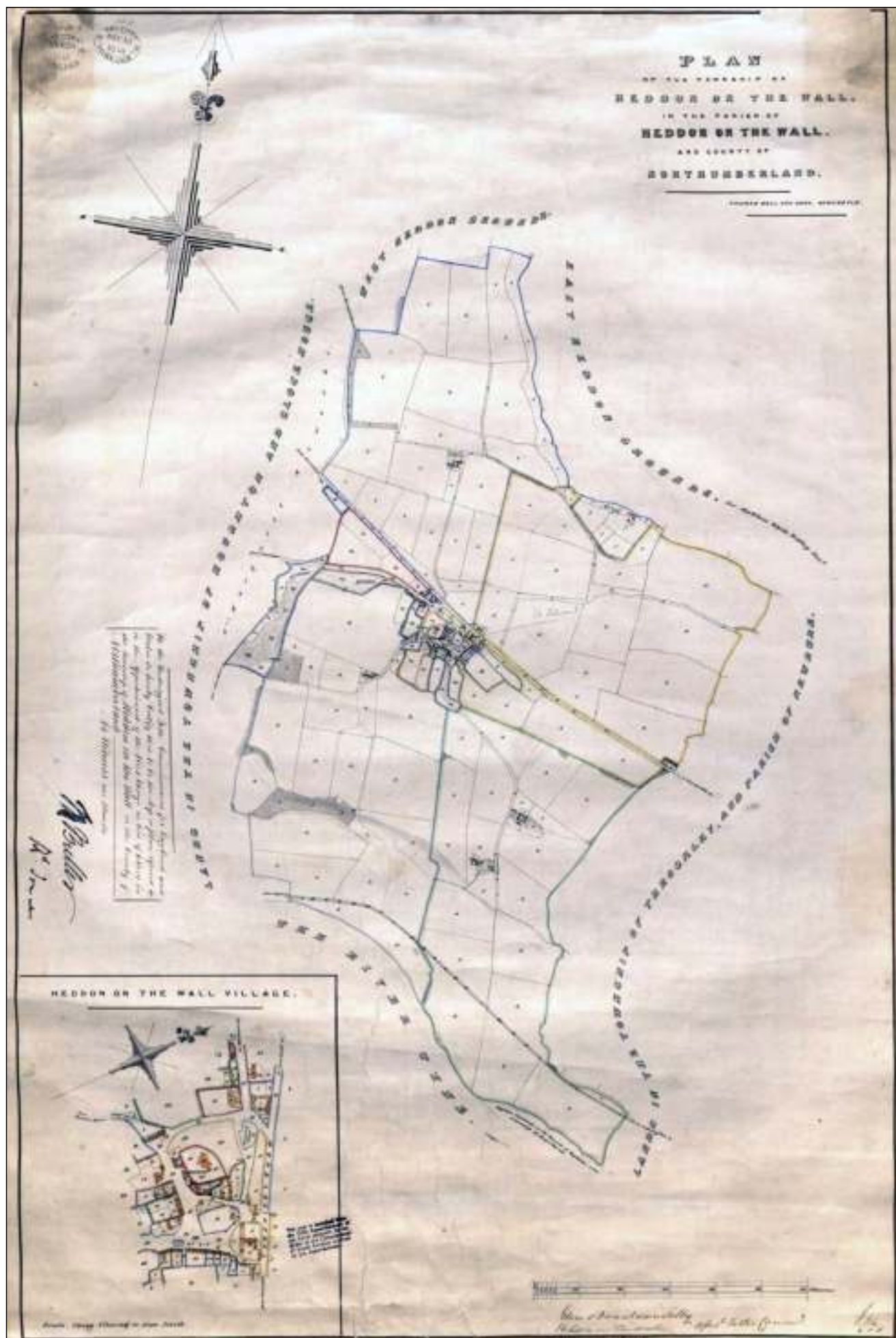
Bays Leap Farm

Plan of Bays Leap Farm, 1823 (NRO 00309/M/63). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.
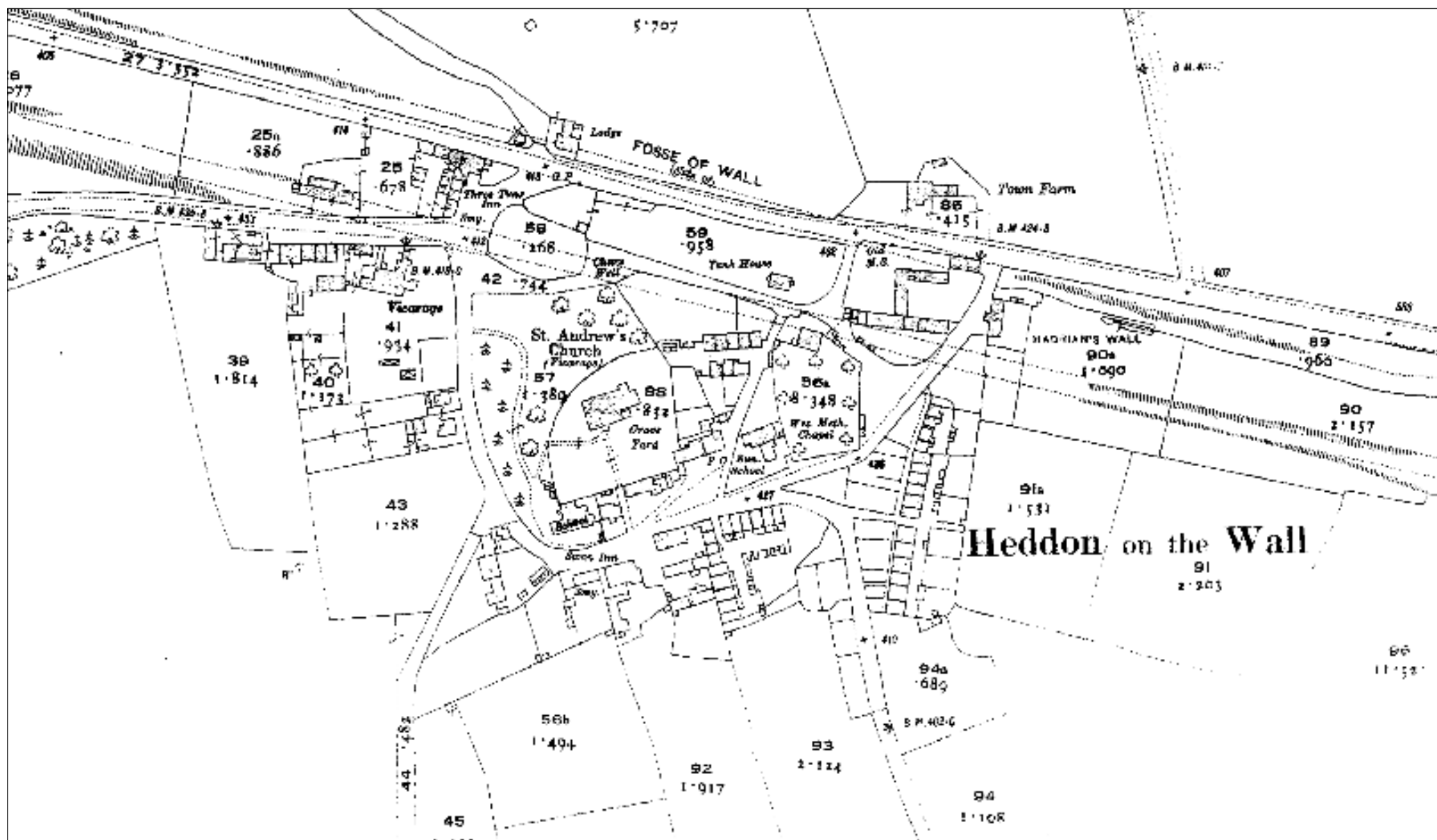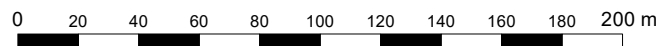
Heddon Banks Estate 1827

Plan of Heddon Banks Estate, 1827 (NRO 00309/M/69). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.

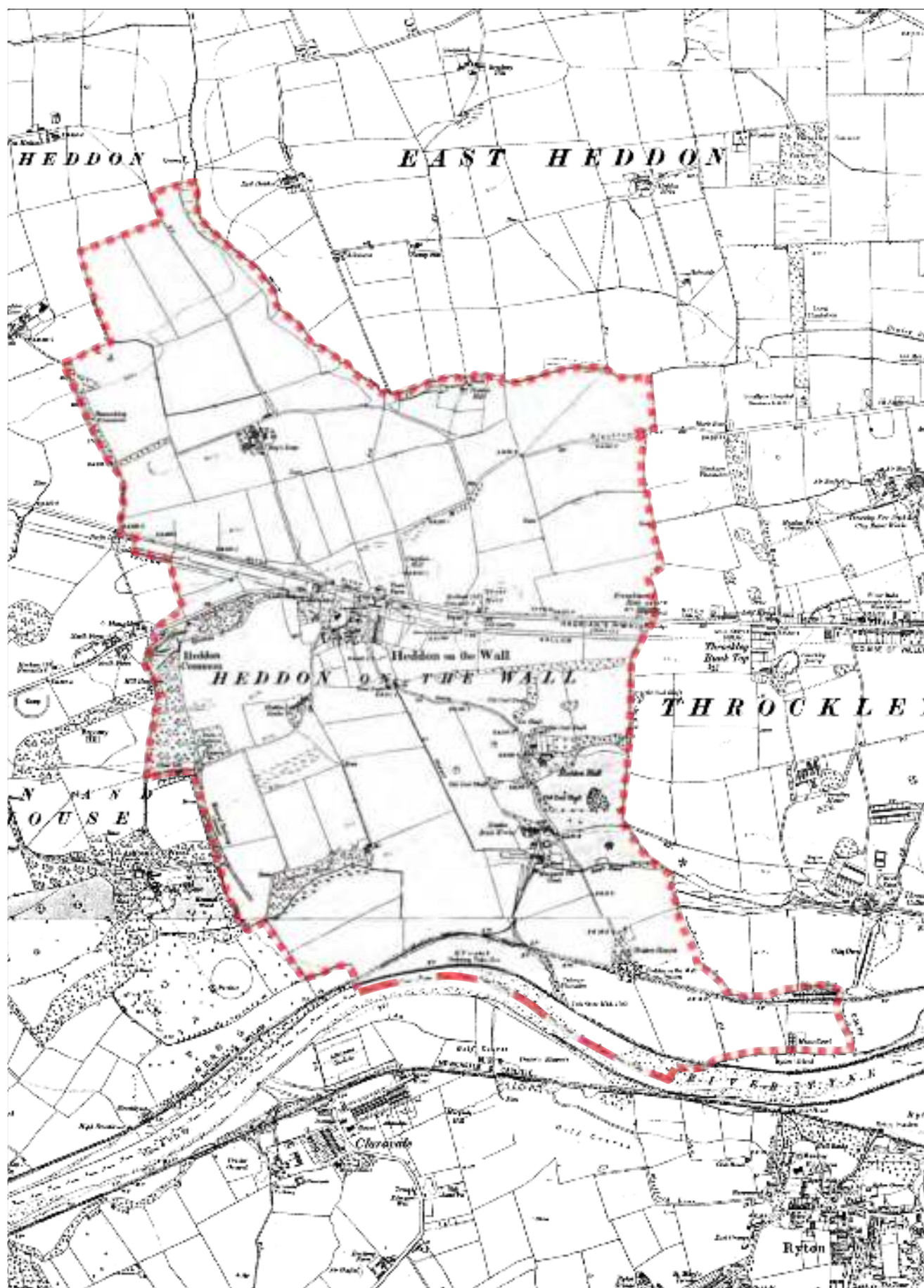*Tithe Map showing the Township and Village of Heddon on the Wall c.1848.*

Extract from the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 25-inch series (revised 1913, published 1920), showing Heddon on the Wall village-core.

Extract from the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series, c.1921 (published), showing the Township of Heddon on the Wall (bound in red).

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA: HER Entries & LIDAR

A total of 47 sites were catalogued within the area of the historic township from the above sources, of which 3 were Prehistoric, 13 Roman, 1 Early Medieval, 5 Medieval and 25 Post-Medieval.

Catalogue by period

PREHISTORIC (1,000,000 BC to AD 43)

Site No. 01. Bronze axe head. Period: Prehistoric (Bronze Age); HER ID: 10868; Grid Ref: NZ13876687
Site No. 02. Three polished stone axes. Period: Prehistoric (Neolithic); HER ID: 10875; Grid Ref: NZ1384266724
Site No. 03. Possible bronzesmith's working site. Period: Prehistoric (Bronze Age); HER ID: 10880; Grid Ref: NZ13956554

ROMAN (AD 43 to AD 410)

Site No. 04. Turret 11a (Heddon Hall). Period: Roman; HER ID: 10846; Grid Ref: NZ14516687; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037
Site No. 05. Turret 11b (Great Hill). Period: Roman; HER ID: 10847; Grid Ref: NZ14046689; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037
Site No. 06. Milecastle 12 (Heddon-on-the-Wall). Period: Roman; HER ID: 10848; Grid Ref: NZ1350966961; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26038
Site No. 07. Turret 12a (Heddon West). Period: Roman; HER ID: 10849; Grid Ref: NZ1304467089; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26038
Site No. 08. Roman coin hoard. Period: Roman; HER ID: 10857; Grid Ref: NZ135665
Site No. 09. Roman Legionary and Centurial stones. Period: Roman; HER ID: 10858; Grid Ref: NZ1338966888
Site No. 10. Roman inscriptions. Period: Roman; HER ID: 10895; Part of HER 30357; Grid Ref: NZ1408266883; (RIB) 1384, 1382; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037
Site No. 11. Roman stone inscribed 'XII'. Period: Roman; HER ID: 10899; NZ1320866475
Site No. 12. Hadrian's Wall. Period: Roman; HER ID: 30356, inc. 30357, 10900, 10901, 31276, 30399, 31255, 31258, 31266, 31277; Grid Ref: NY7424767570; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037-8, World Heritage Site
Site No. 13. Hadrian's Wall Ditch. Period: Roman; HER ID: 30358, 31278, 30398, 31254, 31256, 31257, 31259, 31260, 31274, 31275, 31279, 31280, 31301; Part of HER 30356; Grid Ref: NY7424767570; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037-8, World Heritage Site
Site No. 14. Vallum. Period: Roman; HER ID: 30359; Part of HER 30356, 30374, 30375, 30383, 30384, 30385, 30386, 30730, 30731, 30732, 30733, 30735, 21725; Grid Ref: NY7424767570; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26038, World Heritage Site
Site No. 15. Roman(?) architectural fragment at Keeper's Cottage, Heddon-on-the-Wall. Period: Roman; HER ID: 25879; Grid Ref: NZ1354966964
Site No. 16. Military Way. Period: Roman; HER ID: 30360, inc. 30754, 30755, 30973; Part of HER 30356; Grid Ref: NZ1466866832; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26038, World Heritage Site

EARLY MEDIEVAL (AD 410 to 1066)

Site No. 17. Church of St Andrew. Period: Early Medieval / Medieval; HER ID: 10870; Grid Ref: NZ13386689; Listed Building Grade I 20/147, Listed Building List Entry Legacy UID 238632

MEDIEVAL (1066 to 1540)

Site No. 18. Medieval kiln. Period: Medieval; HER ID: 10864; Grid Ref: NZ1362266942; Scheduled Monument Legacy (National No) 26037

Site No. 19. Medieval coin (silver penny Edward I). Period: Medieval (early-14C); HER ID: 10869; Grid Ref: NZ1318066656

Site No. 20. Medieval deposits within Vallum ditch on land adjacent to 4/6 Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall. Period: Medieval; HER ID: 23609; Grid Ref: NZ1321467002

Site No. 21. Corn drying kiln, located between Hadrian's Wall and its ditch. Period: Medieval; HER ID: 30397; Grid Ref: NZ1355655956

Site No. 22. Ridge and furrow. Period: Medieval; HER ID: 31244; Grid Ref: NZ1227867471

POST MEDIEVAL (1540 to 1901)

Site No. 23. Wylam waggonway. Period: Post Medieval (c.1748); HER ID: 14908; Grid Ref: NZ1229364842

Site No. 24. Milepost at Heddon-on-the-Wall. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 16853; Grid Ref: NZ1351966960

Site No. 25. Heddon Mill (corn). Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 22240; Grid Ref: NZ1384267749

Site No. 26. Bays Leap farmstead. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 22241; Grid Ref: NZ1305767559

Site No. 27. Mill Dam. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 22244; Grid Ref: NZ1373867749

Site No. 28. Heddon Banks Farmhouse, inc. farmbuildings and gingang. Period: Post Medieval (c.1850); HER ID: 22257, 22258; Grid Ref: NZ1321866551, NZ1324266563; Grade II Listed Building Entry 238621-2

Site No. 29. Heddon Hall. Period: Post Medieval (Georgian); HER ID: 22266; Grid Ref: NZ1416266340; Grade II Listed Building Entry 238630

Site No. 30. Tidestone approximately 200 yards south-west of Heddon Haughs Farmhouse. Period: Post Medieval (c.1783); HER ID: 22267; Grid Ref: NZ1423865448; Grade II Listed Building Entry 238631

Site No. 31. Milestone at Heddon-on-the-Wall. Period: Post Medieval (Georgian); HER ID: 27117; Grid Ref: NZ1356166975

Site No. 32. Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam Railway. Period: Post Medieval (Victorian); HER ID: 27395; Grid Ref: NZ1102964233, NZ1746864997

Site No. 33. Heddon-on-the-Wall Station. Period: Post Medieval (Victorian); HER ID: 27396; Grid Ref: NZ1449565560

Site No. 34. Gin gang shown on tithe map, Tulip's Haulage Yard. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 27427; Grid Ref: NZ1352766945

Site No. 35. Farmstead building shown on tithe map. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 27428; Grid Ref: NZ1351666934

Site No. 36. 19th century farm building shown on OS 1st ed. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 27429; Grid Ref: NZ1352966953

Site No. 37. Quarry. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 30739; Grid Ref: NZ1391766874

Site No. 38. Quarry. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 30740; Grid Ref: NZ1385866798

Site No. 39. Quarry. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31300; Grid Ref: NZ1404567056

Site No. 40. Quarry. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31302; Grid Ref: NZ1428167244

Site No. 41. Ridge and furrow. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31021; Grid Ref: NZ1238267461

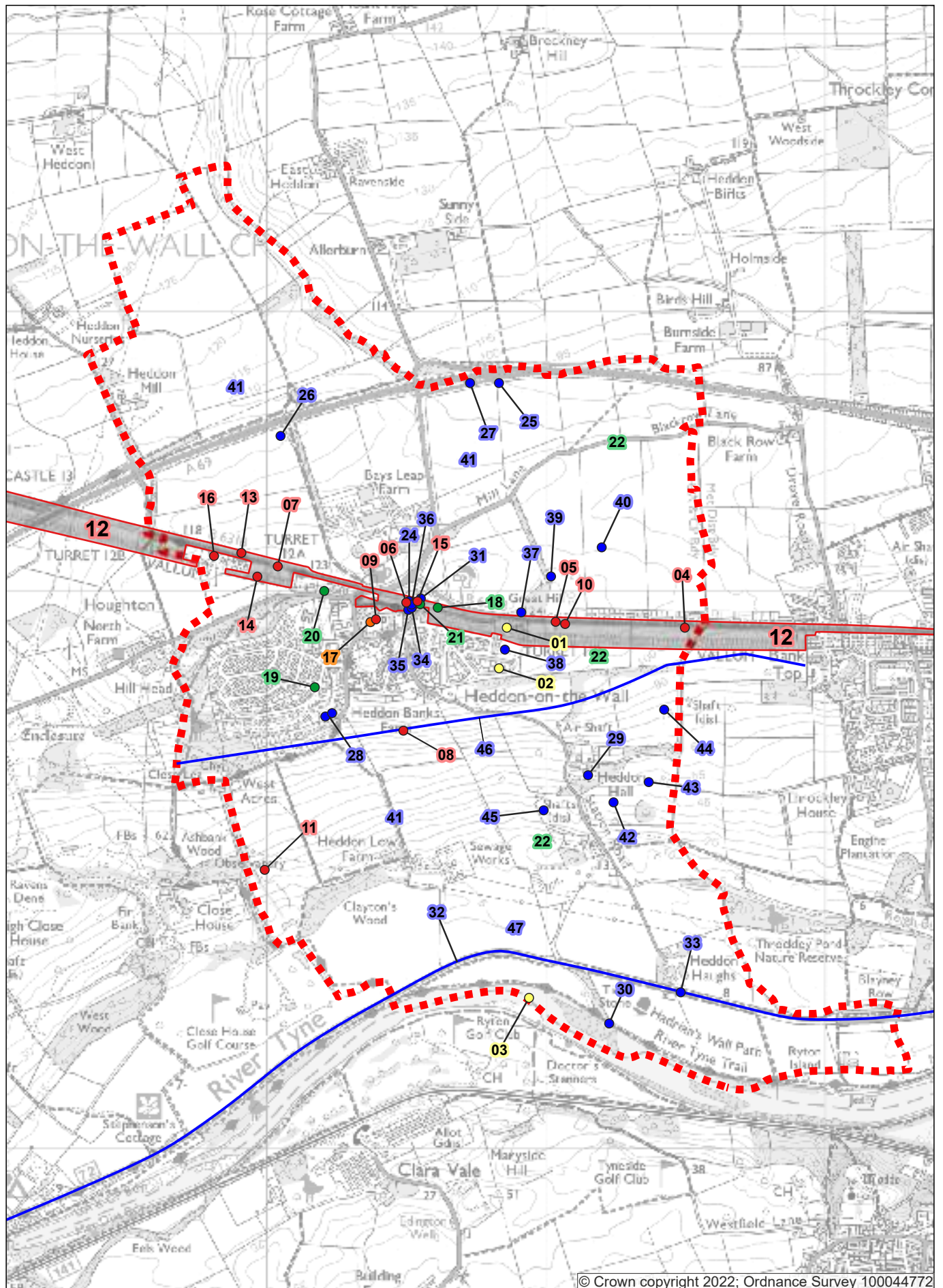**Site No. 42. Tramway.** Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31023; Grid Ref: NZ1424966235

Site No. 43. Tramway. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31028; Grid Ref: NZ1439266274

Site No. 44. Tramway. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31304; Grid Ref: NZ1470566352

Site No. 45. Tramway. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31306; Grid Ref: NZ1392466218

Site No. 46. Water main from Whittle Dean Reservoir (misidentified as a tramway in the HER). Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31313; Grid Ref: NZ1323966558

Site No. 47. Tramway. Period: Post Medieval; HER ID: 31324; Grid Ref: NZ1227867471

Scale 1:18500

0   200   400   600   800   1000 m

○ = Prehistoric ● = Roman ● = Early ● = Medieval ● = Post ○ = Unknown
                             Medieval   Medieval

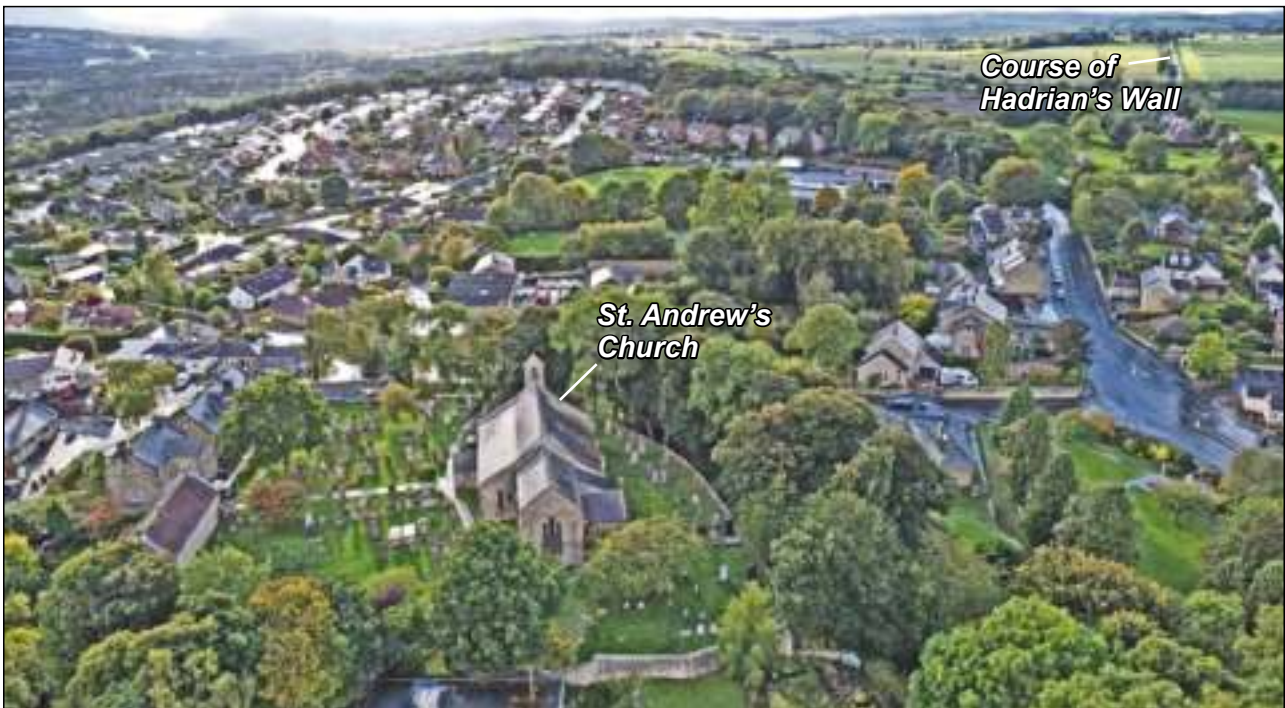© Crown copyright 2022; Ordnance Survey 100044772

Historic Environment Record Map, showing recorded sites of cultural significance, transposed on the Modern Ordnance Survey.

Enhanced LiDAR image, detailing the Heddon village core area. DTM 0.50-1m © Environment Agency 2019-2020.

AERIAL VIEWS OF HEDDON

View looking west to St Andrew's parish church (vertical view below), with 19th- and 20th-century elements of the modern village beyond, south of the line of Hadrian's Wall seen at top right of view.

AERIAL VIEWS OF HEDDON

View looking west of the western part of the 19th-century section of the village, with the Knott Memorial Hall at bottom centre and the Three Tuns PH to the north, beside the 18th-century Military Road which overlies Hadrian's Wall.

The course of Hadrian's Wall under the 18th-century Military Road seen (at right of view) extending westwards from the village core.

AERIAL VIEWS OF HEDDON

View looking southwards over the village core, south of the parish church, with traces of rig & furrow earthworks visible just outside the now largely infilled village green.

View looking north-east from the village core, showing the course of Hadrian's Wall extending eastwards alongside the 18th-century Military Road.

6. HISTORIC BUILDINGS *by Peter Ryder*

The Village

The Towne Gate (north side)

 [01] Wesleyan Chapel (NZ13466688) 1877. Gothic with paired lancets, built at a cost of £450 and seating 150. In 1907-8 the porch was moved from the centre of the south wall to the west end and a schoolroom built where it had been.

 [02] The Old School (NZ13376684**).** Tudor style, stone. Heddon Old School opened in 1852. It was built along with the headmaster's house (now the Old School House) at a cost of £732 4s 7d, in use until 1963.

[03] The Old School House (NZ13376684). Two storeys and two broad bays with a central gabled porch.

[04] Church House (NZ13406686). Much altered 18th-century rubble building, with pantile roof, raised copings to gables with triangular blocks.

The Towne Gate (south side)

[05] Swan Inn (NZ13386688) Twin-gabled elevation with single-storey block to west, late 19th century.

[06] Old Library (NZ13416683) Late 19th century.

Heddon Banks (east side).

[07] The Cottage (NZ13336683). Very standard 19th-century cottage front but rear elevation (to Towne Gate) has a two-light Gothic window, two cinquefoiled lights under a square head, moulded surround and hoodmould with turned-back ends. This must be re-set from elsewhere, although its ashlar dressings look a little unweathered to be genuine medieval work.

North end of the village

[08] Garden House (NZ13486692). Late 18th-century(?), two-storey house of three slightly-irregular bays, with bold moulded kneelers and integral rear outshut.

Houghton (hamlet on B6528 600 m west of Heddon)

(North side)

[09] Houghton School House. A very attractive two-storey five-bay house of c1800, close-jointed square stone with raised surrounds to its openings, tall six-panel door with six-pane overlight, 24-pane sashes to ground floor and 16-pane above, behind a front garden with old rails on a wall with a moulded coping, between two piers with pyramidal caps.

[10] Houghton North Farm (NZ12496676). Two-storey three-bay house has central doorway with 1802 date in pedimented hood; later cottages to east, with similar hoods and one with a door lintel surprisingly inscribed 'MERCI BEAUCOUP', the other with a date of 1815.

The farm buildings are of some interest, early 19th-century on north and west of yard, with two segmental arches in north range, and at rear of west range circular opening for drive shaft from lost gingang. To the north the ground falls steeply, and there is a retaining wall topped by a 'long-drop' privy (NZ12496681).

(South side)

[11] Houghton South Farm (NZ12596674). This has a substantial farmhouse of the early 19th century, two rooms deep, two storeys and three bays and of close-jointed stone with 16-pane sash windows (including a vertical pair set centrally in the west gable end) and a gabled hood over its central door. The farm buildings are probably contemporary, and consist basically of an L-plan group with an earlier north-south structure incorporated in the centre of the north range.

The Old School and the Old School House in Heddon Village from the south.

The farmhouse at Houghton North Farm.
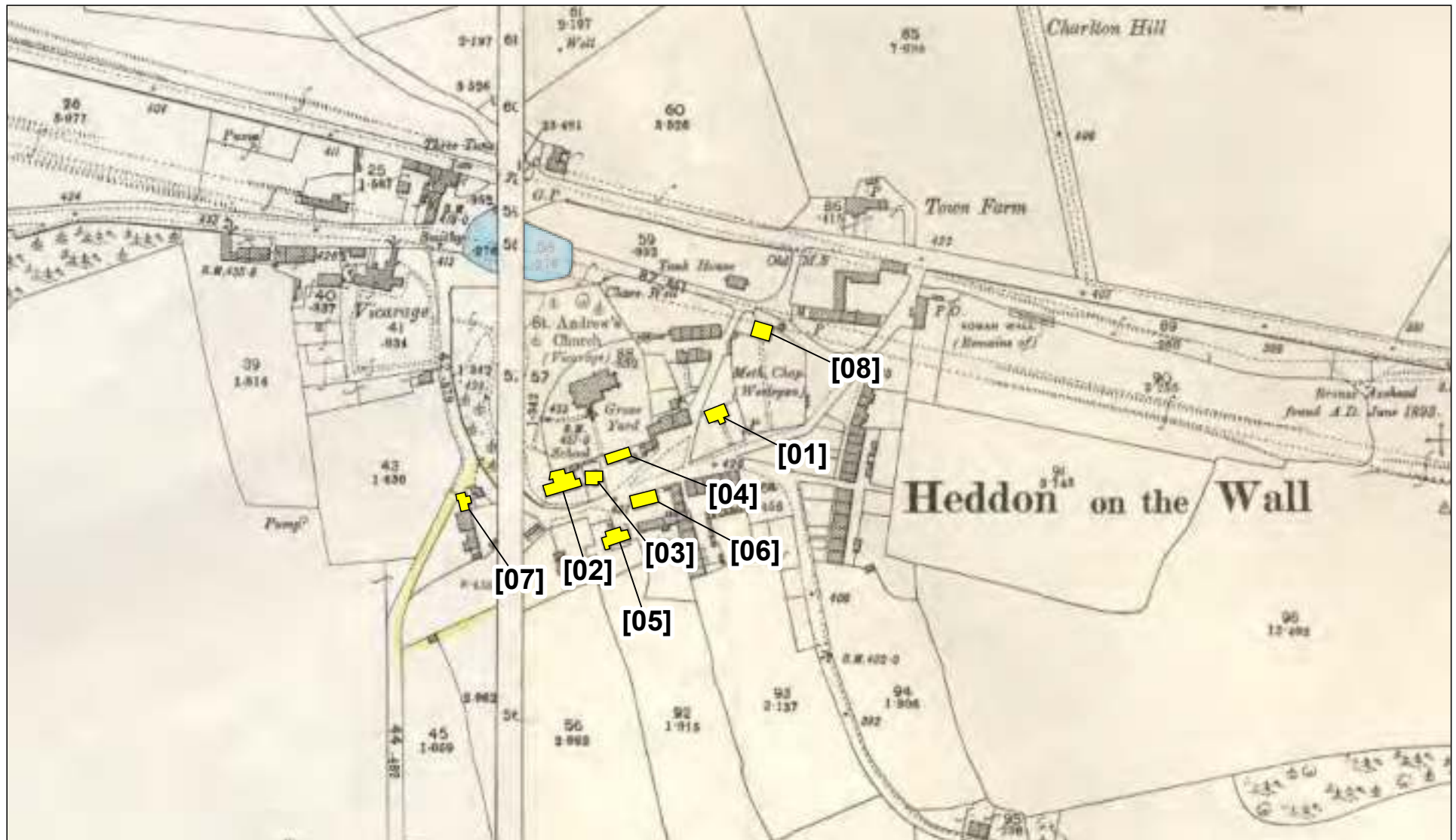
Historic Buildings in Heddon village-core, shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 25-inch series (revised 1895, published 1897).

Historic Buildings in Houghton, shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series (revised 1895, published 1898).

7. ORIGINS: PREHISTORY

Whilst relatively little is known regarding human settlement and occupation of Heddon prior to the building of Hadrian's Wall, it should be assumed that human activity periodically occurred in this resource-rich area over the several millennia following the re-colonisation of northern England after the last Ice Age. Only three prehistoric sites are identified by the HER within the limits of Heddon township, however. The finds of four Neolithic polished stone axes, plus two fragments and a roughout (Site 02; HER 10875), as well as a socketed and looped bronze axehead (01; HER 10678) attest to human occupation of the area during the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, respectively, whilst the bronze palstave and crucible exposed on an island in the Tyne may represent a bronzesmith's working site of c. 1900-1700BC. Nevertheless, evidence from elsewhere along the Wall corridor shows the Roman army did not arrive in an empty landscape. Tyneside and south-east Northumberland are known to have been extensively populated and intensively farmed, with numerous enclosed settlements and field systems known from landscape survey and excavation.

One such major prehistoric monument has been identified in the wider area, located to the west of Heddon just beyond Houghton on gently sloping ground south of the B 6528 road (see below). It takes the form of an oval enclosure over 100m wide and is interpreted as a defended settlement of Iron Age date (800BC to AD 43), now protected as a scheduled monument. The ditch has become infilled along most of its length, but can still be seen on the northern side. The remains of a stone and earth rampart can also be seen. The interior has been over-ploughed by narrow but curving ridge and furrow, whilst the monument is surrounded on the south and east sides by more than one phase of broad and sinuous ridge and furrow, most likely of medieval or early modern date.

8. HADRIAN'S WALL

The course of Hadrian's Wall runs along the northern edge of Heddon village. It has particular significance here because the stretch of the Wall curtain on the east side of the village is one of the few lengths east of the upland Central Sector to have survived the construction of the Military Road turnpike in the 1750s. As such it represents one of the most significant archaeological monuments associated with Heddon (rivalled only by the medieval parish church). It was built as Broad Wall, the original intended form of the Wall, some 2.92m (9ft 7in) wide with footings 3.23m (10ft 7in) in width, and was originally clay-bonded. It stands up to 1.52m high, with up to seven courses of facing stones surviving on the south face (which was perhaps less vulnerable to robbing by the builder of the Military Road), some of which retain traces of white pointing or render. The Vallum also survives well along the south side of the Wall. To the north there is a section of the defensive ditch, seen more clearly just to the east, in the wood north of the Military Road (the B6528). The 6m wide berm between the Wall and the ditch was protected *cippi* entanglements revealed by a geophysical survey undertaken by Paul Bidwell for the *Arbeia Society* in 2018. These consisted of three rows of pits, all with their long axes parallel to the Wall, similar to the arrangements of the pits elsewhere, such as at Throckley and Shields Road, Byker. They would have held spiked thorn bush branches.

A view of the surviving stretch of Hadrian's Wall from Great Hill, looking west towards Heddon village (Photo courtesy of A. Curtis).

The Wall owes it survival here to a slight northward deviation in the course of the Military Road, perhaps to ensure an easier gradient for the road down from the summit of Great Hill and perhaps to avoid pre-existing buildings at Town Farm. Thereafter the Wall remained as a mound capped by a hedge, though with some of its north face visible, until some date between 1867 and 1879, when the corn-drying kiln at the west end and a short length of the adjacent Wall were exposed. In 1924 the remains were given to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne by the philanthropist Sir James Knott, and in 1927 a few trenches were dug to examine the north and south faces of the Wall. It was cleared and consolidated for permanent display in 1936–8 and passed into the care of the state.

G.B. Richardson's view of the stretch of Wall at Heddon looking E, c. 1848, with the Wall ditch to the left and the Vallum ditch to the right seen crossing Great Hill in the background (reproduced in J Collingwood Bruce, The Roman Wall, 2nd edition 1853).

A view of the south face of Hadrian's Wall from a similar point today (Photo courtesy of A. Curtis).
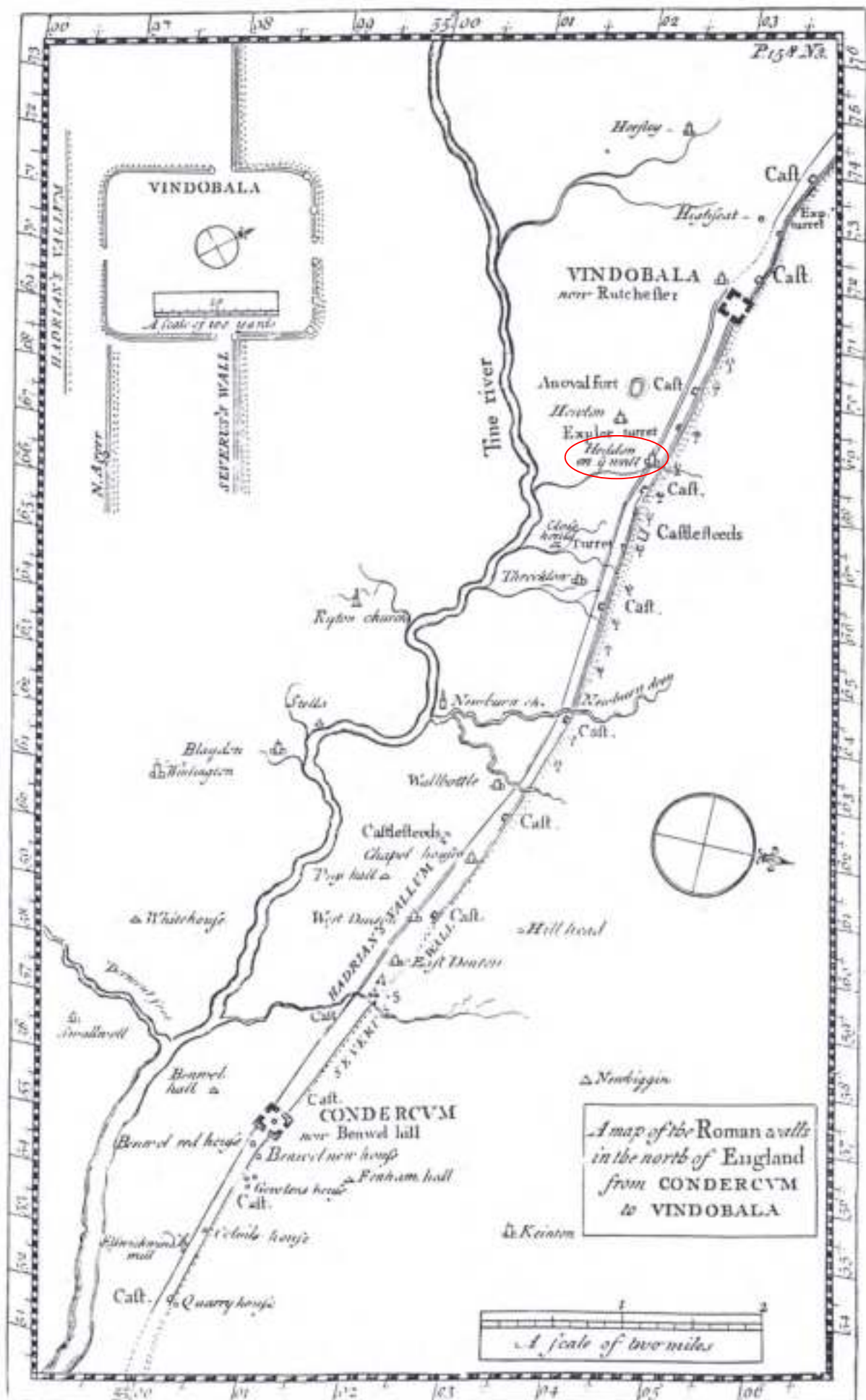
Horsley's map of Hadrian's Wall from Benwell to Rudchester, showing Heddon (circled in red).
(Britannia Romana 1732)

By measurement, Milecastle 12 was assumed to lie under the buildings of Town Farm on the north-east edge of the village. In 1926, a possible part of its north gate was reported, 'close to the west end of an outbuilding of Towne Farm'. However, no trace of it was found during the archaeological investigations in 2019 when the buildings were demolished for the construction of houses at Tulip Mews, although another stretch of the Wall curtain was revealed. It now seems possible that the milecastle may have lain a little further west, perhaps under the garden north of Tank House.

View of the stretch of Wall curtain revealed at Town farm in 2019, looking east. In the distance Hexham Road can be seen climbing over Great Hill (courtesy of A. Curtis)


View showing the lowest course of the north face of Hadrian's Wall during excavation by Wardell Armstrong at Town Farm (Tulip Mews) in 2019 (Photo courtesy of A. Curtis).

An important inscribed building stone from the Wall near Heddon (RIB 1389), with a consular date, records building work by Legion VI Victrix in 158, implying that Hadrian's wall was being recommissioned at this stage and the Antonine Wall presumably given up. The final evidence from this part of the Wall is represented by a small hoard found at or near Heddon in 1820, composed of coins extending from Maximian (286-305) to Arcadius (383-408), the latest one dating to 394AD.

9. PARISHES AND TOWNSHIPS:
Organising Village Territories

By the 12th and 13th centuries, when documentary sources become much more abundant, settlement across the Hadrian's Wall corridor was largely composed of nucleated villages, each one being the focus of a defined territory, known as a **township** or *vill*, which the community's inhabitants exploited. These townships were grouped into larger ecclesiastical territories, termed **parishes**, for the purposes of religious worship. With a church which dates back to the Anglo-Saxon era, Heddon was the centre of just such a parish from the Middle Ages onwards. Like many parishes in Northern England, it encompassed several township communities, including East Heddon, West Heddon, Houghton and Close House, Eachwick, and Whitchester, as well as the Heddon-on-the-Wall itself. The resultant parish was a rather peculiar, irregular shape on the map, with protrusions to the north-west (Eachwick) and west (Whitchester). In particular, the township of Rudchester, part of Ovingham Parish, appears to intrude into the west side of Heddon, being surrounded by that parish on three sides. It was not until 1892 that Rudchester was transferred from the parish of Ovingham to that of Heddon, making the latter more geographically compact (Dodds 1930, 75).
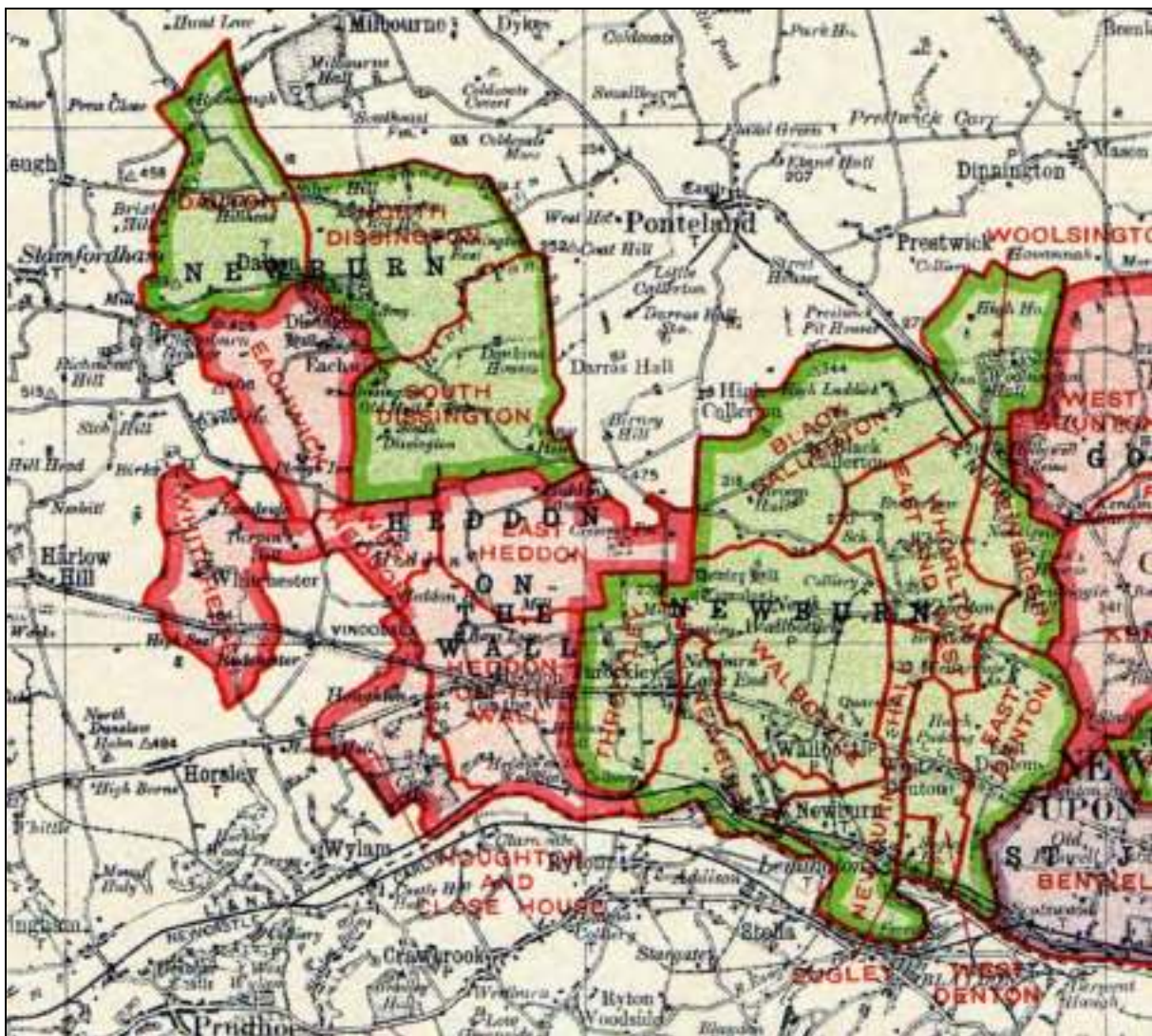
Map of the parishes of Heddon-on-the-Wall and neighbouring Newburn, with their constituent townships outlined in red (from M. H. Dodds: A History of Northumberland, *XIII (1930), facing p.1).*

Views of St. Andrew's Church (formerly St. Philip & St. James'), Heddon on the Wall

Heddon Church on the 1st edition OS c.1859

View of the south wall and porch, looking north

View of the chancel, south-east corner

Medieval column with decorated capital
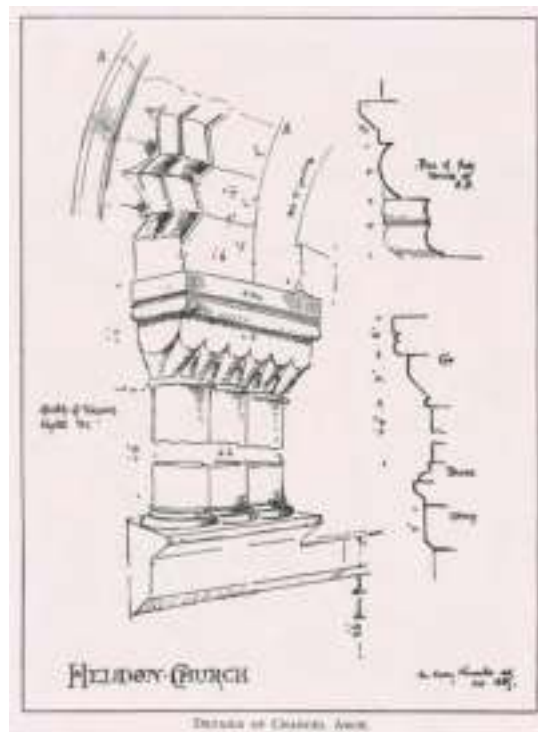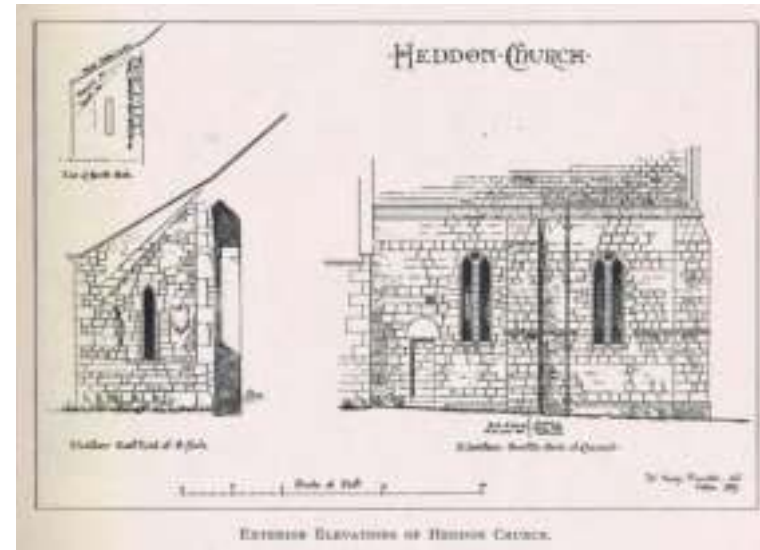

Example of the C19 stained glass

View looking east from the nave towards the chancel
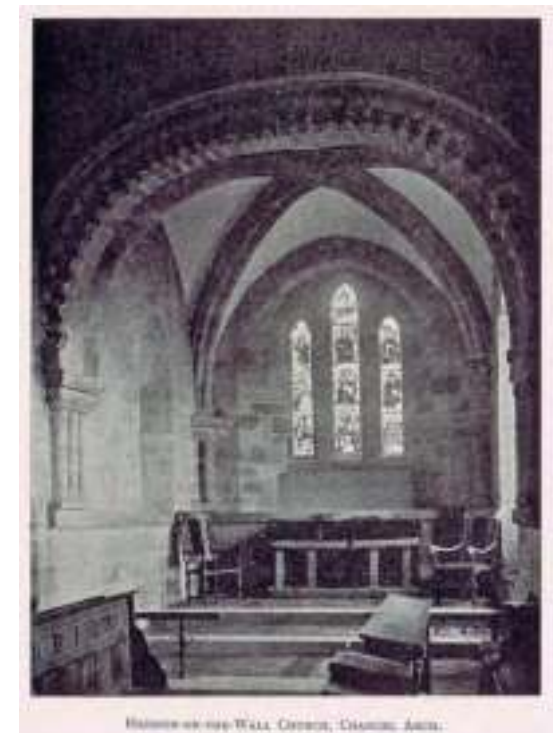

Salvaged Roman and Anglo-Saxon sculpted stones

Medieval grave slab with sword decoration

Phase plan and historic views of
St. Andrew's Church,
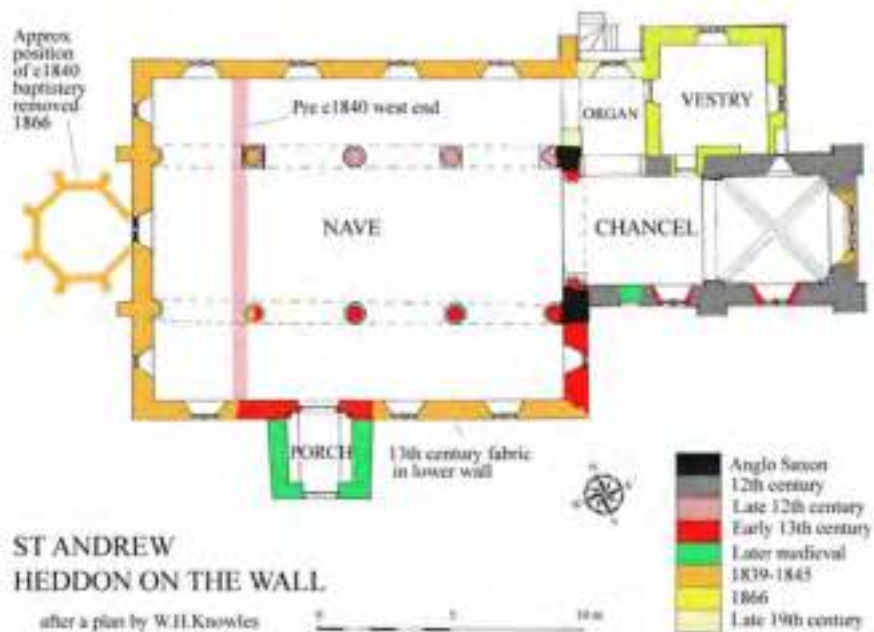*Heddon on the Wall*

by Peter Ryder (2020)

10. HEDDON IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Early Medieval Heddon

A royal villa?
Documentary references to Northumbrian settlements are rare in the early Middle Ages, but it has often been suggested that Heddon features in the account of Northumbria's greatest early medieval historian, the Venerable Bede. In his '*Ecclesiastical History of the English People*', Bede twice refers to a royal estate or township called *Ad Murum* (At or By the Wall) in connection with events in 653, involving first, the baptism of Peada, king of the Middle Angles, and then the baptism of King Sigbert of the East Saxons. Both baptisms took place at *Ad Murum*, which is described as 'a famous royal village' (*vico regis inlustri*: Bede, *Hist. Eccl.*, III, 21) and as a royal estate (*villa regia*: ibid., III, 22). In the latter instance Bede specifies that it was located next to the wall with which the Romans once bounded the island of Britain and some 12 miles from the 'eastern sea' (the North Sea).

Due to the inclusion of the suffix 'on-the-Wall' and presence of an Anglo-Saxon church, Heddon has often been identified with *Ad Murum*. More recently, however the weight of opinion has shifted in favour of Walbottle further east along the Wall, which also has the element 'Wall' in its name. Moreover 'bottle' (OE. *botl*) has a shade of meaning which can signify more than simply a settlement or building – it can denote 'lord's hall'. So Walbottle, when transformed into Latin by a scholar like Bede, would appear as *villa Ad Murum*. Moreover, at a later stage in Northumbrian history, when documentation becomes a little more abundant in the 11th-12th centuries, Walbottle was definitely part of a royal estate, though the centre of that estate had shifted to Newburn (the 'new *burh*') beside the River Tyne. It was eventually sold by a cash-strapped King John in 1204. In the absence of definitive proof either way, however, this is a debate which is likely to run on and on.

ST ANDREW
HEDDON ON THE WALL
after a plan by W.H.Knowles

Anglo Saxon
12th century
Late 12th century
Early 13th century
Later medieval
1839-1843
1866
Late 19th century

The Anglo-Saxon church (St Andrew)
In contrast there is no doubt regarding the Anglo-Saxon origins of the parish church at Heddon (17; HER 10870). Visible evidence for this survives where the east end of the south aisle butts-up against the south-east corner of the original nave of the church, constructed of 'megalithic' blocks typical of Anglo-Saxon work (Ryder 2020, 117, see phase plan above). It is unclear, however, whether this megalithic masonry takes the form of side-alternate quoins (with each block the same size but with

their long axes laid on two different wall-faces), as encountered in most of the early churches in the North East, or 'long-and-short work' (with upright pillar stones and thin horizontals), typical of classic late Saxon churches and common further south. As Ryder notes in the most authoritative recent account, there is simply not enough masonry visible to be certain. However, he suggests a late, post-Viking date might be preferable because of the proportions of the nave, which seem to be short and broad, whereas early naves tend to be long and narrow (ibid.).

Barony and Manor

The manor of Heddon was one of the six townships which comprised an isolated portion of the Barony of Styford and bestowed by Henry I (1100-1135) on Walter de Bolbec I, by the military service of five knights and castle ward at Newcastle upon Tyne, becoming known as the Bolbec Barony. The manor of Heddon-on-the-Wall was soon granted to a subordinate lord, or 'subinfeudated', rather than being held directly by the Bolbec barons. In 1166 it was held by Reginald son of Wymund, also known as Reginald de Kenebell, by service to his Bolbec lord of half a knight's fee. Reginald made a grant to Cistercian monks of Newminster Abbey which is very illuminating regarding travel and transport at this time:

> the monks were to have free passage and landing place for their boat in his land of Hedwin Stream and liberty to go and return by the new road which he had granted to them through his wood to the great road leading to Throckley. If through stress of wind or flood they could not row to their customary landing place he undertook not to molest them (Dodds 1830, 79; *Newminster*, 52).

However, between 1195 and 1205, Walter de Bolbec IV recovered direct control of Heddon, granting Reginald de Kenebell half the manor of Benwell in exchange. Thereafter the de Bolbecs kept Heddon in hand as a demesne manor. It was Walter who granted the church of Heddon to Blanchland Abbey in line with the contemporary trend of putting parish churches under the control and supervision of a monastic or other ecclesiastical institution (Dodds 1930, 77-79).

With the death of Hugh de Bolbec IV, in 1262, the male Bolbec line expired and the barony passed to his four daughters. At this point an extent (inventory) of the manor of Heddon was made which gives a good impression of the various components of the manor and the way it was managed:

- ❖ *There are in demesne 160 acres valued at 6d per acre, sum £4.*
- ❖ *3 acres of meadow at 8d per acre, sum 2s.*
- ❖ *5 bondmen each of whom holds 24 acres worth yearly 18s 2d, and they hold between them 12 acres 9s 1d.*
- ❖ *Of the fishery of the said manor, 5 marks.*
- ❖ *The mills are worth yearly 5 marks.*
- ❖ *22 acres worth yearly 15s 2d for farm and works.*
- ❖ *13 acres worth 11s 1d.*
- ❖ *5 acres of land which a certain widow holds worth yearly 2s 6d.*
- ❖ *14 cottages worth yearly 26s 2d.*
- ❖ *Office of the smith worth yearly 2s 0d.*
- ❖ *Of the Brew-house 4s 0d.*
- ❖ *Rent in hens yearly is worth 21d.*
- ❖ *Pannage is worth yearly 2s 8d.*
- ❖ *Birds taken at Wydestokes yearly 2s 0d.*
- ❖ *Herbage of the same close yearly 12d.*
- ❖ *Sum of the sums of Heddon £18 5s 5d.*

Although it is not mentioned in the extent, there was presumably a **manor house** at Heddon from which the demesne estate was managed and farmed. This would have been associated with a range of ancillary farm buildings – barn, granary stable and sheds etc., all typically enclosed in a hallgarth. The location of this manorial complex is unknown. It may have been abandoned and sold off in the later Middle Ages when lords ceased managing their lands directly and simply leased or 'farmed' them out to tenants ('farm' was the medieval term for a lease).

Two of the co-heiresses, Alice and Maud, died childless so the Bolbec Barony was eventually divided evenly between Margery and Phillippa, each holding half of Heddon township. Margery married Ralph, the son of William, the baron of Greystoke. The land was subsequently held by them and their heirs: the Greystokes, Dacres and Howards (Carlisles). Phillippa married Roger of Lancaster and the land passed first to his son John, and later to one of his descendants, William of Harle.

In 1346/7, on the death of William of Harle, his son Robert gave their share of Heddon to the Abbey at Blanchland, as an endowment to the founding of a chantry in the church of St. Wilfrid at Kirkharle. The land was held by the Abbey until the Dissolution, being leased out to a variety of people. The Abbot of Blanchland appointed a bailiff of Heddon at a salary of 40s per year. In 1538 this office was leased to Edmund Claxton and Roger Mitford.

## Village and Township

The Village Plan

In interpreting the plan of the village, to try to reconstruct its earlier, medieval form, we are principally reliant on a series of three detailed plans which span a decade in the mid-19th century, namely an enlarged plan included on the tithe map (1848), a very detailed plan by Thomas Bell (1856) and the 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey plan (1859). These form a relatively late basis for analysis, no earlier detailed plan of sufficient detail having been located in the course of the current research. By the time these maps were produced there had already been a series of modifications, some of them quite recent, such as the row of cottages erected along the east side of the green by Nathaniel Clayton, but also the creation of the Military Road and Hexham turnpikes in the 18th century, which must have altered the layout at the north end of the village.

The village is clearly focussed around the Church of St Andrew on the summit of the hill, with the overall proportions of the core settlement being roughly square. The layout of the wider settlement appears rather irregular, but this may in part be a function of the way the plan developed in the post-medieval centuries, in particular the gradual infilling of the **common green**. By comparing the three plans we can see how the green was being encroached upon by buildings, garden plots and closes. It is likely that this was a longstanding process after the green lost its communal purpose of grazing villagers' stock during the early modern era. Formerly, there was probably a much more extensive open area to the east of the churchyard, whilst the large plot enveloping the steep slopes adjoining the north and west sides of the churchyard is explicitly described as 'ground added to church yard from Heddon Common' in the tithe award apportionment (No 30). Even the buildings lining the southern edge of the churchyard might represent later additions, though they could potentially represent the sites of medieval cottages squeezed into this space.

Directly opposite, on the south side of Heddon Town Street (now Towne Gate), a row of dwellings and small farms, set within attached plots, could form the remnant of a medieval **row of tenements** comprising the farmsteads and associated **toft enclosures** of individual peasant tenants. To the rear these long narrow closes, or crofts, extend southward down the slope. The east side of the village is occupied by the slightly curving, but very regular row of cottages, with gardens to the rear, built by Nathaniel and John Clayton. It is uncertain whether these took the place of an earlier row derived
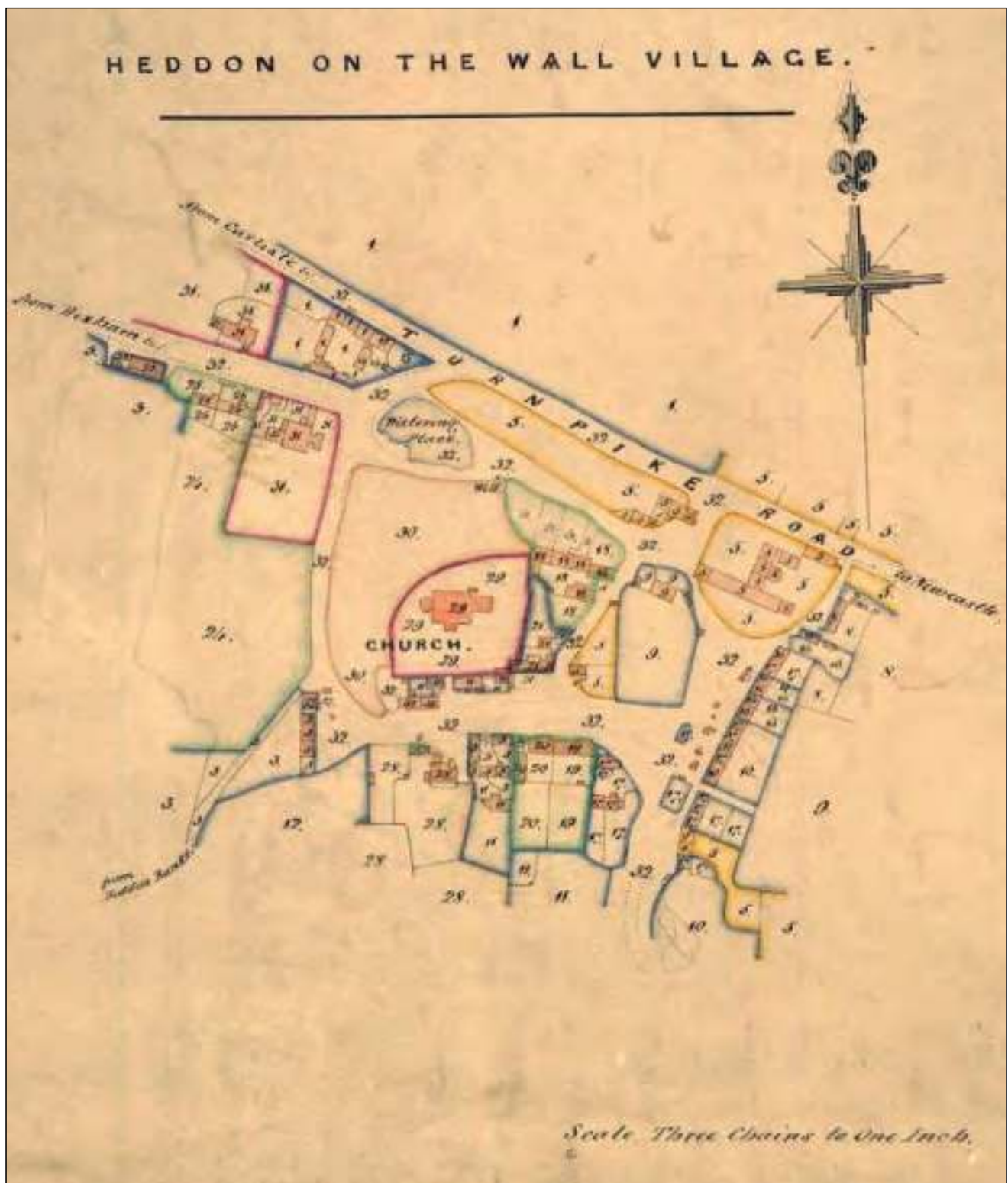
Heddon on the Wall Tithe Award, Enlarged Plan of village-core c.1848
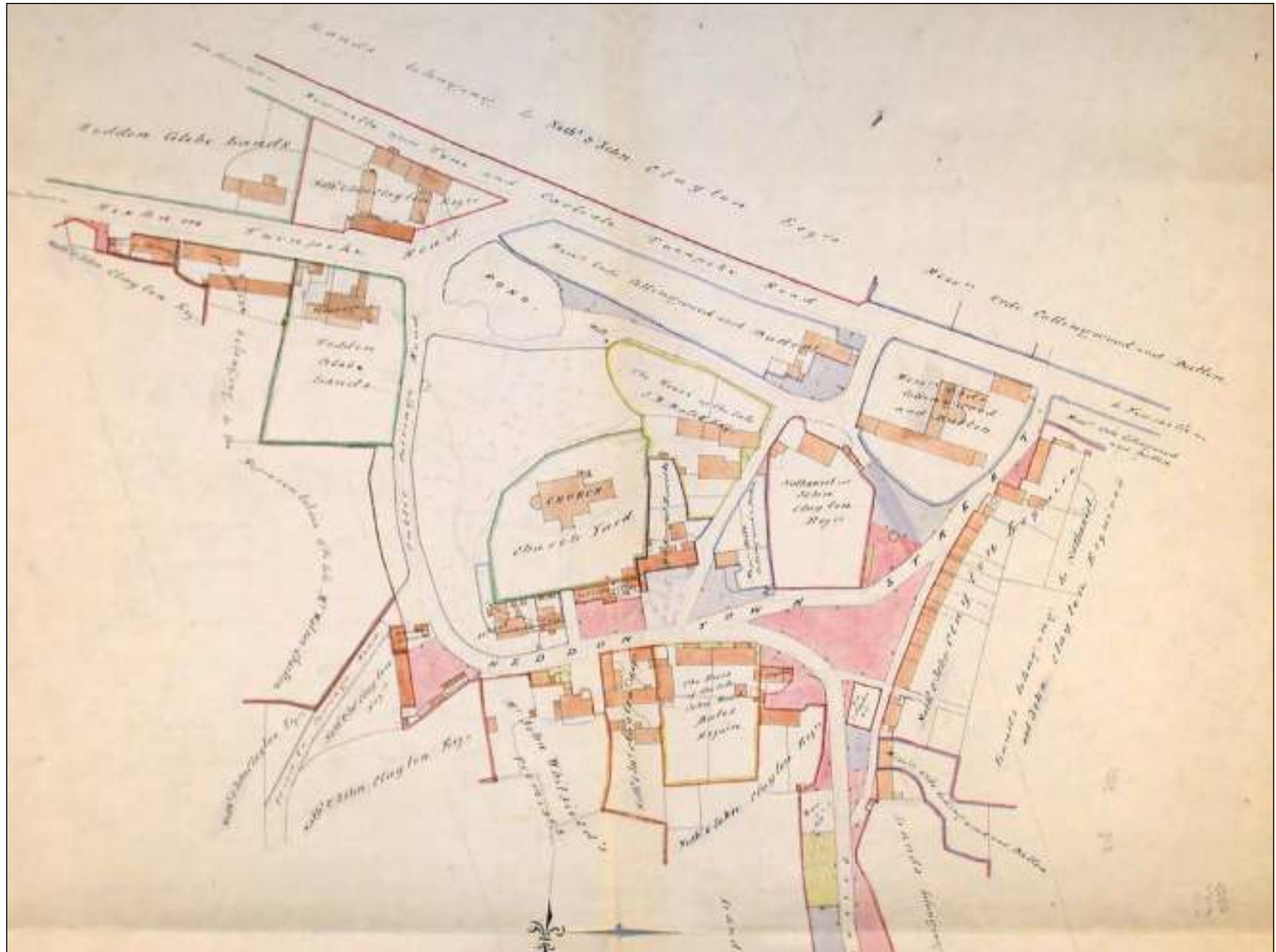
Enlarged Plan of Heddon-on-the-Wall 1856 by Thomas Bell and sons.

from medieval toft enclosures. In the NE corner there is a cluster of buildings associated with Heddon East Farm (later Town Farm) and, similarly, groups of buildings at the NW corner lining the approaches and junction of the Military Road and Hexham turnpike roads, including the Parsonage, the Three Tuns and buildings associated with Bay's Leap Farm. These arrangements must to some degree reflect remodelling following the construction of the turnpikes. The previous layout is difficult to recover precisely, but it is likely that the remains of Hadrian's Wall once bounded the northern edge of the settlement.

The Township
Little definite can be said regarding the layout of the township. Field names recorded on the various 18th- and 19th-century farm plans are not illuminating with regard to the location of the common moor. Areas of broad ridge and furrow ploughing likely to be medieval or very early modern can still be seen immediately to the east and north of the village (see LiDAR imagery). Other areas can be seen immediately to the south-east and north east of the current settlement and also in the north-west extension of the township, but this is narrower and could potentially be post-medieval in origin. It seems likely that the south-facing dip-slopes below the village were exploited for arable cultivation, whereas the low-lying haugh-lands beside the river may well have been used as meadowland. Later documents suggest there was also a Salmon fishery on the Tyne.

The corn mill
The watermill which ground the community's corn was located on the northern edge of the township beside the burn which fed the mill race (25; HER 22240). This features on maps in this location from the early 19th century (notably Fryer's map of 1820 & Greenwood's map of 1828), but is mentioned in the 1717 inclosure award and in documents of 1611-12, 1635 and 1663. As the principal mill serving the village community, it is unlikely to have shifted location once established. Once the effort to install the water management infrastructure required by the mill had been undertaken – the leats, mill pond, weir, etc. – there was no incentive to move the mill building, which was simply periodically rebuilt on the same spot. Interestingly, the extent of 1262 itemised above mentions 'mills'. Was there once a second watermill or perhaps a windmill in addition to the watermill?

The corn-drying kilns
Perhaps the best-known medieval monument in Heddon – apart from the parish church – is the circular corn-drying kiln built into the surviving stretch of Hadrian's Wall to the east of the village, which was exposed at some point between 1867 and 1879, along with a short length of the Wall curtain. The kiln measures 1.9 m in diameter, has a paved floor, and the surrounding wall has a maximum height of 0.7 m (3 courses). The flue in the south-west arc is 1.4 m wide.

Remarkably a second medieval kiln has recently been discovered at Heddon. In addition to a stretch of Hadrian's Wall, the watching brief at Town Farm in 2019 also identified a well-preserved stone-lined kiln with associated fire pit and flue (21; HER 30397). The kiln was initially considered to be associated with Roman activity at the site, but the recovery of several sherds of medieval pottery from the feature (the only medieval pottery recovered anywhere during the watching brief) and its location on the northern side of the Wall indicates that it relates to a later phase of activity, probably the 14th or 15th century. Apart from the recovery of oak charcoal, primarily from the fire pit, no indication of use of the kiln was identified, although it is likely that the feature was used as a corn-drying kiln, similar to the well-known example further east. The purpose of such corn-drying kilns was to dry corn prior to threshing, or to dry and harden damp, threshed grain for storage or milling. Some structures interpreted as medieval corn-driers may also, or alternatively, have served as malting ovens associated with brewing.
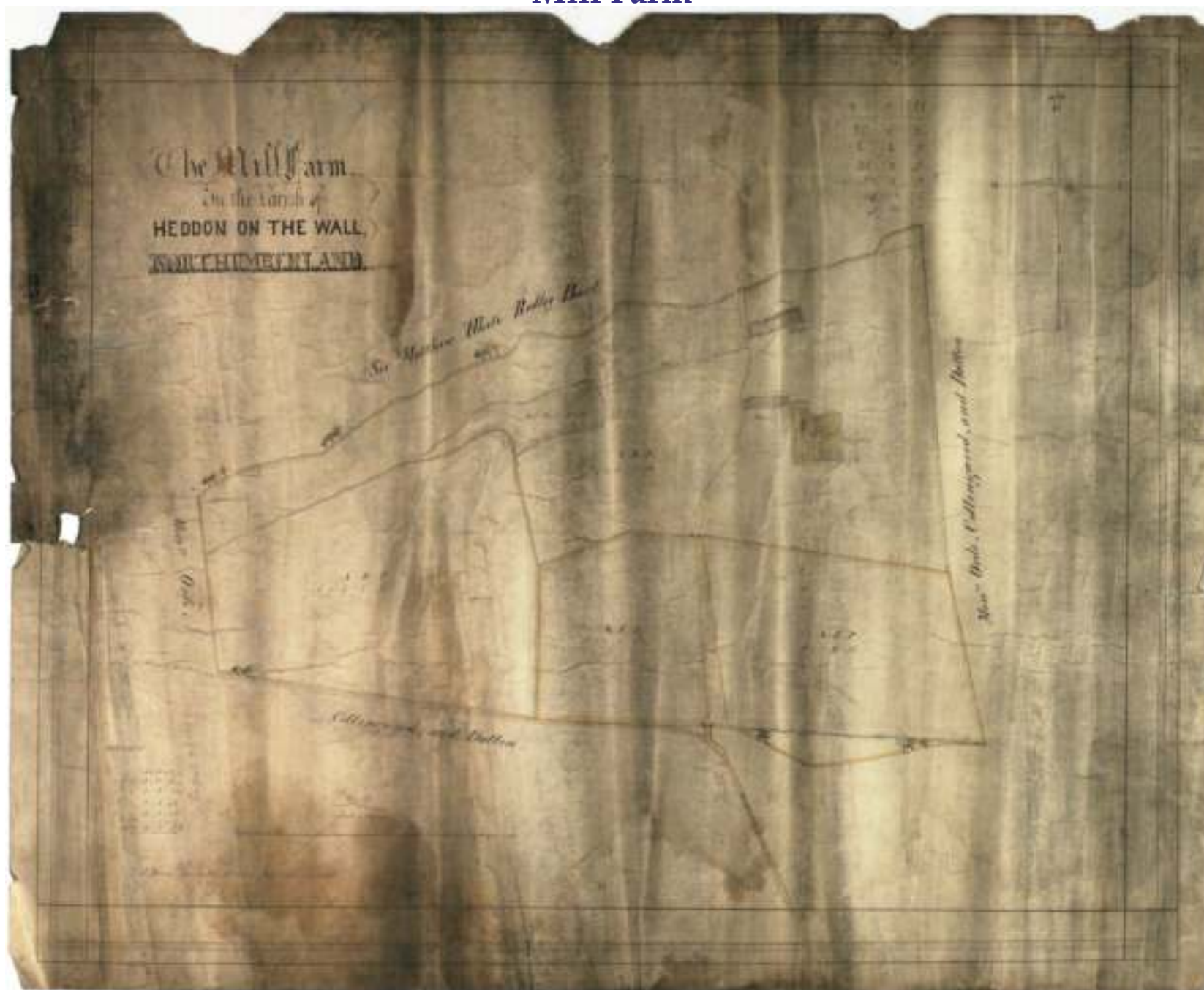
The corn-drying kiln built into the stretch of Hadrian's Wall E of the village, viewed from the W (1884).

The medieval corn-drying kiln revealed during excavations at Town Farm (now Tulip Mews) in 2019. Photo: courtesy of A Curtis

Mill Farm

Plan of Mill Farm, Heddon, 1855 (NRO 00309/M/46). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.

11. THE 16TH TO 18TH CENTURIES

Landholding

At the end of the Middle Ages there were two principal landholdings in Heddon, descended from the halves (moieties) received by the two heiresses to the Bolbec barony in the 13th century. Over the course of the 16th century, one portion passed to the Dacres by marriage to the Greystoke heiress and then to the Lord William Howard in 1601. The Howards subsequently acquired the title Earl of Carlisle. In 1796, the sixth Earl of Carlisle sold his share of Heddon for £15,750 to Nathaniel Clayton, Town Clerk of Newcastle upon Tyne 1785-1822. It remained in the hands of the Clayton family until 1918, when the widow of John Clayton, grandson of Nathaniel, sold the farms of Bays Leap, Heddon Mill and Towne House to Adam and James Hedley of Newcastle. East Town Farm and several other pieces of land were sold to Sir James Knott for £13,345.

The second landholding, had been granted to Blanchland Abbey in the 14th century. Following the Dissolution of that monastery in 1539, the holding seems to have come into the tenure of Edmund Claxton who had leased the office of bailiff of Heddon for a term of 80 years from the abbot of Blanchland in 1538. In 1590, the Great Tithes of Heddon Parish, together with the tithe barns of Heddon and Eachwick, and the tithes of salmon at Heddon, were leased to George Mason for 21 years; also...

> *'..all the other possessions of the monastery of Blanchland at Heddon* (a half share of the township)*, which (Roger Mitford and Edmund Claxton have lately) held at the rent of £7, including the right of digging and drawing coal and other ore with way-leave and staithe-leave; and likewise, the tithe of these premises amounting to £2 17s 01/2d.'*

This moiety of Heddon was later granted to John Eldred and others in 1611-12. Subsequent owners were Sir Robert Wingfield, Henry Deth, Ralph Carr, Thomas Dent and James Metham. In 1635, when Ralph Carr sold the moiety to the trustees of James Metham, it was described as comprising:

> '*7 messuages, 6 cottages and a water corn mill, 300 acres of ploughed land, 100 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture, 50 acres of furze and heath*' (with mining rights reserved).

The holding was finally divided between Thomas Dent's two married daughters, Isabel Bigge and Julian Hindmarsh in 1684 (although succession was not finally resolved until 1706), who shared in the division of the common lands of Heddon in 1717 (Dodds 1930, 82-83; http://heddonhistory.weebly.com/1-heddon-township.html).

In 1810, Charles William Bigge sold the quarter held in the south-east part of the township to George Bates of Aydon, whose descendent was the famous local historian, Cadwallader Bates. The other quarter, occupying the north-east part of the township was further divided and then redivided over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, coming into the hands variously of Ordes, Shadforths, Duttons and Collingwoods, with the Collingwood portion being purchased by John Clayton in 1874 (Dodds 1930, 84).

Inclosure

The common lands of Heddon, amounting to 1,020 acres were divided by award on 28th September 1717 between the three main landowners (Dodds 1930, 83):

- ❖ 504 acres on the west side of the township were assigned to the Earl of Carlisle;
- ❖ 260 acres on the north-east to Julian Hindmarsh;
- ❖ 256 acres on the south-east to John, son and heir of William and Isabel Bigge.

The vicar, James Carmichael and his successors, also received a parcel of ground, amounting to 13 acres lying next to the 'Great Wall' (Hadrian's Wall), thereafter called the **Glebe land**. The three main participants retained the liberty thereafter to bleach and dry their clothes on the east part of the Glebe land, a place used for that purpose by the tenants of Heddon.

No order was made as to **quarries**, there being sufficient on each party's allotment for the building of homes, walls, etc. The wells and watering places for cattle remained in common use; and highways and foot-ways in ancient use were to be maintained.

The Manor Mill and Miller's House which belonged to all three participants were left undivided, the rents to be divided in proportion. 12 acres of land was set aside to continue in common use, undivided for the use of villagers, in lieu of several stints [the proportion of a man's cattle which he can keep upon the common] adjoining the Mill. The tenants of the lands of Heddon retained the liberty to come to the Mill Dams with their cattle in a storm to fetch their water as was their usual practice. (http://heddonhistory.weebly.com/common-land.html)

Newcastle-Carlisle Military Road Survey c.1749 showing the agricultural landscape around Heddon in the mid-18th century (SANT/PLA/7/2/1/1A). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.

The New Farms

Prior to the inclosure award, landholding may have been quite fragmented with tenants cultivating scattered strips of ploughland across the township, and even the main landholdings may have been unconsolidated, whilst moorland would have been held in common. Inclosure created three consolidated estates, which in turn formed four large coherent farms. These are recorded by individual farm plans of the late 18th and early to mid-19th centuries and can be seen clearly on maps showing the entire township, notably the Tithe Map (1848) and Bell's Coalfield Map (1847). The Clayton estate encompassing the western half of the township was divided into two main

farmholds, Bays Leap and Heddon Banks Farms corresponding to the north-west and south-west quarters respectively. Heddon Hall Farm in the south-east quarter belonged to the Bigge then Bates estate, whilst the block encompassing the north-east quarter owned by Messrs. Ord, Collingwood & Dutton, extending from the village north to 'Heddon Mill' and east to the 'Workhouse' (Frenchmen's Row) was represented by East Town Farm located in the north-east corner of the village. Finally Mill Farm represented a much smaller farmhold around the mill located beside the burn which marked the northern edge of the township. The creation of these coherent farms enabled landowners and tenants to participate in the drive for agricultural improvement.

Bell's Coalfield Map of 1847 showing the landholdings and farms of Heddon-on-the-Wall (note the Bates landholding in the SE quarter of the township is wrongly labelled Heddon Banks, which should apply to the Clayton farm in the SW quarter). Courtesy of the Robinson Library, Newcastle University.

Heddon Hall Estate 1780
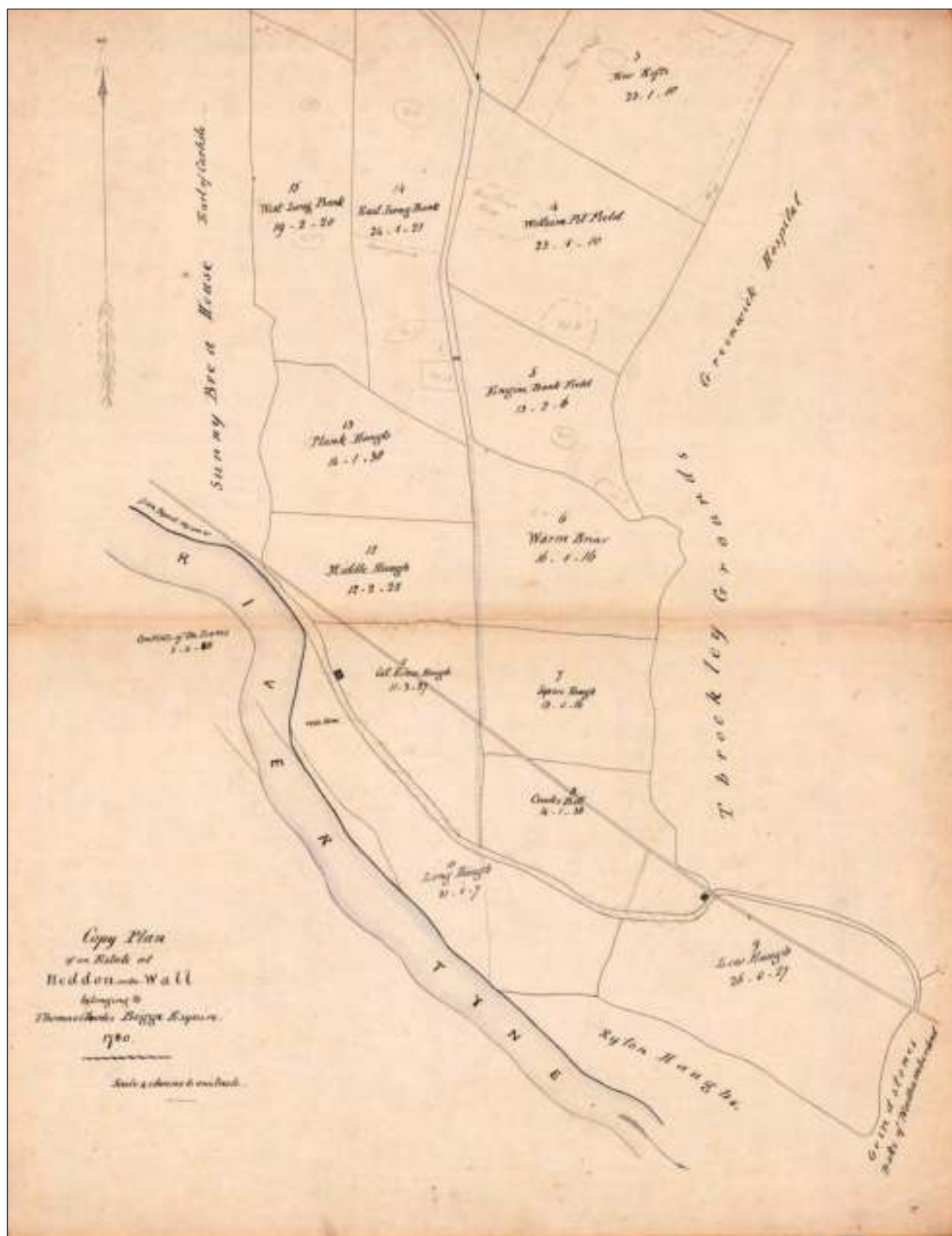
Copy plan of an estate at Heddon (later Heddon Hall Estate) belonging to Thomas Charles Bigge, 1780 (ZGI/XXXI/1). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.

12. COAL, RAIL & QUARRIES

Agriculture was not the only important economic activity in Heddon from the 17th century onwards. Various extractive industries played an increasingly important role, most notably coal-mining and quarrying.

Coal-mining at Heddon (This section is based largely on information supplied by Les Turnbull & Andy Curtis – see Turnbull 2022. Images are courtesy of NEIMME unless otherwise stated.)

As elsewhere in the Tyne valley and its tributaries, coal seams cropped out at the surface or close to it on the valley side leading down to the river, which made the coal easy to locate and extract. It was probably mined from at least the Middle Ages to supply fuel to the locality. The liberty to dig coal and other minerals in Heddon is mentioned in the lease of tithes and land in 1590 and the grant of 1611-12. When Ralph Carr sold a moiety of the Heddon township in 1635, he reserved the mining rights. These were later sold by his son, Francis Carr, to Henry Widdrington of Black Heddon, and from him in 1654 to Charles Howard of Naworth Castle (Dodds 1930, 82).

Numerous named 1-2 m thick seams are available for coal-working in the area (see Chapter 3). Of these, the first to be mined was the six-foot Engine seam, which lies near the surface in Heddon and Throckley but is absent to the west. The potential offered by the shallow Engine seam was sufficiently large at the end of the 17th century to merit the construction of the Tyne Level, a drainage level running from Walbottle Dene westwards into Heddon. In November 1747, the Earl of Carlisle, the owner of Heddon royalty, advertised for letting of Heddon Colliery in the Newcastle Courant, commenting that the coal was suitable for the seasale trade and that the colliery had the facility of the Tyne Level which ran through his estate. The offer appears to have been taken up by Barkas who was associated with William Brown in the development of the neighbouring Throckley Colliery. Soon after, the area became involved in the much more lucrative sea-sale trade which supplied London and the South East with domestic fuel as a result of the initiative of Brown. The decision to make Throckley a sea-sale colliery resulted in the building of the area's first railway in 1751, running from pits near old Throckley village to Lemington. The Wylam Waggonway was built in 1756 and joined the Throckley Way east of Newburn Hall, the home of the Forster family of railway engineers. The Wylam Way had an unusually large gauge of five feet and was to achieve fame as a result of William Hedley's experiments with locomotives on the line (Turnbull 2012, 152-154).


Throckley Waggonway in 1755.

The *Map of Throckley Waggonway* (above) *s*hows the waggonway and associated pits in 1755. It was drawn to seek permission from the Duke of Northumberland for a change of route through his Newburn estate following the opening of Heddon Colliery in the west and new pits for Throckley Colliery in the north. Brown also sought to adopt a gentler descent to the bridge over Wallbottle Dene, a huge wooden structure, 84 yards long, which spanned the valley on 23 pairs of wooden trestles (see below).
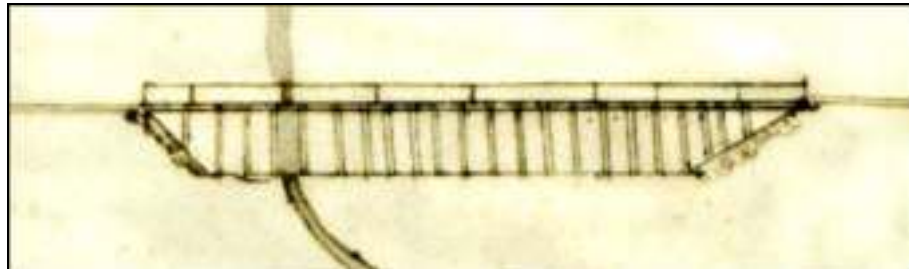
Viaduct across Walbottle Dene

Records of Heddon Colliery's operations during the later 18th and early 19th centuries are sparse. A record of the shaft sunk in Richard Pit on 3rd April 1764, from the existing workings in Main seam down through the Black seam to the Brockwell seam, has been preserved (NEIMME 1885, no. 1107; https://www.dmm.org.uk/shafts/h037-01.htm), which demonstrates that this pit was already in use by then, whilst the 1780 plan of Thomas Charles Bigge's farm (later called Heddon Hall Farm) depicts fields called William Pit Field and Engine Bank Field nearby (Northumberland Archives ZGI/XXXI/1). In 1784, Heddon Colliery was the first in the coal trade to start using mechanical means of 'screening' the coal to separate the 'round' (large) from the small (http://heddonhistory.weebly.com/coal-mining.html).
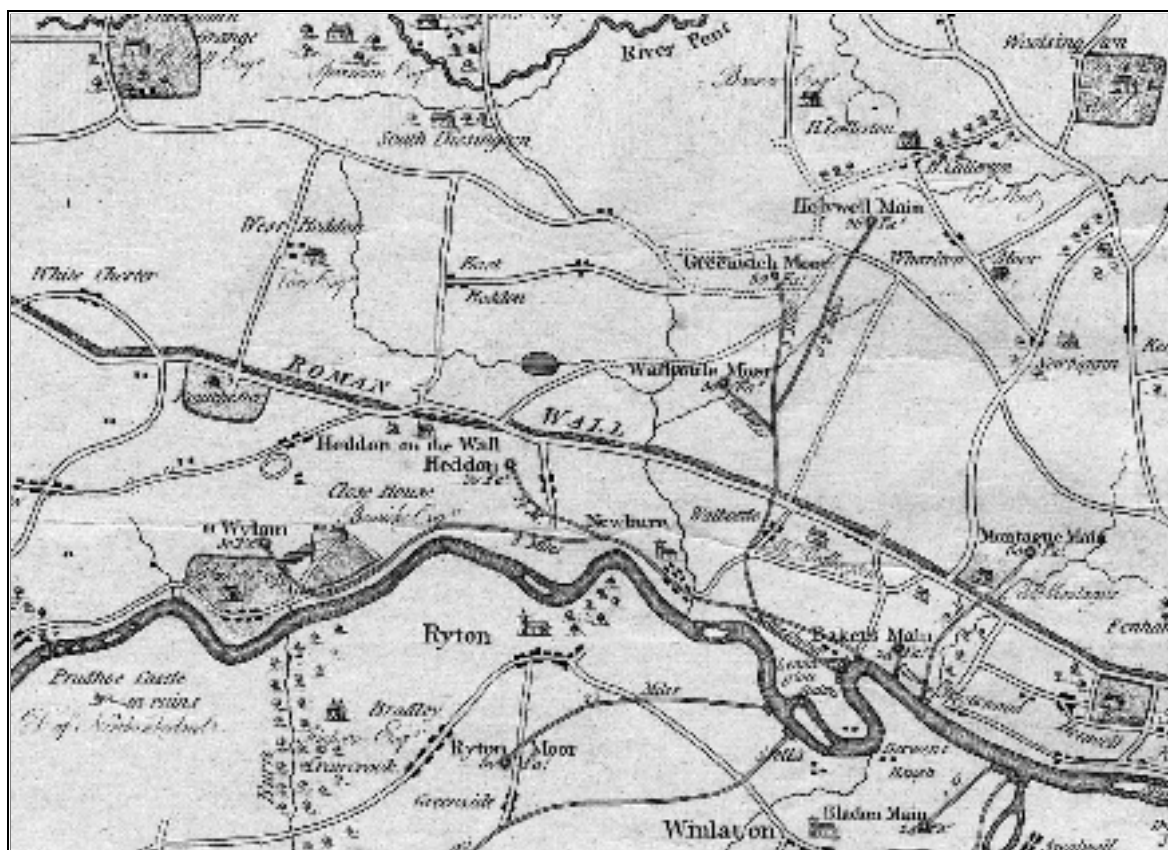
Extract from John Gibson's Plan of the Collieries on the Rivers Tyne and Wear, 1788, showing the waggonway serving the collieries at Heddon and Wylam.

The late 18th century, Gibson's plan of collieries on the Tyne and the Wear shows one pit on the south-east side of Heddon village connected by a branch waggonway to the main Wylam Waggonway. Likewise, Bell's map of the *Great Northern Coalfield* in 1847 shows no working collieries in Heddon other than the drift mine (King Pit) which provided coal and fireclay for the fire brick factory of Thomas Bates. The branch line linking this enterprise to the Wylam Colliery Railway also features on Bell's map. However it is likely that these two plans present an oversimplified picture of the nature and extent of operations in Heddon.

Extract from the 1st edition 6in Ordnance Survey showing coal pits in Heddon.

A clearer impression of the pattern of historic mining activity in Heddon is provided by the 1st edition Ordnance Survey plan. This names nine individual pits[1] and shows four others as 'old coal workings' or 'old coal pit' in the township's south-east quarter. In addition, there are several small, circular, fenced features resembling many of the named pits, which probably mark the site of un-identified, ancient abandoned pits – probably simple bell pits or shallow shafts – some of which still

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[1] The named examples are Engine Bank Pit, Fan's Pit, Fence Pit, Gee Pit, Humble Pit, Jenny Pit, King Pit, Mary Pit and Richard Pit. William Pit does not figure, but Jenny Pit lies in the same field so might be an alternative name for it.

survive, surrounded by clumps of trees as shown below. A similar pattern prevails in neighbouring Throckley. None of the named pits are labelled 'disused' or 'old coal pit' so they may still have been operating, though no buildings are shown alongside the shafts. At any rate it is likely they had been operating relatively recently. The number of these pits and their close proximity to one another suggests a series of fairly small scale workings, sunk via multiple shafts, though the galleries may have eventually linked up underground to create extensive pillar and stall systems. The 1st edition also shows the branch waggonway from the Wylam Way connecting directly to the Heddon Brick Works, next to King Pit; this was the successor to Bates' Heddon Fire Brick Works shown on Bell's 1847 Coalfield Plan, which had been dissolved in 1848.

By the time of the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1895), a major intensification of operations had occurred. The small coal pits had all closed, but a new larger pit, Margaret Pit, had been established just south of the still functioning Heddon Brick Works, next to Station Road. This pit had been sunk to the Brockwell seam, the lowest marketable coal, in the 1860s. In addition to the link line connecting both enterprises to the North Eastern Railway's Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam loop branchline (see below) – the successor to the Wylam Waggonway – the Ordnance Survey plan shows a tramway system which hauled coal in 7cwt tubs up to a land-sale depot near Heddon village, using a steel wire rope powered by a stationery engine at the pit. Two parallel branches are shown, the westerly one being a replacement for the easterly, probably in response to a projected new driveway for Heddon Hall, which, in the event, was never constructed. The western branch still features on the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey (revised 1914, published 1921). The line of the old tubway is still visible running due south down the field edge.

The 2nd edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey plan showing Margaret Pit and Heddon Brick Works.
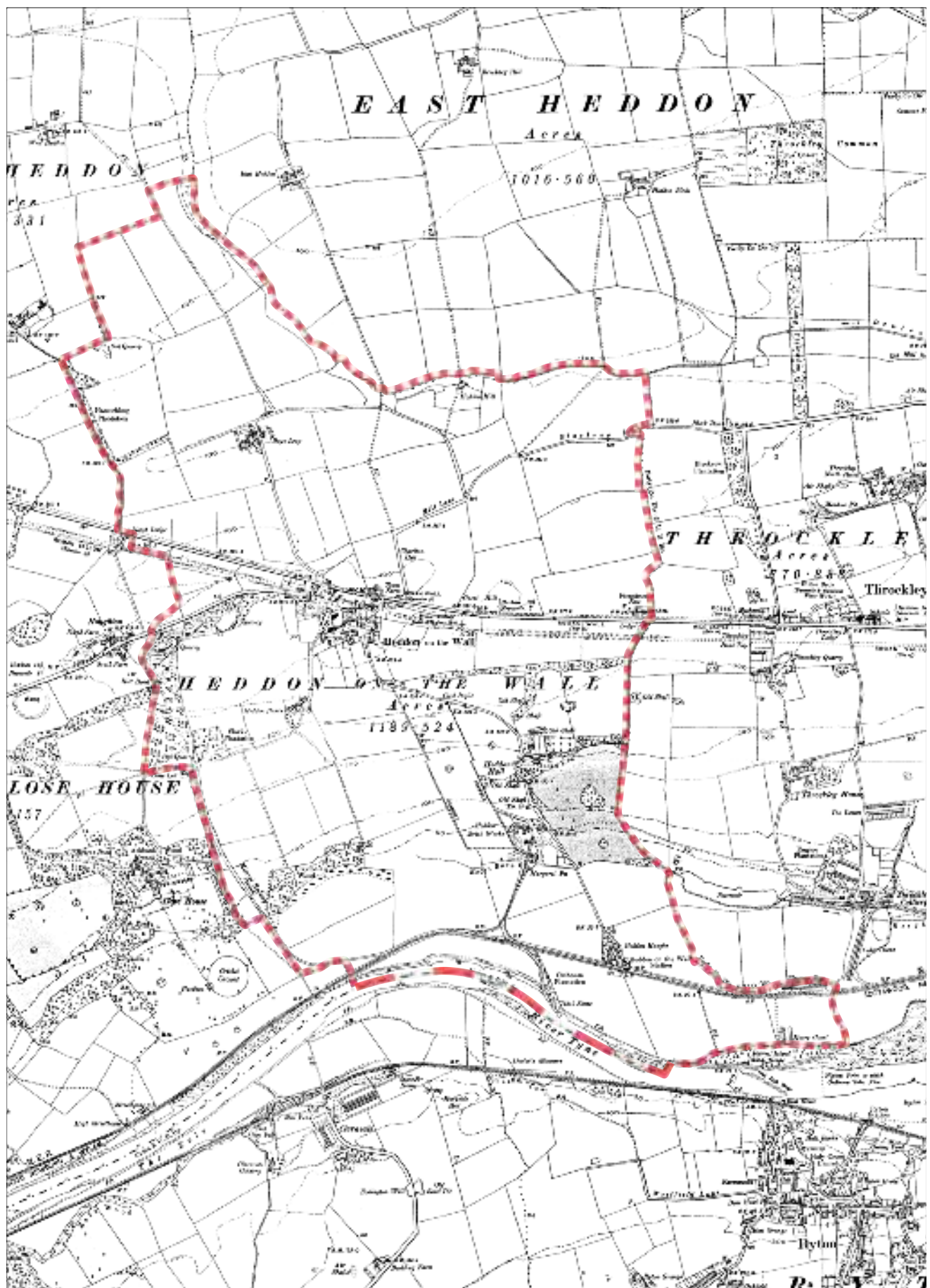
Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series, c.1898 (published), showing the Township of Heddon on the Wall (bound in red).

Margaret Pit was both a deep mine and a drift mine, with drift workings going back into the hillside. It supplied coal to the village and also coal and clay to the 'Heddon Colliery and Fire Brick Works' located on Newcastle's Quayside. It was sold to the Throckley Coal Company in 1902, allowing the latter to better manage water drainage, and continued to operate until the early 1930s when it closed with the loss of over 200 jobs. The remains of some pit buildings, a large spoil heap and faint evidence of the associated trackway can still be seen.

Firebricks from Heddon Brick Works (courtesy of A. Curtis)

This was not quite the last mining activity seen at Heddon, for, in 1957, the National Coal Board bought Bays Leap Farm, comprising 70 acres from which 2.5 million tons of coal were extracted by opencast mining before it closed in 1965. This marked the end of coalmining in Heddon.

Pit south of Heddon Hall.

Thistle Pit, Throckley, opposite Frenchman's Row.

Margaret Pit and coal depot tramways.
(all photos courtesy A Curtis)

Bays Leap Farm after NCB restoration.

Quarrying

Rights to quarry stone are also mentioned in documents of the early 17th century. The inclosure award made no order regarding quarries as there was sufficient on each party's allotment for the building of homes and walls. The Military Road survey of 1749 labels a stone quarry on the east side of Heddon village, an important feature for road building, even if the Roman Wall was the primary quarry for that project. The 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps show substantial quarries in the township, particularly to the immediate west of the village and it is likely that 19th to the early 20th century was the heyday of this industry, producing good quality building stone for use across the region. All quarrying in the village ended about 1930.

The Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam Railway

As noted above this branch was a loop line off the Newcastle and Carlisle railway line, built by the North Eastern Railway. It ran along the north side of the Tyne from Scotswood to West Wylam Junction, where it re-joined the main line. The line opened in 1875/77 and was furnished with stations at Lemington, Newburn, Heddon-on-the-Wall (from 1881) and North Wylam. Although freight and long-distance trains might run through, the local passenger service was essentially treated as a branch line from Scotswood with virtually all trains from Newcastle terminating at North Wylam.

The station serving Heddon was not located in the village, however, but over a mile to the south, close to the river, and accessible only by a steep track down Heddon Banks. The railway used the course of the Wylam Waggonway, which had served collieries and brickworks along the southern reaches of Heddon and Wylam since the mid-18th century. The 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps clearly show the various branches and tramways which connected the waggonway and the succeeding railway to these coal pits and brickworks.

14,124 tickets were issued at Heddon-on-the-Wall station in 1911, but only 2,428 in 1951 (Young 2003, 72), doubtless as a result of competition from bus services which began in the 1920s and were much more convenient, passing directly through the centre of the village itself. The station was closed for both passengers and goods in 1958, with the passenger service to North Wylam ceasing completely in 1968. The track was finally removed in April 1972.


A view of Heddon on the Wall station and staff, perhaps c.1900.
(http://heddonhistory.weebly.com/old-photos-3.html

The Station at Heddon on the Wall, shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Plan c.1897, 1:2500 series.

Photograph of a Newcastle-bound diesel train passing Heddon on the Wall Station, probably in the late 1950s. Note the station still retains its ornate LNER nameboard. .
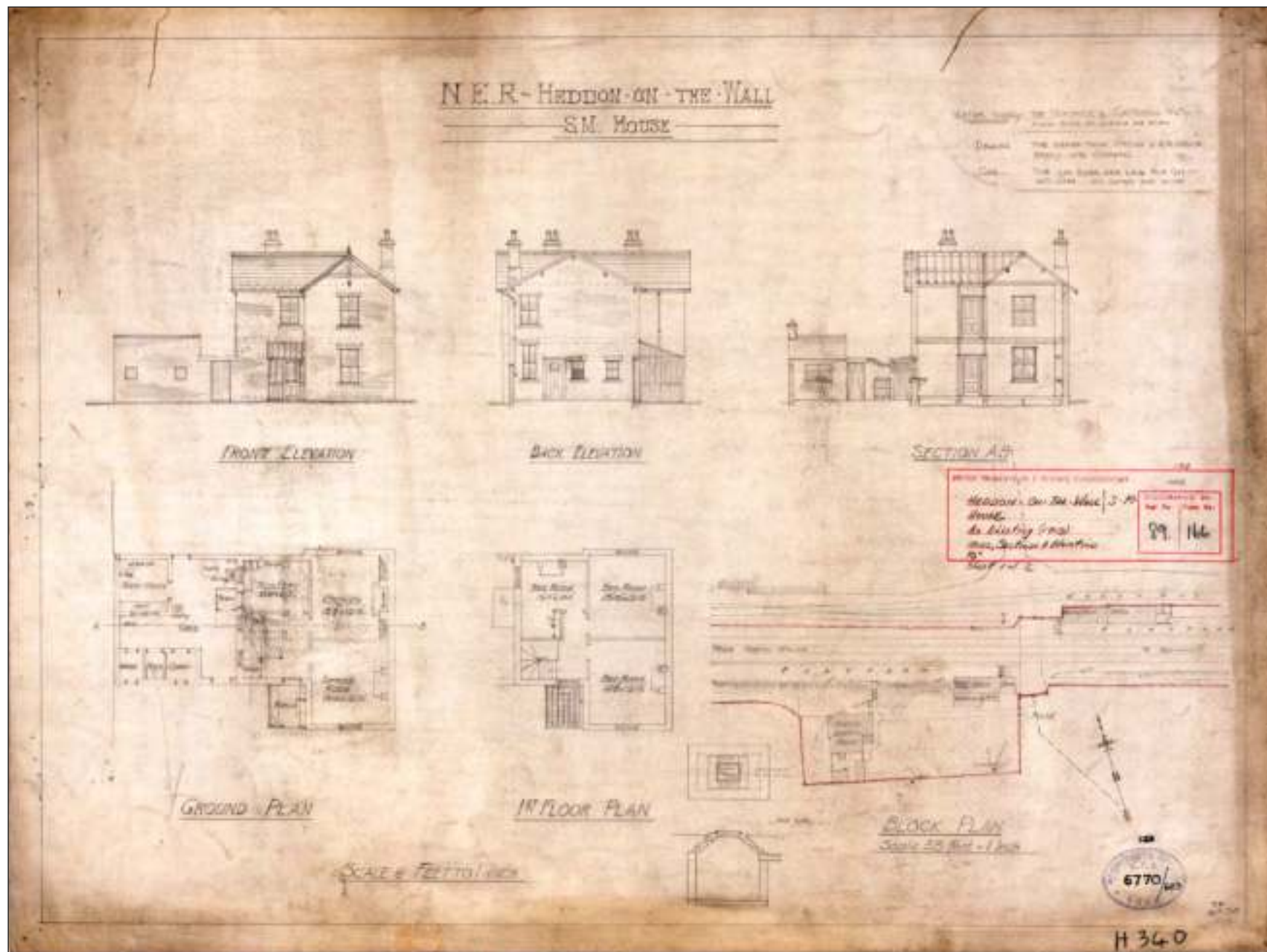
North Eastern Railway (NER) plan of proposed stationmaster's house at Heddon-on-the-Wall station, 1877 (NRO 09145/1/13). Reproduced with permission of Northumberland Archives.

13. HEDDON FROM 1900 TO THE PRESENT DAY

Heddon witnessed considerable change over the course of the 20th century. Historic photographs give a good impression of life in the village throughout this period.

Agriculture remains important in the area, but the other industries which were once so important are no longer a feature of village life. The quarries and coal mines did not survive The Great Depression of the 1930s. Even the larger nearby pits such as Throckley and North Walbottle all closed in the second half of the 20th century. However, there was a later resurgence of coal mining with the purchase of Bays Leap Farm, Town House and Heddon Mill by the National Coal Board in 1957 for open cast mining. 70 acres of land was then excavated to a depth of 200 feet to extract 2.5 million tons of coal, the land being returned to farming in 1965 and a new Bays Leap Farm erected in a different location from its predecessor. Since the closure of the railway station in 1958, Heddon has adapted fully to motorised transport. From the 1920s onwards buses provided more convenient public transport than the distant railway station, but most now rely on the car and the petrol station built beside the main crossroads at the north end of the village is now a prominent feature, serving as something of a social as well as economic hub. Its changing form can be seen in historic photographs. Fortunately, most through-traffic is now able to bypass the village on the A69 dual carriageway built in the 1970s.

The mark left on the village by the terrible conflicts of the first half of the 20th century is commemorated by the war memorial and by Memorial Park provided by Sir James Knott in 1925 in memory of his two younger sons killed on the Western Front during the Great War. Today the village core retains its essential form, with newer buildings squeezed in here and there, but has been augmented by housing estates added to the east and west from the 1960s onwards. This represents the most significant change to Heddon in this period, greatly increasing its size and marking a shift towards dormitory village status for the wider region.
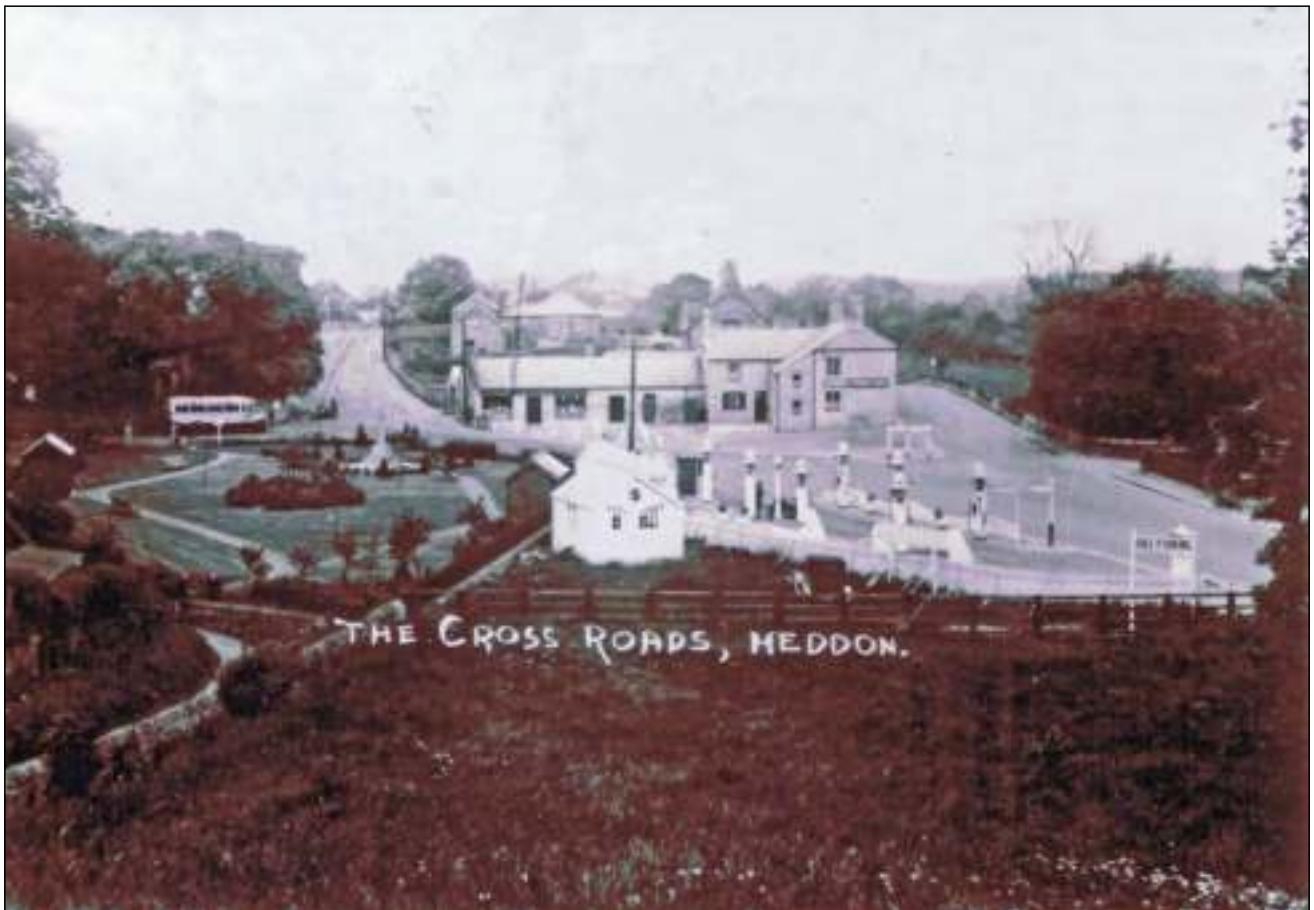

The Knott Memorial Hall – the principal meeting hall and venue for events in the village – erected in 1936, in memory of Sir James and Lady Margaret Annie Knott, by their son, Sir Garbutt Knott.

Historic Photographs of Heddon

A hunting party, outside the Three Tuns Inn, with pond in the foreground, around 1910-1920.
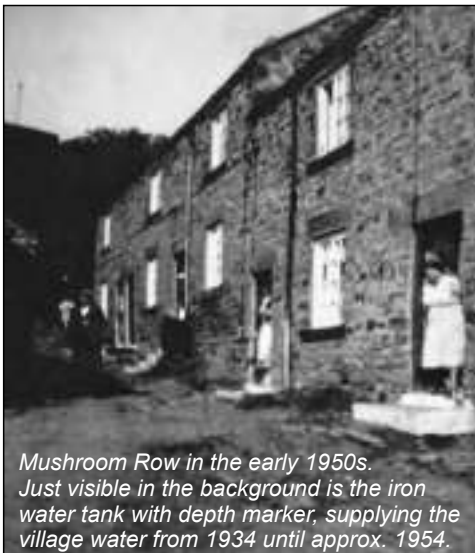

THE CROSS ROADS, HEDDON.

A later postcard, probably around the 1950s, showing the new filling station and the former pond area infilled to become Memorial Park in the early 1920s.

Historic Photographs of Heddon


HEDDON. W.I. WINNERS of ST CECILIA BANNER

The Royal French Arms, Hexham Road, built in 1897 now converted to apartments.


Mushroom Row in the early 1950s. Just visible in the background is the iron water tank with depth marker, supplying the village water from 1934 until approx. 1954.

Looking east along Towne Gate, around 1900, with the Methodist Chapel (left) and the Jubilee Tree with railings (centre).
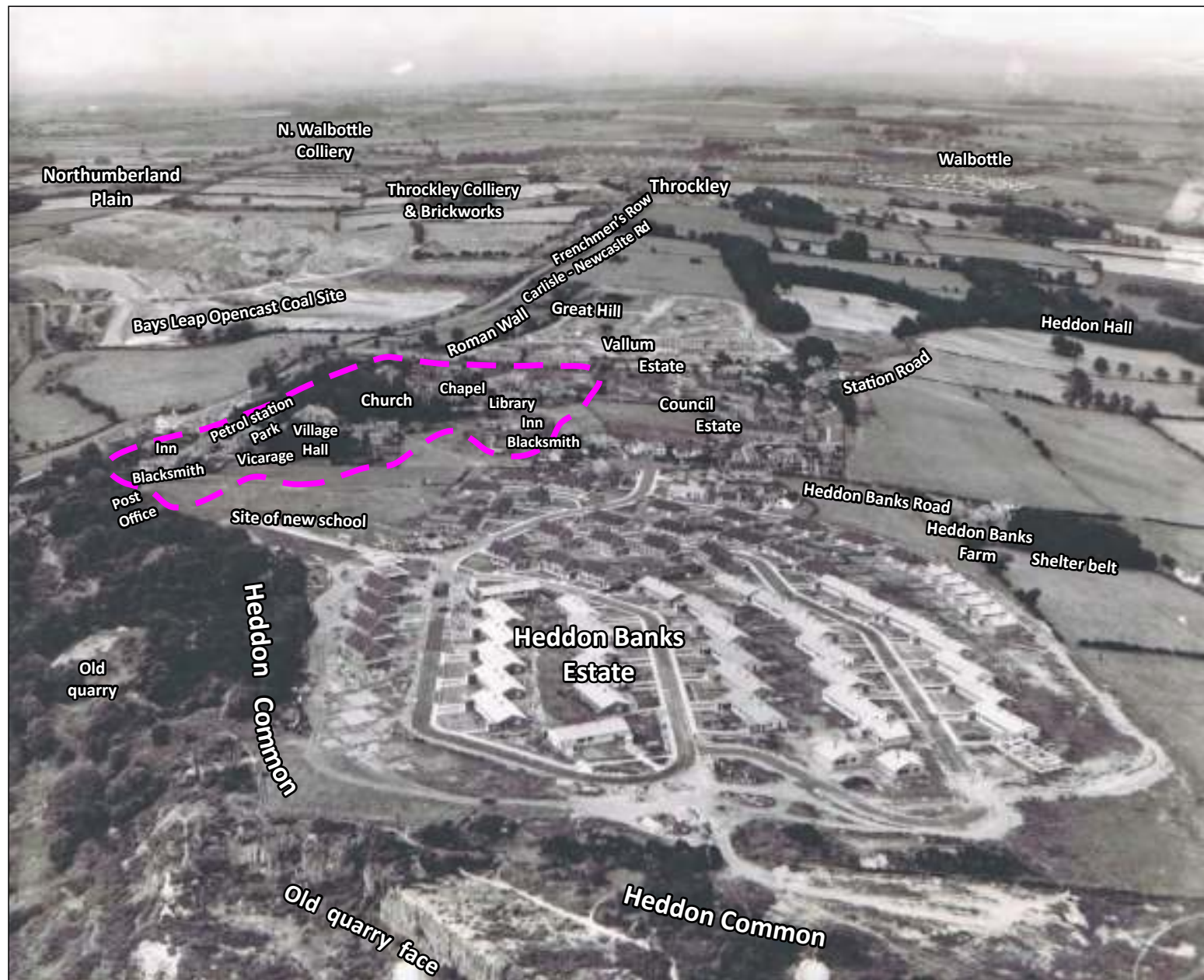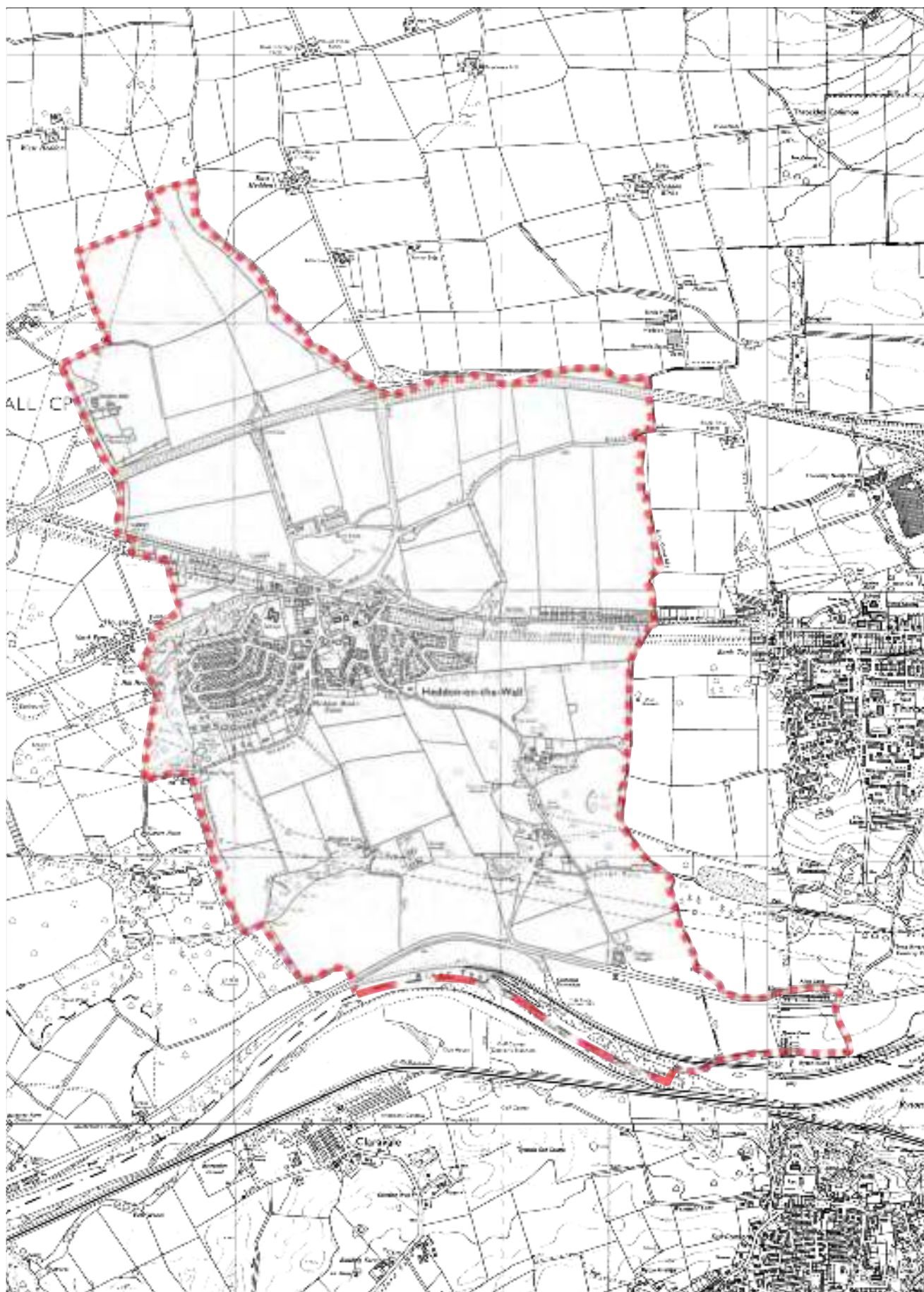
Aerial photograph of Heddon Village looking east (1961). The pecked line indicates the pre-1920s village nucleus.
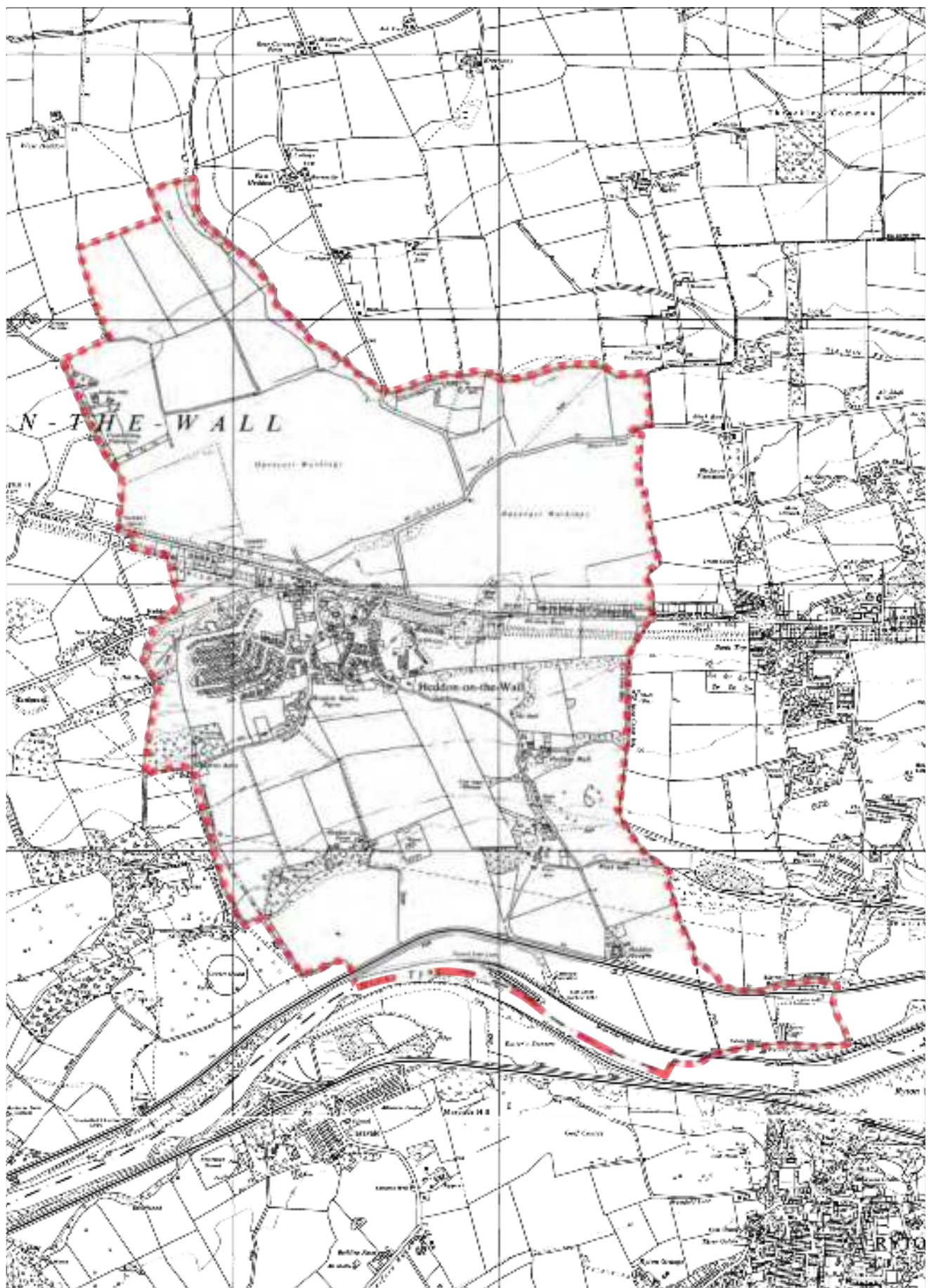
Extract from the c.1967 (published) Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series, showing the opencast workings north of the Military Road and the initial housing estate developments east and west of the village.

Extract from the c.1980 (published) Edition Ordnance Survey Plan, 6-inch series, showing the new housing estates and the A69 bypass north of the village.

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FURTHER READING

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A great deal of additional information can be found on the Heddon Local History Society website: http://heddonhistory.weebly.com/
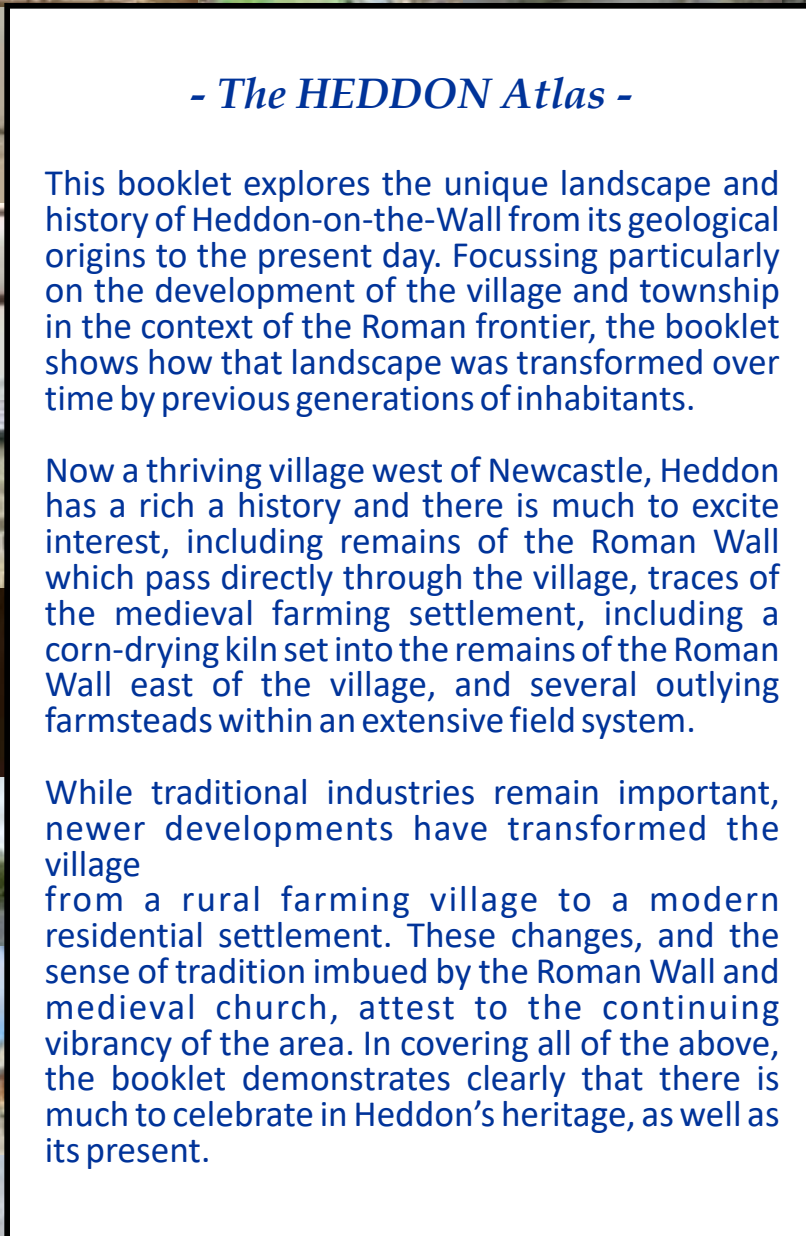
- The HEDDON Atlas -

This booklet explores the unique landscape and history of Heddon-on-the-Wall from its geological origins to the present day. Focussing particularly on the development of the village and township in the context of the Roman frontier, the booklet shows how that landscape was transformed over time by previous generations of inhabitants.

Now a thriving village west of Newcastle, Heddon has a rich a history and there is much to excite interest, including remains of the Roman Wall which pass directly through the village, traces of the medieval farming settlement, including a corn-drying kiln set into the remains of the Roman Wall east of the village, and several outlying farmsteads within an extensive field system.

While traditional industries remain important, newer developments have transformed the village
from a rural farming village to a modern residential settlement. These changes, and the sense of tradition imbued by the Roman Wall and medieval church, attest to the continuing vibrancy of the area. In covering all of the above, the booklet demonstrates clearly that there is much to celebrate in Heddon's heritage, as well as its present.