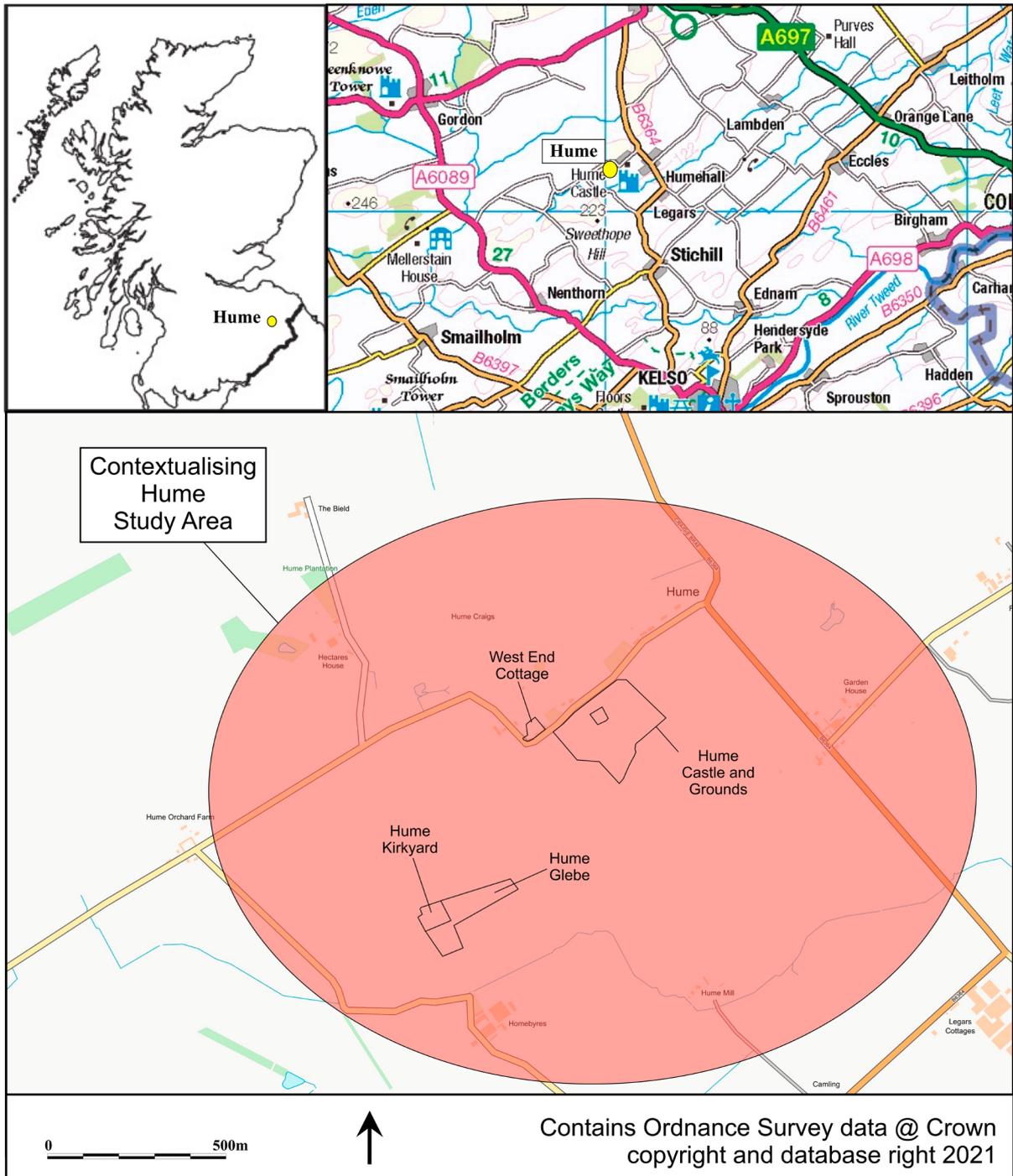


2. INTRODUCTION

The Contextualising Hume Project was a community engagement project that ran from summer 2018 until early 2022, focussing on Hume Village and Castle and their immediate surrounding landscape (NGR NT 70472 41393; centred on Hume Castle SM387, NRHE No. NT74SW 3, Canmore ID [58561](#)) (Illus 1). The project was funded by the

National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Fallago Environment Fund. The archaeological works and project delivery was undertaken by Heritage & Archaeological Research Practice (HARP) on behalf of the Hume Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT). HCPT owns Hume Castle and the land immediately surrounding it, and administers, maintains, and promotes the Castle. The project also engaged local delivery partners including the



Illus 1 Location plan (Image by Heritage and Archaeological Research Practice)

Hume Community Association (HCA), the Borders Family History Society (BFHS), and Knitting For All Kelso, Melrose and Jedburgh (KFA).

A number of training opportunities and workshops were provided for local volunteers, archaeology students, and primary school pupils over the course of the project. Two seasons of excavation were carried out, which included excavations in the castle grounds, glebe field of the former Kirk of St Nicholas (former parish church of Hume), and a garden in the modern village.

This report presents the results of the archaeological aspects of the project, with detailed analysis of the artefacts uncovered during excavation works, and an analysis of Hume Village and Castle and their setting.

2.1 Background to the project

The Contextualising Hume Project aimed to undertake a range of archaeological techniques to research, excavate, and record Hume Village and its surrounding landscape. This included Hume Castle and the remains of the former medieval village immediately surrounding it and the associated kirkyard that used to house the former parish church. The project engaged with over 350 members of the public including volunteers from the local community, school children, university students, and local interest groups. Opportunities to learn more about the history of Hume were provided, and over 100 people received skills training in archaeological survey, excavation, and recording (Illus 2).

Key research questions that the project aimed to address included: When did occupation and/or activity in the settlement remains immediately surrounding Hume Castle cease? Does the settlement at Hume follow a traditional model based around castle, church, or both? How was the settlement at Hume affected by the abandonment, and possible destruction, of the former parish church and destruction of the castle? What significance is maintained at a settlement whose church and castle have been abandoned and/or destroyed?

To answer these questions the project covered four central archaeological themes: Research; Survey and Recording; Excavation; and Interpretation. The aim of each theme was to enhance current understanding

of Hume Village and the surrounding landscape, and to provide opportunities for volunteers to engage in archaeological activity.

The research theme involved exploring the historical narrative of the village and castle. Their immediate setting was explored and included analysis of historic maps, aerial photographs, an assessment of publicly accessible documentary evidence, and an appraisal of existing archaeological evidence and reports.

A central theme of the project was a series of non-invasive surveys and archaeological recording techniques to provide a more complete record and understanding of the Hume landscape, and to help inform the excavations that were carried out. The survey and recording elements of the project included a condition survey of Hume Kirkyard including a survey to identify and record visible and non-visible gravestones and remains of the former kirk (church); a geophysical survey of the kirkyard and surrounding glebe fields to identify any subsurface features; and a landscape survey of the land immediately surrounding Hume Castle. An Historic Building Record (HBR) for some elevations of the castle was also undertaken to provide volunteers with the opportunity to learn this aspect of archaeological recording.

Two seasons of excavation were conducted to target specific aspects of the Hume landscape. In the land immediately surrounding Hume Castle, two trenches and three test pits were excavated to investigate the remains of structures and features identified during previous survey works. A trench was excavated to investigate the remains of a former workshop identified in the gardens of West End Cottage in Hume Village, and two trenches were excavated in the glebe field to the east of Hume Kirkyard to investigate circular anomalies that had been identified during the geophysical survey.

Interpretation was highlighted as one of the most important outputs from the project as there is a lack of easily accessible, detailed information available to the public with regards to Hume Castle and its immediate vicinity. Alongside this publication, four data structure reports were completed to detail the results of the survey and excavation works. A suite of new interpretative material, providing a basic historical background and to disseminate the



Illus 2 Volunteers and students excavating in Hume Glebe (Image by Heritage and Archaeological Research Practice)

results of the project, were completed including three new interpretation boards sited at the castle, village, and kirkyard, and two new information booklets made freely available at those locations. The project also explored engagement with heritage by different audiences using craft as a theme, with a hand-crafted (knitted) replica of Hume Castle produced for an exhibition hosted in Kelso at the end of the project.

Beyond the key research questions outlined above, the principal aims and objectives of the project were to engage members of the local community with an opportunity to learn new skills whilst discovering the heritage of Hume Village and Castle and their immediate surroundings.

2.2 Historical setting of Hume Village

It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a discussion of medieval lordly structures, medieval parish development and function, the history of the Dunbar Earls and their association with Hume, or the gentry in the borders region (for analysis and discussion of these matters see Meikle 1988; Hamilton 2010; Gledhill 2013). Rather, a historical setting is discussed to provide evidence of the earliest records of the church, castle, and village, and to highlight evidence related to clear changes and adaptations, or abandonments, of these entities.

Hume Village originally had an associated parish kirk, at least as old as the castle and located

approximately 800m to its south-west. The earliest record of the Kirk of St Nicholas dates to between 1128 and 1138 when it was granted property (one ploughgate), the parish of Hume and half of the parish of Gordon by Cospatrick I, 1st Earl of Dunbar (Beam et al 2019a, 2019b). The church was later gifted to Kelso Abbey by Cospatrick II, 2nd Earl of Dunbar, at some time between 1138 and 1165 (Beam et al 2019c, 2019d). It is possible that an earlier kirk was located in the vicinity, with a quadrangular, ecclesiastical, hand-rung bell, dating to between AD 600 and 900, found at Hume Castle (Gunn 1899: 219). This bell is now held in Scottish Borders Museum Service store at Duns Museum (Andrew Tulloch, pers comm). The kirk is one of 22 from the Merse specifically mentioned in two letters from the Bishop of St Andrews in 1555 and 1565, noted as being either partly ruinous or at risk of collapse (McRoberts 1959), and had possibly been affected by the wars with England (A Corpus of Scottish Medieval Churches 2008). The Parish of Hume was merged with that of Stichill at some point before May 1611 (CH2/1325) and the kirk was in a ruinous state by 1637 (Gunn 1899: 218). Despite the merging of the parishes, Hume Parish still maintained its own Parish Council and ecclesiastical independence (ibid: 218). The kirkyard at Hume continued to act as a burial ground for locals from the 18th century onwards and contained the 'Earl's Aisle'. This was recorded as the place of sepulchre for the Home family (OS Name Book 1856–58: 17), although it is not known which, if any, Earls of Home were buried there. The 'Earl's Aisle' is depicted as a roofed building (a mausoleum) on the Ordnance Survey First Edition map of the area (1859). It was located on the northern side of the former kirk, occupying part of its transept, but was removed in the early 1990s. The south-east corner of the kirkyard has also been recorded as the location of a 'Pest Knowe', believed to be the burying place of those who had succumbed to the plague in Hume in 1681. There are, however, no records of plague in Scotland in the second half of the 17th century, suggesting that any epidemic or outbreak in Hume was not actually the plague. The mound was investigated by a Lady Scott of Stichill House in the early 19th century, but no evidence of human remains was found (OS Name Book 1856–58: 17). Later suggestions propose that this

mound is actually formed of the structural remains of the kirk (Gunn 1899: 218).

Hume Castle was originally a medieval stronghold dating back to the 13th century, occupying a crucial site for controlling the Merse and the eastern Borders. At least part of the lands at Hume were owned by Ada (Daughter of Patrick I, 4th Earl of Dunbar) and her first husband William de Courtenay at some time between 1206 and 1217. Ownership of more land at Hume was donated to Ada on her marriage to Theobald de Lascelles at some point between 1220 and 1232 (Beam et al 2019e, 2019f). Following the death of Ada, Lady of Hume, the lands passed to Sir William, Lord of Home (Beam et al 2019g). He was Ada's cousin, William of Greenlaw (Hamilton 2010), and from whom the descent of the Home/Hume families is traced (Kerr 1809). William of Greenlaw was probably responsible for the construction of the castle. It was initially built, in all likelihood, of earthworks and timber (Canmore [SC 2072971](#)) and then re-built in stone: first as a castle of enclosure (Canmore [SC 2073035](#)); then as a tower house with artillery fortification (Canmore [SC 2072972](#)) that subsequently saw further artillery fortifications through the 16th century (Dixon 2017). The strategic location of the castle was of particular importance during the Anglo-Scottish Wars, sitting atop the highest point within a 5km radius, and providing unhindered views to the Eildon Hills in the west and the Berwickshire coast to the east. This was highlighted in the 16th century during the Rough Wooing when the castle was besieged and captured by the Duke of Somerset, before being retaken by Alexander Home, 5th Lord of Home, in 1549 (MacGibbon & Ross 1889: 109). Hume Castle was ultimately destroyed in 1651, reportedly by Oliver Cromwell's troops from Berwick under the direction of Colonel Fenwick (ibid). The rebuilding of the castle as a folly in the late 18th century (Canmore [SC 2073036](#)) by Hugh Hume-Campbell, 3rd Earl of Marchmont, saw the structure sitting atop the rubble footings of the earlier castle (MacGibbon & Ross 1889: 109).

The castle is flanked on the north by the modern village of Hume comprising just under 30 properties. Around the base of the castle's rocky outcrop are the remains of the original, likely medieval, village of Hume. This is partially depicted on William Roy's

map of the Lowlands of Scotland (1747–55), the first to show the village of Hume in any real detail. The buildings within the village are shown surrounding the castle on the east, north, and west sides (despite the castle having been destroyed 100 years earlier) with the settlement extending west towards Hume Orchard and Fallsidehill. The former size of the village is alluded to in historic documents, with the Ordnance Survey Name Books (1856–58) noting that the Earls of Home had been able to raise 400 armed men from Hume alone. Similarly, Hearth Tax Rolls from 1694 recorded that Hume Parish had 127 hearths, 105 of which were located in Hume belonging to 94 different households (E69/5/1/18; E69/5/1/19; E69/5/1/20). As the Hearth Tax Rolls did not record those located in hospitals, or those of the poor, it is probable that Hume had even more properties than those recorded by hearths at the time. Medieval settlement patterns in Scotland are complex, and whilst generalisations can be, and have been, made regarding settlement type and character there is no model that fits every case. The settlement pattern at Hume is mixed, with arguments to suggest it is more suited to the classification of a ‘castletoun’, and other reasons to suggest that it could be classified as a nucleated

village with rows of property lining a street, as depicted in Roy (1747–55) and further displayed on the Ordnance Survey First Edition (1859) (see also Dixon 2003 for an analysis of settlement types). Roy depicts the route of the loaning that leads west from Hume Village and Castle and then south towards Hume Byres and the location of the former parish church. The church, however, is not depicted as it was already in at least a ruinous state by this time. Survey work completed by the Border Burghs Archaeology Project (BBAP) in 1987 shows evidence of settlement extending along this loaning to the west of the castle and village (Canmore [SC 1545028](#)), suggesting that the original settlement at Hume extended between the castle and church. This pattern follows other examples of nucleated villages, such as Rattray, with a central street flanked by houses with the castle at one end and the church at the other (Dixon 2003: 59). Improvements were made in Hume in the early 1800s with both the construction of new buildings, and repairs to existing ones noted in a report drawn up on the Marchmont Estate by David Low in 1819 (SBA/1314), but the village itself was apparently seen as a burden rather than a benefit to the estate (*ibid*).