

The enclosure wall (circa 1790) that bisects the D shaped bank has been examined and photographed. The D shaped bank goes under this wall and therefore predates 1790. Where it bisects the D shape it is evident that stones from the D shape have been used in its construction.



Excavations

We have excavated 4 areas of the site, trench HW25T1 across a potential entrance, trench HW25T2 and HW25T4 in the interior and trench HW25T3 across the D shape bank. The soil profile is very shallow and overlies approximately 30 cm sand and stones with the sandstone bedrock beneath.

Trench HW25T1 - Establish if the gap in the bank is an entrance through the bank

The excavation in trench 1 (HW25T1) allowed us to prove that this is indeed an entrance, revealing a definite gap in the bank. A large fallen sandstone orthostat was uncovered, indicating a terminal stone for the entrance gap in the bank. There was no evidence of a ditch or stake holes that could have held a gateway feature. Finds from trench 1 include a possible prehistoric hammer-stone and a prehistoric struck flint, part of a blade that could be of Neolithic or Mesolithic date. The entrance to the enclosure is close to a very steep escarpment and suggests that it may have been located there for defence.



Trench HW25T2 - Interior

Trench 2 was sited across a small stony linear rise which bisects the enclosure. The initial trench was 3 x 10 metres. The north end revealed a low collapsed and robbed out sandstone bank, the south end was sterile and backfilled. Within the bank around 18 shards of unglazed porous pottery (of a reduced type) were uncovered. These will be sent off for further analysis but could potentially be Romano/British. To the north of the bank feature was a compacted stone/rubble 'surface', which abutted the bank and was about 3-4 metres wide. The trench was extended to the north to explore the rubble 'surface' which contained lots of burned stone, smoothing stones, a piece of iron slag and hearth features. Hearth and charcoal samples have been taken. There were no hammer scale or signs of metalworking but the area contained fragments of broken saddle querns and one of a broken beehive quern. The 'surface' was excavated, revealing parallel lines of upright stones, resembling a small flue going back into the bank, under a tree. The trench was extended to investigate the feature and revealed a hearth like feature relating to the flue. Carbon dating of residue charcoal indicates a date of 95.4% probability of 538-640 calAD. The working hypothesis is that this is a domestic area, possibly for the processing or drying of grain. One flint artefact has been identified as Mesolithic. This does not date the features of the site but does indicate hunter-gatherer presence in the area in the Mesolithic period and is of similar in style and flint colouration to the March Hill (Marsden Moor) typologies with a likely date of between 8000 BC to 5000BC.



Trench HW25T3 - the D shaped bank

A 2 metre wide section across the south side of the bank was excavated. Under the leaf litter layers was humus and a charcoal-blackened layer of small stones covering the bank, with some larger stones that appeared to be slippage or buttressing. After recording, this layer of stones was removed as were subsequent layers in order to deconstruct the bank and find out its construction. The bank eventually revealed itself to be a wall 2.5 to 2.7 m thick, more carefully built on the outer face than the inner, with a drainage feature toward the interior. The inside of the wall was filled with sand and stones. Samples of sand from between the wall courses and from phases of construction have been taken. Within the centre at the base of the wall was an upright stone that we believe was part of the initial marking out by the architect of the structure. The blackening of the stones may indicate charcoal manufacture was taking place at a later period and this is born out by the old coppiced oaks in the wood. Interference from tree roots, rodents and the potential that sand used to build the wall may contain earlier charcoal from fires so the sample taken for radio carbon dating was taken from a secure sealed context at the base of the structure. This indicates a date of 95.4% probability of 248-385 cal AD, suggesting a mid to late romano-british date of construction. The trench was extended to the south side to look for an outer ditch. There is no outer ditch but we did discover some quarrying out of stone at the time the wall was constructed. One piece of flint debitage was found indicating the sand used to construct the wall contained evidence of previous prehistoric human activity in the area. The trench was extended into the interior by 2 metres to look for an internal ditch for which there is no evidence. A piece of unglazed pottery found in this area will be sent off for analysis. Other finds from the bank/wall trench include a metal object (found high up in the rubble layer) which may be the rim of a flask and 1 piece of flint, found in the

lower sand layers. The wall is a very deliberate and sophisticated single phase piece of construction, requiring a lot of labour and planning which indicates that the site is of higher status than a standard farmstead.



HW25T4

Stones on the ground were explored to ascertain if they were part of a structure but these quickly proved to be surface stones, potentially removed from the main bank so this area was closed down.

Post excavation work

Post excavation work continues on the finds from the site.

Site Management and Supervision

The excavation and recording has been overseen by the Project Manager, John Bowen and Supervisor, Linda Beever. A regular team of around 5-10 HDAS members have contributed throughout the excavation.

Trenches have been covered and fenced off when not in use and spoil heaps managed with regards to Health and Safety. All trenches were backfilled in accordance with the project plan and care of the woodland environment was observed throughout the excavation.

We involved the Young Archaeologist Club for a visit and day of excavation and this was supervised by the YAC leaders. Members of the public have visited the site as they walk in the woods and have taken a keen interest. Laminated maps, lidar images, notes and photographs have been taken on site to explain and show to visitors the work being carried out.

Throughout the excavation the society has had access to support and advice from West Yorkshire Archaeological Services and this will continue throughout the post excavation stage, after which a full report will be produced and sent to the landowner, HDAS, WYAAS and Pennine Prospects who kindly funded the cost of radio-carbon dating.

Our thanks go to all who have contributed.

Project Manager	John Bowen
Supervisor	Linda Beever