Community Archaeology North CIC (CANCIC): Test Pit CHAP25 TP8

Location of Test Pit: Hewn Stones, Hextol Terrace, Hexham, NE46 2DF
Owner:
Date of Excavation: 13 September 2025
Area of Excavation: 1.0m x 1.0m
Weather conditions: Dry, high cloud
Excavators: Jane Brantom, Rob Handyside, Rhonda Handyside, Lorna Swan-Graham, Bennie Wright, Katherine Wright
Report: SM with Team
Grid reference and height above sea-level, mOD: NY92974 63777 c.71mOD

Introduction

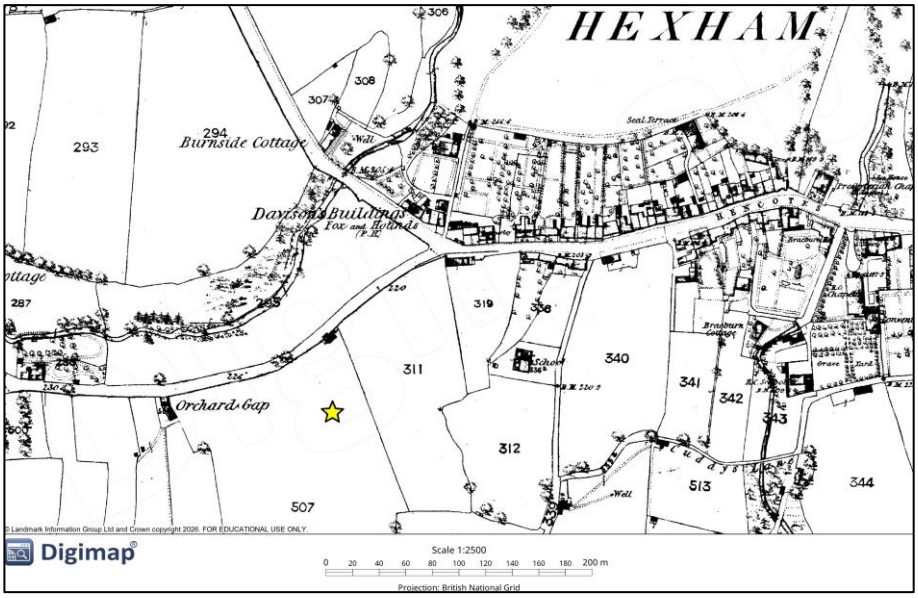


Figure 1 Location of TP8 1860s edition OS map

Hewn Stones is located on Hextol Terrace on the hillside above and to the west of the abbey and town centre. OS map regression shows that during the 1860s the land was open fields (Figure 1). By the 1890s the house, South View, has been built and is set in extensive grounds on the east side of Hextol Terrace (Figure 2). A coach house, added by the 1920s, is still at the rear of the garden. During the 1970s and 1980s the house and grounds were subdivided into three properties including Hewn Stones (Figure 3).

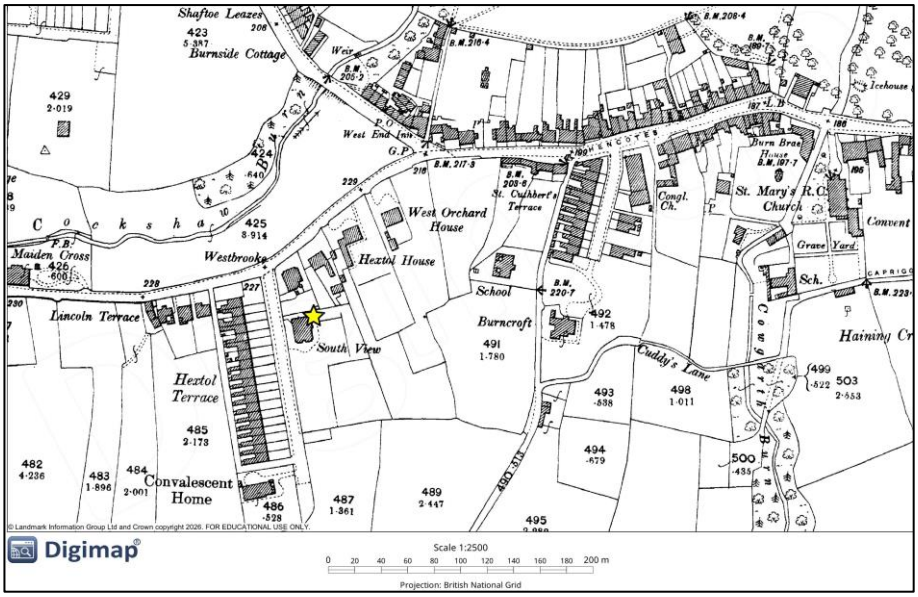


Figure 2 OS map 1890s edition showing location of TP8 in grounds of South View

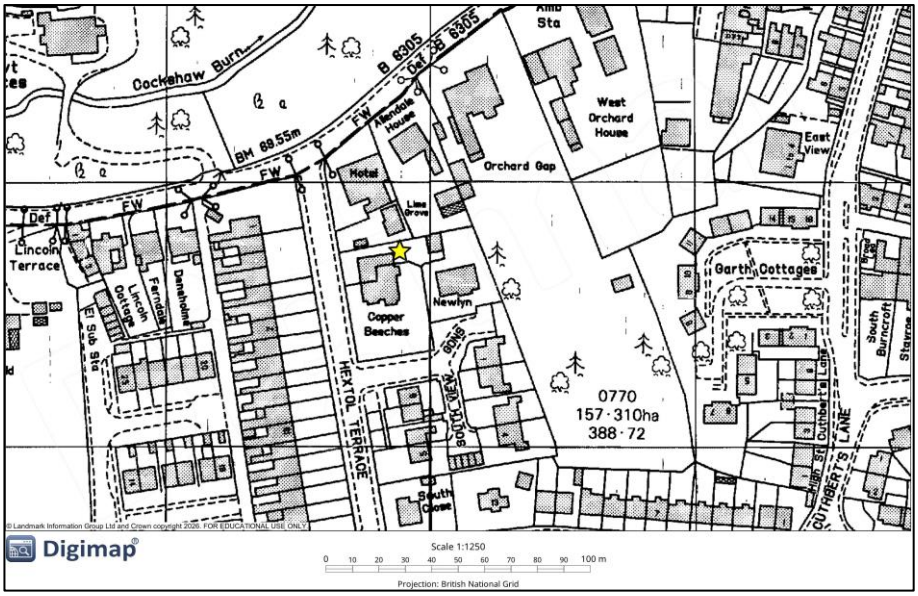


Figure 3 OS map 1980s edition showing subdivision of South View's grounds into three properties

Test pit 8 was excavated in the rear garden, between the house and coach house. Figure 4 shows the test pit location in relation to the coach house and garden wall.

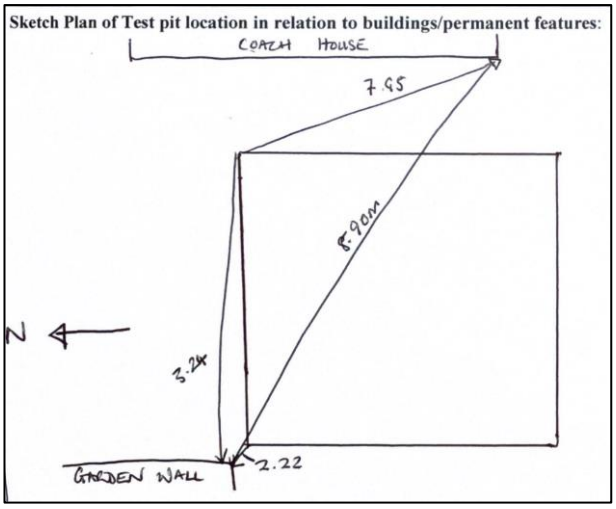


Figure 4 Measured location of TP8, Hewn Stones rear garden

Excavation Summary

Following hand de-turfing excavation of spit (100) was commenced using trowels and soil was 100% sieved. The soil was friable mid to dark brown, hummic sandy silt consistent with a cultivated garden area. Soil contained frequent fine grass roots and infrequent sub-rounded stones (50-100mm). A single piece of clay pipe stem was found.

Excavation was halted be owing to the discovery of unmapped services.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, despite pre-excavation research and consultation of works reports with the householder, unmapped services (trunking for power and water) were revealed in the first spit so excavation was halted and the test pit was backfilled.

Results

Spit	Type of deposit	Description	Comments and photos
(100)	Spit	**Soil:** Friable, mid to dark brown sandy silt (10:90) **Inclusions:** Small sub-rounded stones <10% (50-100mm) **Contamination:** frequent fine-medium roots **How dug:** Spade for turf removal, hand trowel. **Finds**: clay pipe stem x1 **Special finds**: none **Distance from top of context:** 0-100mm	Unmapped services discovered in first spit so excavation was stopped for safety. 



Figure 5 The team neatly deturfing and excavating the test pit