

Tynedale Rock Art Project



Part of the Beyond the Wall : Edges Green Project

Summary

As part of our 2016-2017 Beyond the Wall : Edges Green Project, supported by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Northumberland National Park Authority, Tynedale North of the Wall Archaeology Group organised a programme of volunteer visits to selected rock art sites in Tynedale to record various aspects of the decorated stones and their contexts. The Tynedale Rock Art Project has four main purposes:

1. To conduct and record condition assessments of open-air rock art using CARE app format developed by Newcastle University and Queen's University, Belfast. Assessment records are submitted to the CARE Project data centre at Newcastle University. The CARE condition assessment document is shown in Appendix 1.
2. To add to and update data held on the ERA (England's Rock Art) database. This complements the work done in the 2000's by volunteers on the Northumberland and Durham Rock Art Project (NADRAP). Some members of our recording teams had participated in the NADRAP programme.
3. To undertake photogrammetric imaging of selected stones and generate rotatable 3D models using Agisoft Photoscan software.
4. To compile a gazetteer of rock art sites in Tynedale. This is published as an accompanying document.

Paul Frodsham of Oracle Heritage Services led a Rock Art training workshop for 24 volunteers on September 24th 2016 and conducted two half-day fieldwork training sessions for 16 volunteers on November 5th 2016.



Fig. 1 Fieldwork training in recording techniques

14 volunteers were organised in 3 teams to undertake a series of site visits between February and April 2017. 43 rock art sites were visited at Bellshiel Law, Carr Hill, Cleughfoot, Hartleyburn Common, Heavenfield, Howden Hill, Padon Hill and Wallridge.

Subsequently 5 volunteers, have been involved in utilising Agisoft Photoscan software to generate a series of 3D models.

Rock Art Locations in Tynedale

We 'stand on the shoulders of giants' in our present study of prehistoric rock art in Tynedale. The pioneering work of Stan Beckensall has informed and inspired countless subsequent enthusiasts and researchers. In addition to his numerous publications, his work is now accessible on-line at the Beckensall Archives, <http://rockart.ncl.ac.uk/>. Stan's work was augmented by the Northumberland and Durham Rock Art Project, NADRAP, the data from which is now available on-line on the England's Rock Art website, <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/era/>. Several of the volunteers who conducted site visits on the NADRAP project have made substantial contributions to our present project.

As of September 2016, the ERA database listed 121 rock art sites grouped at 31 locations. Locations with multiple decorated stones include Bellshiel Law (14), Carr Hill (13), Goatstones (30), Hartleyburn Common (7), Howden Hill (3), Padon Hill (3), Ray-Sunniside (12), Whitley Pike (5). Our selection of sites to visit was based on researching existing data on the nature of rock art at the locations and the archaeological context. One of our volunteers, Cezary Namirski, a doctoral student at Durham University, prepared a priorities document that formed the basis for our selection of site visits (See Appendix 2). Our selection of site visit locations was constrained by some issues of access permission.

In the outline that follows we have also included some sites that our group had previously surveyed but which we were not able to include in the current series of site visits.

Our investigation of rock art sites in Tynedale will continue beyond the duration of the current project and additional data will be added to the archaeological record in due course.

Bellshiel Law

13 panels are recorded on ERA but 2 were not re-located in prior surveys. The motifs are fairly simple, mostly cup-marks, in some cases channels (panel 2b) and possibly artificially enhanced basins (panels 1a and 1b). It is difficult to be sure in several cases that they are artificial rather than natural erosion features.

Panels of group 1 are located close to a group of six Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape monument no. 276) preserved as grass-covered mounds of 0.2-0.7m height, as well as a Neolithic long cairn (Pastscape monument no. 263). Although of an impressive size (the cairn is 109m long), little of interest was found during its excavation in 1935 and it was not possible to date it securely to the Neolithic period. The cup-marked stones noted nearby were later described as water-worn depressions.



Bellshiel 1a



Bellshiel 1b

Panels of group 2 are located a few hundred meters to the south of the long cairn, one of them (2d) is an earth-fast boulder in a structure of possible burial cairn. P. Deakin considered Bellshiel Law as one of the examples of the association between cup-marked boulders and cairn-fields in which the rock art panels could have been used to outline the boundaries of cairn-fields.



Bellshiel 2b

Carr Hill

15 panels are listed in ERA database, although some of them have not been relocated since first recorded. Some of the motifs may be natural erosion features (e.g. Carr Hill 11 and 13) or possibly created by later quarrying activity (e.g. Carr Hill 16).

Carr Hill a (ERA-1462) is one of few examples of cups with multiple rings in Tynedale. It is a prominent outcrop with two main motifs: a cup and 4-5 rings with a groove running to the N on NW side, and a cup and 3 rings with a faint groove running to the E on the NE side at a lower level. The outcrop has been eroded on the S end away from motifs.

It has been pointed out that the carved rock lies just above a natural spring, formerly located in the adjoining arable field to the SE but now probably drained to the southern field edge where a well provides a water supply pumped up to Frankham Fell. It would be interesting to undertake field walking of this land after ploughing to see if flints could be found to provide evidence of prehistoric activity in this area.



Carr Hill a

The carved rock is near the natural valley passing between Frankham Fell to the S and Carr Edge to the N. Perhaps this valley could have operated as a routeway in prehistoric times, providing W-E access onto higher grazing land above the Tyne valleys with the carved rock occupying a prominent position near the high point of the col.

Located on a knoll to the NE is Carr Hill 10 (ERA-1471), a very unusual carving in that it is a clear representation of a warrior figure with a shield in one hand and spear or sword in the other, making comparison with depictions of Romano/Celtic warrior god, 'Cocidius'. Directly to the south under turf is an 'L' shape of two linear grooves and other grooves terminated at each end by small cups. Further grooves are located below turf north of the warrior and may also be figurative.



Carr Hill 10

This carving is likely to belong to a much later period than the abstract cup and rings of our usual prehistoric rock art. It has been suggested that Coccidius could be associated with the proximity of Roman stone quarries and that is a possibility here with Chester's Fort only 2.7km NE and the possibility of river transport to the E. However, we are not aware of any evidence that there were Roman stone quarries in this location.

Close to this panel is Carr Hill 9 (ERA-1470), a small boulder sloping steeply into ground below turf, decorated with 4 cups and multiple deep grooves.



Carr Hill 9

This more traditional form of rock carving is often associated with burial cairns. Evidence for a cairn located on the knoll is suggested by a few remaining scatters of loose stones and would have been a prominent location. Bed rock is close to the surface here and is extensively turf covered. Although the S part of the mound has

been quarried, much remains intact, and finding more rock art here may help shown how the Cocidius carving relates to much earlier use of the site.

Cleughfoot

The low lying stone, 1.1m x 0.8m x 0.25m, has 20 visible single cup marks, including 6 in a 'domino' configuration on its steeply sloping western edge was discovered during our 2016 survey on Cleughfoot farm. On the eastern, less sloping, side there are 6 further single cup marks plus two 'basins' on its top edge top edge. The stone is some 30m west of a probable robbed-out burial cairn.

A rubbing was taken using the Stan Beckensall method, but for the first time using calico fabric rather than paper. This and some subsequent calico rubbings by Anne Bowyer have confirmed this method to be more practical in the field and to yield very good results.



Cleughfoot 1



Rubbing of Cleughfoot stone. (Anne Bowyer)

Goatstones

The site at Ravensheugh Crag, west of Simonburn in the North Tyne has long been known for its rare scheduled monument Four Poster stone circle with its heavily cup-marked eastern stone. Stan Beckensall's early recording of a further half dozen decorated stones was supplemented to 16 following his 2004 revisit with Aron Mazel.

The Four Poster is considered to be a burial monument and itself draws attention to the strong association between rock art and prehistoric burial practices evident across the site on the south-facing slope of Ravensheugh Crag. A detailed community archaeology Level 3 survey under the auspices of Altogether Archaeology and Northumberland National Park Authority in July 2013 recorded over 30 rock art sites. There were two extensive cairnfields in the survey area. The western clearance cairnfield revealed no rock art despite an intensive search. The eastern cairnfield which was assessed as containing at least 6 possible burial cairns contained the vast majority of rock art sites identified.



Goatstones Four Poster

The clearest examples of the association with burial practices were at Stone 22, a cup-marked portable within a kerbed cairn, and stones 36-38 in the perimeter of a robbed-out cairn.



Goatstones 22

Like many of the Tynedale sites the rock art consists of simple cups, sometimes conjoined or with accompanying grooves. The heavily decorated eastern-most stone 19, possibly marking the south-east edge of the cairnfield lies just 20 metres north-west of one of the two burnt mounds on the Goatstones site.



Goatstones 19

The most heavily decorated new panel discovered in 2013, stone 40, is perhaps the only stone that may have had a ring motif. Stan Beckensall's rubbing indicated a possible ring and subsequent photography of the panel partially dried indicated part of a ring with peck marks visible.



Goatstones 40

Hartleyburn Common

Hartleyburn Common is a big expanse of coarse grassland, W of the South Tyne valley close to Northumberland's border with Cumbria. Much of it is now given over to cattle grazing and some to forestry.

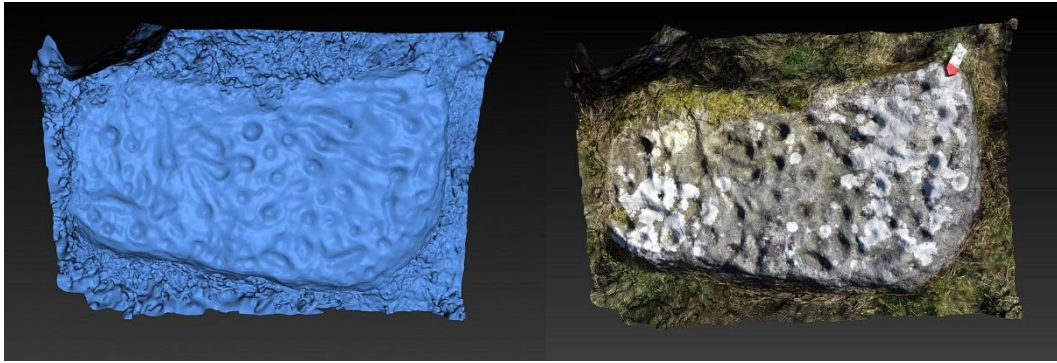
9 panels are listed in the ERA database although 2 of them were not recorded in prior surveys. Most have definite cup-marks. Panel 3 is a flat slab 1.4 x 0.9m carved with a very busy design of around 50 cups, some with raised arcs, and multiple grooves. Panel 5 has about 17 cups.



Hartleyburn Common panel 5

The immediate surroundings of panel 1a was destroyed by quarrying. Some of the other panels are unlikely to be in their original location. Panel 1e is set in a bank of a Romano-British enclosure known as *The Curricks*, a site reused in the medieval period (Pastscape 14111), while panel 3 (Pastscape 14125) was probably moved during field clearance alongside an Iron Age boundary feature. Panel 5 (Pastscape 14134) is also considered unlikely to be in situ.

Three Bronze Age round cairns are located nearby (Pastscape 14131) and substantial areas of cord rig have been located by aerial photography showing that what is now rough moorland was at one time subject to arable cultivation.



Hartleyburn Common 3 – Agisoft Photoscan 3D model (solid & textured)

Howden Hill

The Beckensall Archive reports that 16 cup-marks were noted by an English Heritage Field Warden on a boulder that forms part of the Round Cairns west of Middle House (Tynedale). The location is however unclear and three rock art panels in the area were subsequently described.

Panel 3 constitutes part of the easternmost of three Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape 16336) and is located in a commanding position above the Settlingstones Burn with views to the E-SE. It is a large boulder (one of several) in a very exposed location, heavily eroded with grooves and some rounded depressions that could be interpreted as cup-marks but quite possibly of natural origin. Two other round cairns are located a few hundred meters to the W-NW.

Howden Hill 1 and 2 are located about 100m further west of the western cairn and about 50m E of a sheepfold. The two stones lie very close to each other, and are partly turf-covered. They have 50+ and 30+ cup-marks respectively.



Howden Hill 1 & 2

Between the sheepfold and the cup-marked stones lies a setting of large boulders and what appears to be a large and deep stone-lined trough (or cist). It is interesting to speculate that this might have been the site of another burial cairn, subsequently robbed of its stone to build the sheepfold.

Sewingshields

Following discoveries during our previous landscape surveys there are now 4 known rock art sites immediately north of Sewingshields Crag. 2 of these are located close to the Iron Age/Romano-British Enclosed Settlement on the south-facing slope of Queen's Crag. One, with an arc of 7 single cups, is located in the settlement's enclosure bank.



Queen's Crag 1

About 80m west of the settlement, overlooking Broomlee Lough, lies a large boulder with a series of quarrying slots running centrally and at least 15 single cups.



Queen's Crag 2

There are two sites on private land at Davy's Lee. Davy's Lee 1 is a large boulder with up to 12 cups. There is a 3D model of this stone in the Gazetteer images folder.

Davy's Lee 2 is located in the perimeter of a 14m diameter probable burial cairn. In addition to some 30 single cups it is decorated with 4 deep serpentine grooves and centrally between the grooves a grid pattern previously found at only one other Northumbrian site at Fowberry Enclosure.



Davy's Lee 2

Adding further context to the location are the subtle remains of both N-S and E-W linear banks that converge within metres of the decorated boulder and probable cairn.

The stone was de-turfed and recorded under professional supervision and carefully re-turfed to ensure conservation of this exceptional feature.

Wallridge Moor

In 1992, Stan Beckensall wrote, *"Many rock surfaces must have been covered up or removed, and one must take into account that there were more marked rocks than there are now, and still the possibility that those covered up will reappear."*

This has been shown by the several new finds of rock art in Northumberland over the subsequent years. However, it is a rare event indeed when a carved panel of the quality of that found on Wallridge Moor two years ago makes an appearance, still preserved in situ on bed rock in the southern part of our county.

It had been uncovered by a mechanical digger on private land on the edge of a newly opened sandstone quarry where it was discovered and reported to the archaeology community by a local dog walker from Wallridge in 2015. It has since remained

undisturbed but still clearly at risk of destruction or damage. The almost flat panel of dimensions 2.35 x 1.55m is finely decorated with cups, several multi-ringed, and many with sinuous connecting grooves.



Wallridge Moor

Although strictly outside Tynedale district, we felt it was important to provide a full description of this 'new' rock art panel for the ERA database.

Situated on a low ridge between Ingoe to the west and Bygate Hill to the east with extensive views north to the Simonside Hills, the area has several interesting prehistoric features, including standing stones, burial cairns and rock art. The latter comprises either small sporadic finds whose location has been lost or associated with cist burials as those from Stamfordham, Ouston, Ingoe and Black Heddon.

Wallridge Moor was previously uncultivated land used only for grazing but has in recent years been ploughed and crops grown, apart from the area around the quarry where stone presumably lies too close to the surface. Any prehistoric context around the panel has probably been lost or substantially degraded, although it is possible that more rock art may be found.

We consider it likely that the stone recorded as [ERA-578](#), known to have originated from this area but now in private hands, may also have been extracted nearby. We are of the opinion that, if it can be achieved with the landowner's permission, conservation of this remaining rock art panel in situ should take place and needs to be an important priority.

Compared to the pristine, yellow-white state of the newly uncovered sandstone two years ago, the uncovered stone has now taken on a darker hue with weathering, and

algae, lichens and moss are starting to colonise the surface. This brings into question the whole problem of conservation, as it seems clear that the best option for long term preservation lies in recovering the stone or allowing turf to re-grow. A hidden location could however make accidental damage more likely. If the quarry was to be extended, the only option may be to seek donation of the extracted panel to a museum.

Our Northumberland rock art though has a power that cannot be separated from its location. It seems more desirable if panels such as this could remain where they were created, and, although on private land, still available to be seen, and yet without compromise to its long-term preservation. How this might be achieved remains one of the difficulties of such a heritage.



Simonside Hills north from Wallridge Moor

Credits.

ERA data compilation of Tynedale sites: Anne Tate

Assessment of priority sites: Andy Curtis, Cezary Namirski


Site visit volunteers: Anne Bowyer, Phil Bowyer, Lorraine Clay, Andy Curtis, Derek Gunby, Derek Gwynne, Jenny Gwynne, Marilyn Kendall, Liz Kerrey, Liz Pounds, Margaret Rogers, Fransje Samsom, Andy Willis

Agisoft 3D modelling: Phil Bowyer, Lorraine Clay, Andy Curtis, Michael Hall, Andy Willis

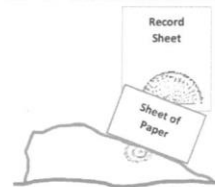
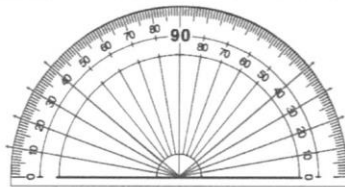
Tynedale Rock Art Gazetteer and Report: Phil Bowyer and Andy Curtis

Appendix 1

Rock Art CARE Report

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Panel | Panel Name | Statutory Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown | | |
| | Panel Number | Location, ideally the Grid Reference _____/_____ | | |
| Recorder | Your Name | Date Recorded | | |
| | Role | <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant Farmer <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |
| Environment | Land Use | <input type="checkbox"/> Active Military <input type="checkbox"/> Heathland <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal <input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture <input type="checkbox"/> Settlements/Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Designed Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Pasture Farmland <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Extractive/Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Ploughed Farmland <input type="checkbox"/> Valley Floor | | |
| | Land Status | <input type="checkbox"/> Private (no public access) <input type="checkbox"/> Private (public access) <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown | | |
| | Local Impact within 10 metres | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Feeders <input type="checkbox"/> Deturfing <input type="checkbox"/> Ploughing <input type="checkbox"/> Shrubs/Trees <input type="checkbox"/> Built Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Footpaths <input type="checkbox"/> Road/Track <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |
| | Human Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Deturfing <input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti < 10 years old <input type="checkbox"/> Ploughing <input type="checkbox"/> Walking Wear <input type="checkbox"/> Field Clearance <input type="checkbox"/> Litter <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation Clearance <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |
| | Animal Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Droppings, excluding bird <input type="checkbox"/> Scratches <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Rubbing <input type="checkbox"/> None | | |
| Condition | Cracks | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Potential for Standing Water <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Maximum Panel Height _____ cm | | |
| | Algae Coverage | <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> < 10% <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25% <input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 50% <input type="checkbox"/> > 50% <input type="checkbox"/> ? Unknown | | |
| | Lichen Coverage | <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> < 10% <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25% <input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 50% <input type="checkbox"/> > 50% <input type="checkbox"/> ? Unknown | | |
| | Moss Coverage | <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> < 10% <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 25% <input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 50% <input type="checkbox"/> > 50% <input type="checkbox"/> ? Unknown | | |
| | Surface Instability | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% <input type="checkbox"/> <25% <input type="checkbox"/> 25-50% <input type="checkbox"/> >50% (traces of grains on fingers) | | |
| Motif Condition | | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 0 (fresh) <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 3 (very worn) | | |
| | |  | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> North <input type="checkbox"/> East <input type="checkbox"/> North East <input type="checkbox"/> North West <input type="checkbox"/> Surface Flat <input type="checkbox"/> South <input type="checkbox"/> West <input type="checkbox"/> South East <input type="checkbox"/> South West <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown | | |
| | Motif Angle | <input type="checkbox"/> 0-10° <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20° <input type="checkbox"/> 21-30° <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40° <input type="checkbox"/> >40° (use tiltmeter or see diagram below) | | |
| Other | Images | Take digital images to upload later: one of the panel in the landscape and the other of the panel. | | |
| | Comments | | | |

Go to <http://rockartcare.ncl.ac.uk/> for the Rock Art CARE Report Definitions document and to enter your results.



Appendix 2

Priority sites

1. Bellshiel Law

Rock art: 11 panels recorded by NADRAP, two more were not located. The motifs include mostly cup-marks, in some cases channels (panel 2b) and possibly artificially enhanced basins (panels 1a and 1g).

Archaeological context: panels of group 1 are located close to a group of six Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape monument no. 276) preserved as grass-covered mounds of 0.2-0.7m height, as well as a Neolithic long cairn (Pastscape monument no. 263). Panels of group 2 are located few hundred meters to the south, one of them (2d) is an earthfast boulder in a structure of possible burial cairn. P. Deakin considered Bellshiel Law as one of the examples of association between cup-marked boulders and cairnfields in which the rock art panels could have been used to outline the boundaries of cairnfields¹.

Overall assessment: although the motifs are rather simple (there are no cup-and-ring marks, only cup-marks, basins and channels), and some of them might be natural features (e.g. panel 1d), their rich archaeological context which includes association with Bronze Age cairns and closeness of the Neolithic long cairn (one of the few monuments of this type in Northumberland) warrants prioritizing this site, especially considering prospects for excavation.

2. Carr Hill

Rock art: 15 panels listed in ERA database, although some of them were not located during the NADRAP project. Panel A is one of the few examples of cups with multiple rings in Tynedale. Some of the motifs are likely to be natural features (e.g. Carr Hill 11 and 13).

Archaeological context: no prehistoric feature has been recorded in Pastscape database in radius of 1km of panel A.

Overall assessment: the main panels with best examples of rock art (Carr Hill A and Carr Hill D) are on outcrops rather than boulders (panel A has originally been classified a boulder, but probing with skewer done during the NADRAP indicate it is an outcrop) which ensures that the rock art is in its original location. Together with the complexity of motifs it warrants prioritizing this group despite scarce archaeological context.

3. Davy's Lee

Rock art: an isolated boulder with 12 cups and an arc.

¹ P. Deakin (2007), "Exploring links between cup-marks and cairnfields" in *Art as Metaphor: The Prehistoric Rock-Art of Britain*, edited by A. Mazel et al. Oxford: Archaeopress, p. 111-122.

Archaeological context: rich prehistoric archaeology in the surrounding area, including Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape monument no. 1476221) and a stone circle (Pastscape monument no. 1476218) with 11 visible stones, including possible portal stones at the SW². Two further rock art panels were discovered by Tynedale Archaeology Group at the nearby Queen's Crag (to the SW).

Overall assessment: a significant prehistoric landscape context of the panel warrants its prioritization during the project.

4. Goatstones

Rock art: 31 panels included in ERA database, more were discovered during the 2013 survey at Ravensheugh Crag. The motifs include cup-marks and channels.

Archaeological context: clear set of cup-marks is located on the Goatstones four-poster stone circle, numerous other panels are located among Bronze Age cairns at Ravensheugh Crag.

Overall assessment: significant degree of preservation of prehistoric landscape at Ravensheugh Crag, the number of rock art panels and their direct association with specific monuments make Goatstones rock art one of the most interesting groups of petroglyphs in Tynedale,

5. Hartleyburn Common

Rock art: nine panels are listed in ERA database, two of them were not recorded during the NADRAP project. The most significant ones are 1a, 1e, 3 and 5. Panel 5 is partly turf-covered, it is decorated with a busy design of cup-marks and cups with single rings, it is partly turf-covered. Convincing cup-marks can be found on panels 1a and 3, while on panel 1e there is a cup with possible faint single ring.

Archaeological context: the immediate surrounding of panel 1a was destroyed by quarrying. Panel 1e is set in a bank of a Romano-British enclosure, while panel 3 has probably been moved to the edge of a pasture – both are unlikely to be in their original positions. According to Pastscape records panel 5 (Pastscape monument no. 14134) is unlikely to be in situ either. In the nearby there are three Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape monument no. 14131)

Overall assessment: some of the best panels at Hartleyburn Common group (1e, 3, 5) are probably not in their original location, which limits prospects for excavation. Nevertheless, the complexity of designs (especially on panels 3 and 5) and the presence of Bronze Age cairns should place this rock art concentration within the interest of the project.

² A. Burl (2005), *A Guide to the Stone Circles of Britain, Ireland and Brittany*, p. 72.

6. Howden Hill

Rock art: three rock art panels decorated with cup-marks. Howden Hill 1 and 2 are located close to each other and have 50+ and 30+ cup-marks respectively, they are partly turf-covered.

Archaeological context: panel 3 constitutes part of a Bronze Age round cairn located in a commanding position over Settlingstones Burn with views to the E-SE. Two other round cairns are located few hundred meters to the W-NW.

Overall assessment: panels 1 and 2 constitute some of the best examples of prehistoric rock art in Tynedale. Together with the proximity of the Bronze Age round cairns it places Howden Hill among the sites which should be prioritized, especially with potential future excavation in mind.

7. Ray-Sunniside

Rock art: 13 panels included in ERA database, some of them were not located during the NADRAP project. Among the motifs there are mainly cup-marks and channels, in many cases they might be natural features (e.g. panels D, H), but some of them are convincing (panel F).

Archaeological context: most of the panels are concentrated near two Bronze Age round cairns (Pastscape monuments no. 1037366 and 1571294).

Overall assessment: despite doubts about the artificial origin of many recorded motifs their clustering around Bronze Age round cairns and number of panels make the site worthy of prioritization.

8. Belsay

Rock art: a large outcrop surface located near an active quarry, discovered in 2015. The motifs include numerous cup-and-ring marks with multiple rings, some of them interconnected with channels. The motifs are in varying states of preservation, some of them heavily eroded (especially near the northern edge of the panel), while others retain visible peck-marks.

Archaeological context: the surrounding of the panel was mostly destroyed by quarrying and covered by spoil heaps.

Overall assessment: this newly discovered rock art panel remains unrecorded. It is one of the finest examples of prehistoric rock art in Northumberland, and considering a threat to its existence posed by an active quarry its recording should be among the priorities of the project.

Other sites of interest

9. Greenlee Lough

Rock art: two panels, one of them is located on a steep slope overlooking Greenlee Lough, it is decorated with two large basins connected with a groove (panel B). The other one (panel A) is decorated with 11 cup-marks.

Archaeological context: a Bronze Age stone circle (Pastscape monument no. 15269) is located between the two panels.

Overall assessment: panel B is located in a position overlooking the lake and the lower ground to the N-NW, which echoes typical rock art locations in Northumberland, but prehistoric origin of the basins is unsure. Panel A has well-preserved cup-marks, but its small size and proximity to the Roman camp might indicate it has been moved.

10. Padon Hill

Rock art: three panels recorded during the NADRAP project. The main panel is a large outcrop with almost 70 cup-marks which might be of natural origin.

Archaeological context: no Neolithic/Bronze Age features recorded in the nearby.

Overall assessment: uncertainty about artificial origin of the cup-marks and lack of archaeological features in the nearby do not allow to place this site among prioritized ones. Nevertheless, the number of motifs and the prominent landscape location of the panel justify placing Padon Hill among the sites of secondary interest.

Cezary Namirski