

Part of Historic Environment Scotland



CANMORE

NATIONAL RECORD OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT



Archaeology InSites



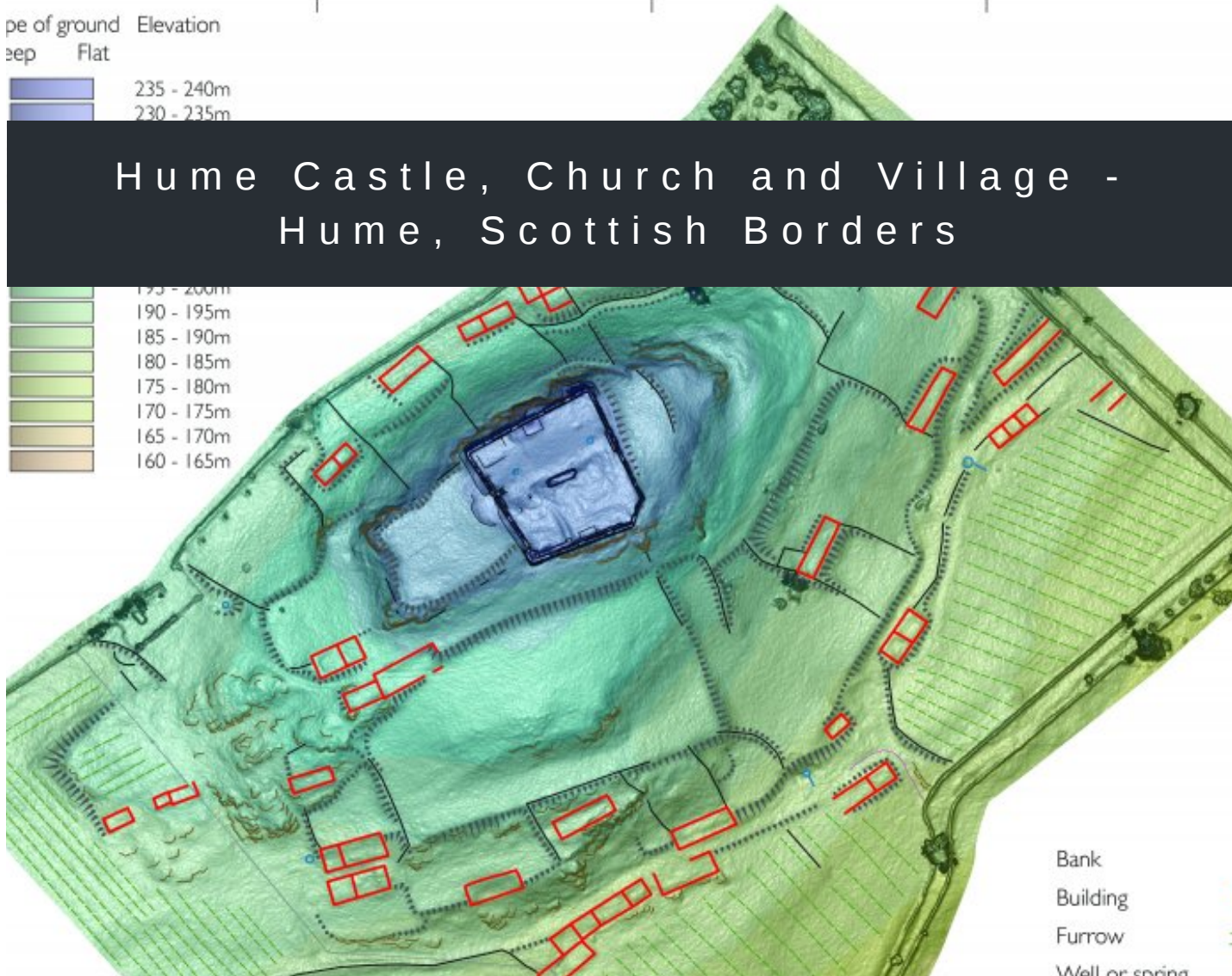
◀ [Return to Archaeology InSites](#)

Type of ground Elevation
Deep Flat

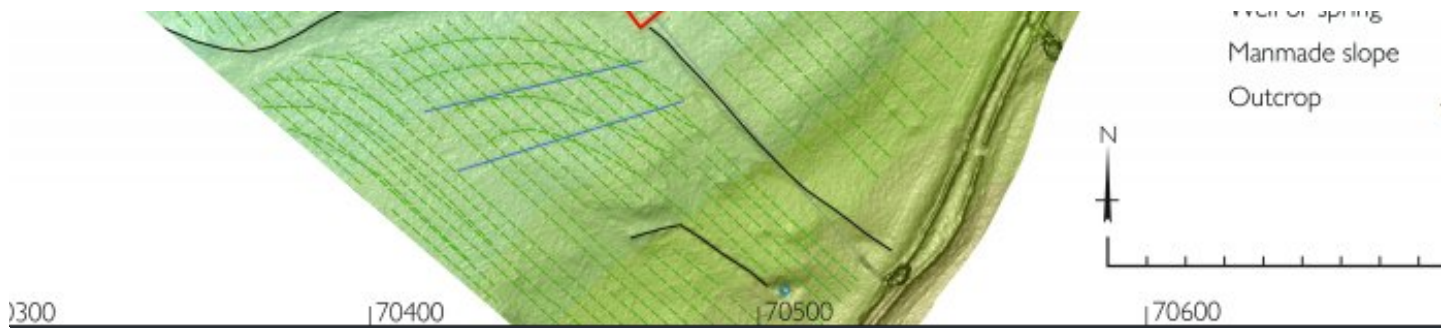
235 - 240m
230 - 235m

Hume Castle, Church and Village - Hume, Scottish Borders

195 - 200m
190 - 195m
185 - 190m
180 - 185m
175 - 180m
170 - 175m
165 - 170m
160 - 165m



Bank
Building
Furrow
Well or spring



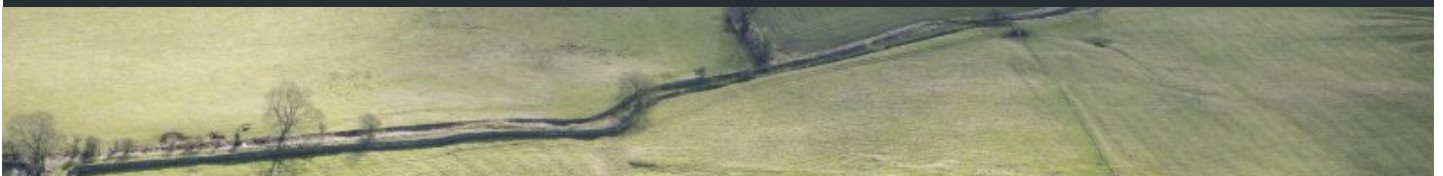
The village and church

The modern hamlet of Hume occupies a rocky ridge overlooking the Merse and the English border to the south. A church and village are recorded at Hume from the mid-12th century, but direct reference to the castle does not appear until the later Middle Ages. This site is remarkable for its 18th century folly and the juxtaposition of castle and village: and not just any village but the largest deserted village in south-east Scotland. While today's village comprises a row of twenty 19th century and modern houses along the north side of the public road through the village, in the late 17th century there were 86 houses in the village according to the Hearth tax returns.

The Hume and Greenlaw estate was granted to a son of the Earl of Dunbar in the early 13th century whose family name, Home, became eponymous with the name of the land they had acquired and was a well-known surname in the eastern borders. It is possibly from that time that a castle was built on the outcrop of rock now crowned by the fantastical castellated folly erected by the Earl of Marchmont in the late 18th century. The village was devastated in the 14th century during the Wars of Independence and cleared in the late 18th century, while the castle, fought over in the 16th and 17th centuries, was finally destroyed by Cromwell's army in 1650.

The size of the settlement was revealed in a survey by Piers Dixon and a local team of young people in 1987. The sites of many houses and ridge and furrow cultivation was mapped that stretched from modern village for half a mile to the west on either side of the loaning that leads to the churchyard of the former parish church of St Nicholas. The church itself has been robbed of stone and can only be traced as a platform surrounded by gravestones. The village houses that were located did not stand to any great height and the walls were mostly reduced to footings or robber trenches, suggesting that the superstructure of the walls may have been of perishable material, such as clay, on a stone base.

The 1987 survey lay dormant in the local records for almost 30 years until the Hume Castle Preservation Trust acquired the site. Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland answered a request for help from them to interpret the site that led to a resurvey of the castle and surrounding field using a low level aerial survey by UAV in 2015 (including a video). A 3D model of the ground surface was produced from which a plan of the castle and surrounding part of the village was mapped. Within the field in which the castle stood some 25 houses and yards alone were located forming rows of properties along the hollow ways of the village streets to north and south of the castle rock. However, this is only about one third of the late 17th century village, the rest of which still lies, further to the west. On the slopes to the south of the village, two phases of ridge and furrow were revealed, with straight narrow, Improvement period ridges over curving broad ridges of medieval origin, hitherto unnoticed.



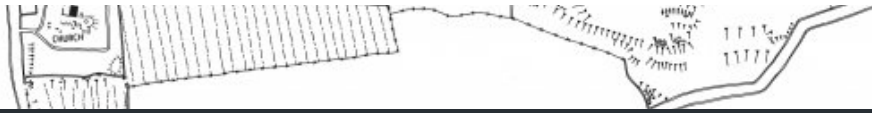


The castle

The 3D model also showed that there was a rampart on the east end of the castle rock outside the stone walls of the folly suggesting there might have been an earthwork and timber castle here, possibly dating to the 13th century. There was also an outwork of the castle on the west which can be traced from the stone footings around the squared shape of the outcrop at this end. Further indications of the early castle were shown clearly by the 3D survey to include an earlier wall outside the present west wall which included a round tower immediately in front of the present entrance and another round tower on an outcrop outside the north wall which had been invisible until the UAV survey. This evidence suggested an enclosure castle replaced the earlier earthwork in the 13th or 14th centuries, which was in turn replaced by a large tower and artillery defences in the 15th and 16th centuries, when the Homes acquired baronial status. Part of the tower still stands as a ruin inside the folly, a 15th century dumbbell gun-loop is built into the west wall and the sloping artillery defence of the south wall is of late 16th or 17th century date. The outer approach to the castle was via a ramp from the west between two robbed-out buildings, with a large terraced garden on the south, which gives a more pleasurable aspect to the castle than hitherto appreciated.

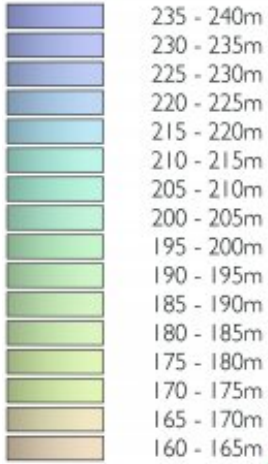
Dr Piers Dixon, Deputy Head of Survey and Recording, HES





<https://canmore.org.uk/site/58561/hume-castle>
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/58551/hume-general>
<http://humecastle.org/aerial-video-of-hume-castle/>

pe of ground Elevation
eep Flat



#ArchInSites

Please be aware that this site may be on private land. For more information regarding access please consult the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)



[Accessibility Policy](#)
[Buying Images](#)
[Cookie Policy](#)
[Legals](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Contact](#)
[MyCanmore](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[User Guide](#)



SUPPORTING
year of young people
bliadhna na h-òigridh
2018



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

© Historic Environment Scotland. Scottish Charity No. SC045925