

Survey of Sow Kilns Nr Hill Inn Chapel-Le-Dale



A Batty

2013

Front cover showing location of Sow Kilns.

Photograph A Batty.

Sow Kilns

Several sow kilns have been identified to the east of the Hill Inn in Chapel-le-dale. A gradiometer scan has been carried out on each feature, the area within which they are located has been topographically surveyed as show in Fig 1. There is a group of three kilns at SD 7446 7768, two at SD 7445 7763 and one at SD 7443 7749. A description of each feature and gradiometer scanning results are given below.

Kiln 1

This is a circular bowl-shaped feature with a hollow break in the outer rim on the western side, this is of typical sod kiln form. The gradiometer scan showed high readings around the outer edge of the bowl, suggesting firing within it.

Kiln 2?

This feature is not circular like the other kilns described here but is kidney-shaped in form, it could be two kilns side by side as there appears to be two bowls. The gradiometer scan was less clear on this feature, as there were metal deposit readings within the bowls which were identified with a metal detector.

Kilns 3, 4 and 5

These 3 kilns all have the same description, i.e. bowl-shaped features with no break in the outer rim. The gradiometer scan revealed areas of high readings around the bowls suggesting firing within the bowl.

Kiln 6

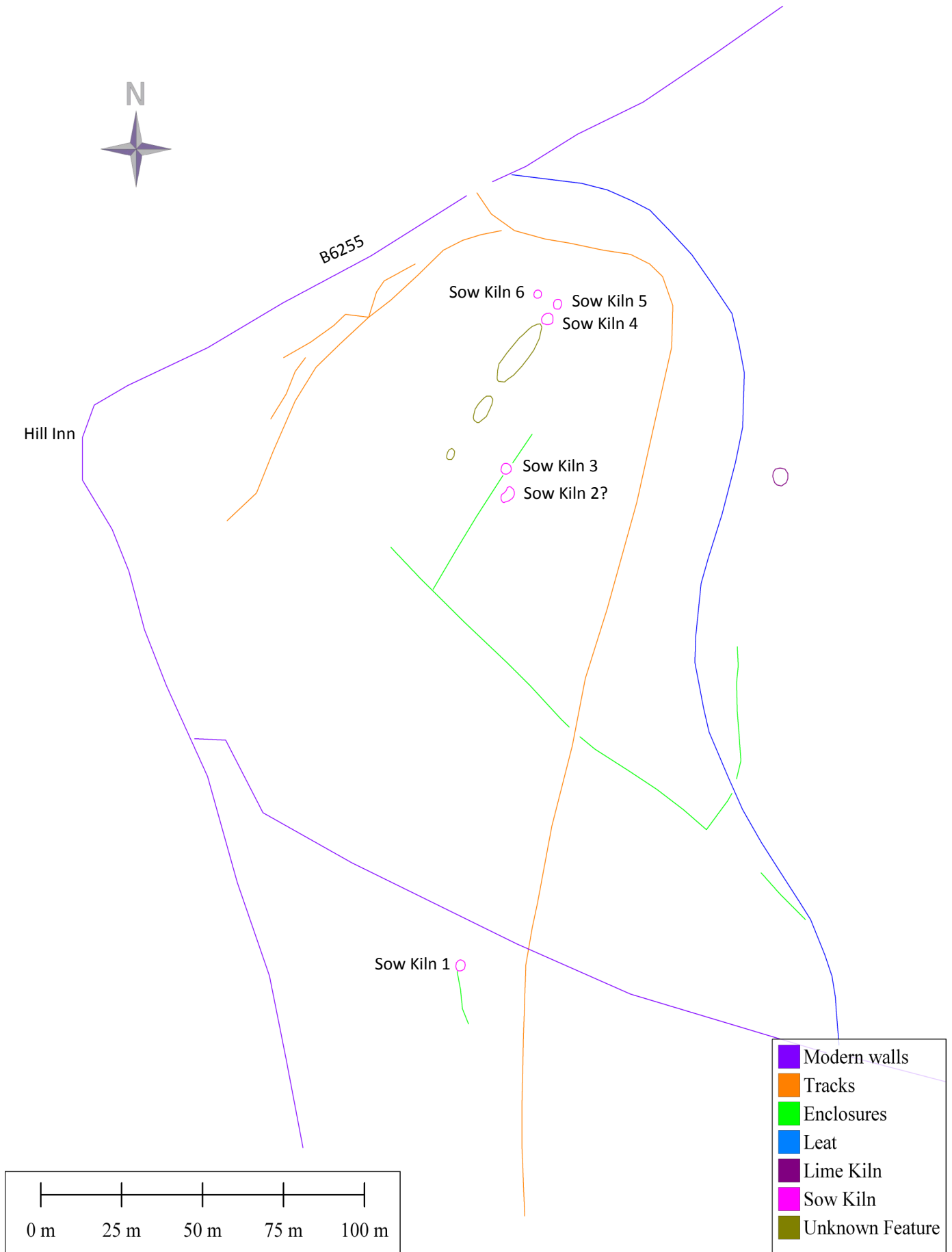
A bowl-shaped feature on sloping ground, approximately half of the bowl has been formed by building up earth to form the shape. There is no break in the rim to show the location of the flue. The gradiometer scan, once again, showed areas of burning around the bowl.

Conclusions

The gradiometer scans suggest 5 of the features are kilns but kiln 2? as stated previously may be 2 kilns side by side, or a feature that had a different purpose. There only appears to be evidence for a flue in Kiln 1, but it is likely the flues on the other kilns entered underneath the outer rim sloping down from the outside into the base of the kiln bowl. There are some small burnt pieces of limestone visible in the edge of the bowl in kiln 5.

There are also 3 earthen mounds (unknown features) shown on the survey. These are aligned NE/SW and abut Kiln 4 at the NE end of largest mound. Whether there is any relationship between the mounds and the kilns cannot be established without further investigation. There is the possibility that these may be of pre-historical construction, with the largest feature possibly being a long barrow, they are prominently positioned and there are some large stones at the SW end of the largest mound, but any interpretation at the present time is speculation.

Survey of Sow Kilns Nr Hill Inn Chapel-Le-Dale



Surveyed by A Batty 2012

Fig 1 Topographical survey



Plate 1 Kiln 1.

Photograph A Batty



Plate 2 Kilns 2? and 3.

Photograph A Batty



Plate 3 Kilns 4,5 and 6.

Photograph A Batty



Plate 4 Unknown feature.

Photograph A Batty