



NAA

THE CURTAIN RISES
THE MAUSOLEUM

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATIONS

NATIONAL TRUST
SEATON DELAVAL HALL
NORTHUMBERLAND

on behalf of
the National Trust

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District Northumberland

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THE MAUSOLEUM, SEATON DELAVAL HALL, NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

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THE MAUSOLEUM, SEATON DELAVAL HALL, NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

Summary

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological mitigation relating to the Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland (NZ 32817 76491), conducted by Northern Archaeological Associates on behalf of the National Trust. This formed one of a number of Archaeological Work Packages conducted as part of 'The Curtain Rises' project, a two-year restoration and representation scheme, part-funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

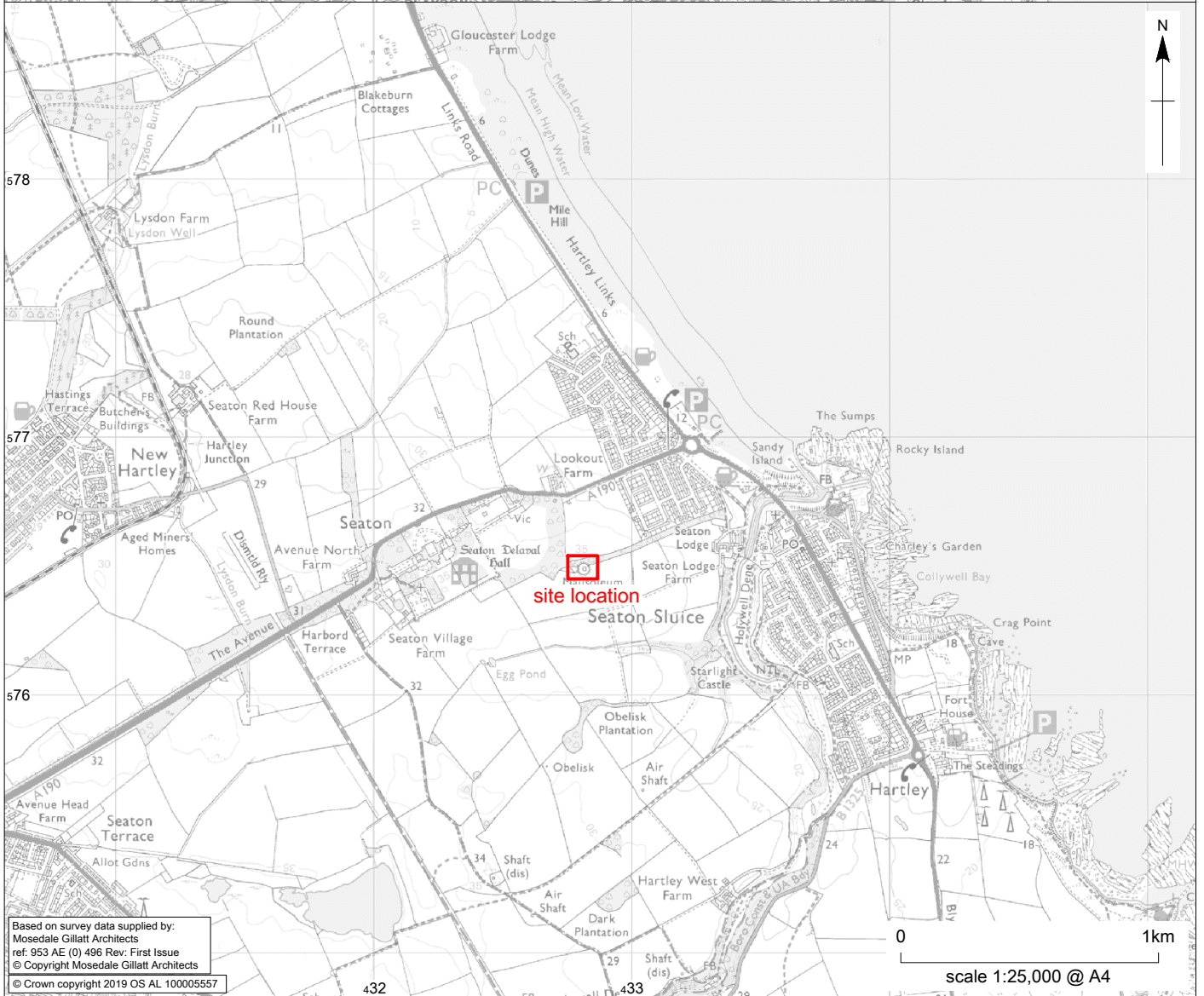
The Mausoleum is located c.600m east of the main Hall complex and lies on the southern edge of a belt of woodland associated with the Sea Walk. The Grade II listed building was built c.1776–8 (architect unknown) for Sir John and Lady Hussey Delaval as a memorial to their son who died in 1775, aged 20. However, the building was never consecrated or put to its planned use. The property was later converted into domestic accommodation and served as such until the mid-20th century*

The Mausoleum mitigation works comprised limited historic building recording of the entablature and other high-level elements, and archaeological monitoring (a watching brief) during the clearance of vegetation from the interior and ground reduction to create a level working platform for future conservation.

In September 2020, an accurate survey of the high-level elements of the north two bays was prepared using Structure from Motion technology. However, a change in the scope of the conservation works, and reduction in the scaffold provision, limited any further survey. In contrast, the extent of the ground reduction proved significantly greater than originally anticipated. This took place over a 10-day period in November 2020 during which a continuous archaeological watching brief was maintained.

Although constrained by the specifications of the work, mortared brickwork features within the building were discovered extant above the required floor level, obscured by overlying demolition rubble and debris. These included the remains of three fireplaces and the base of a partition wall associated with the use of the building as a domestic dwelling. Three architectural fragments – two fragments of a ball finial and an urn base – as well as pieces of ironwork were also discovered. These were recorded on site and reburied in the hearth of the north fireplace for future retrieval if required.

Although the nature of the Mausoleum works was fairly limited in scope – being restricted only to the removal of modern debris and overburden from the interior of the building – it nevertheless provided an opportunity to find out more about the last phase of the building's use and history. Further monitoring and recording during any future conservation work is highly recommended.



The Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall: site location

Figure 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological mitigation relating to the Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland (NZ 32817 76491; Fig. 1), conducted by Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) on behalf of the National Trust. This formed one of a number of Archaeological Work Packages (AWP) (National Trust 2018a) conducted as part of 'The Curtain Rises' project, which was a two-year restoration and representation scheme, part-funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund, aimed at conserving the 18th-century Hall and improving the overall visitor experience.
- 1.2 The Mausoleum mitigation works were conducted as part of AWP 14 and originally intended to comprise historic building recording of high-level elements of the building and archaeological monitoring (a watching brief) during any ground interventions. However, in response to changes made to the final conservation programme, the scope of the works varied slightly from those outlined in the original specification (National Trust 2018b) (see Section 4).
- 1.3 All work was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by the National Trust (National Trust 2018c) and approved in advance by the Northumberland County Council (NCC) Assistant County Archaeologist. The fieldwork, together with this report, fulfils Condition 4 of Planning Permission 17/04412/FUL (as varied by 18/01484/varyco) and relates to Listed Building Consent 17/04413/LBC (as varied by 18/01486/varyco).
- 1.4 The Mausoleum is a Grade II* listed building (NHLE: 236062), built around 1776–8 by Sir John and Lady Hussey Delaval for their son, also named John (known as Jack), who died in 1775, aged 19 (Tomlinson 1888, 65). However, the building was never actually consecrated and put to its planned use. The property was later converted into domestic accommodation and served as such until the mid-20th century (Newman 2015).
- 1.5 The Mausoleum echoes the Palladian style of Seaton Delaval Hall. The two-storey building is thought to have originally been designed as a chapel comprising ground floor area with altar and pews with a burial vault beneath. It is cruciform in plan with a three-bay central nave and two flanking two-bay side aisles. The main west-facing elevation (Plate 1) features a central pedimented Roman Doric portico and doorway with open-pedimented Doric surround and arched fanlight. On each side are two round-arched windows with keyed archivolt, set at ground and first-floor level (although

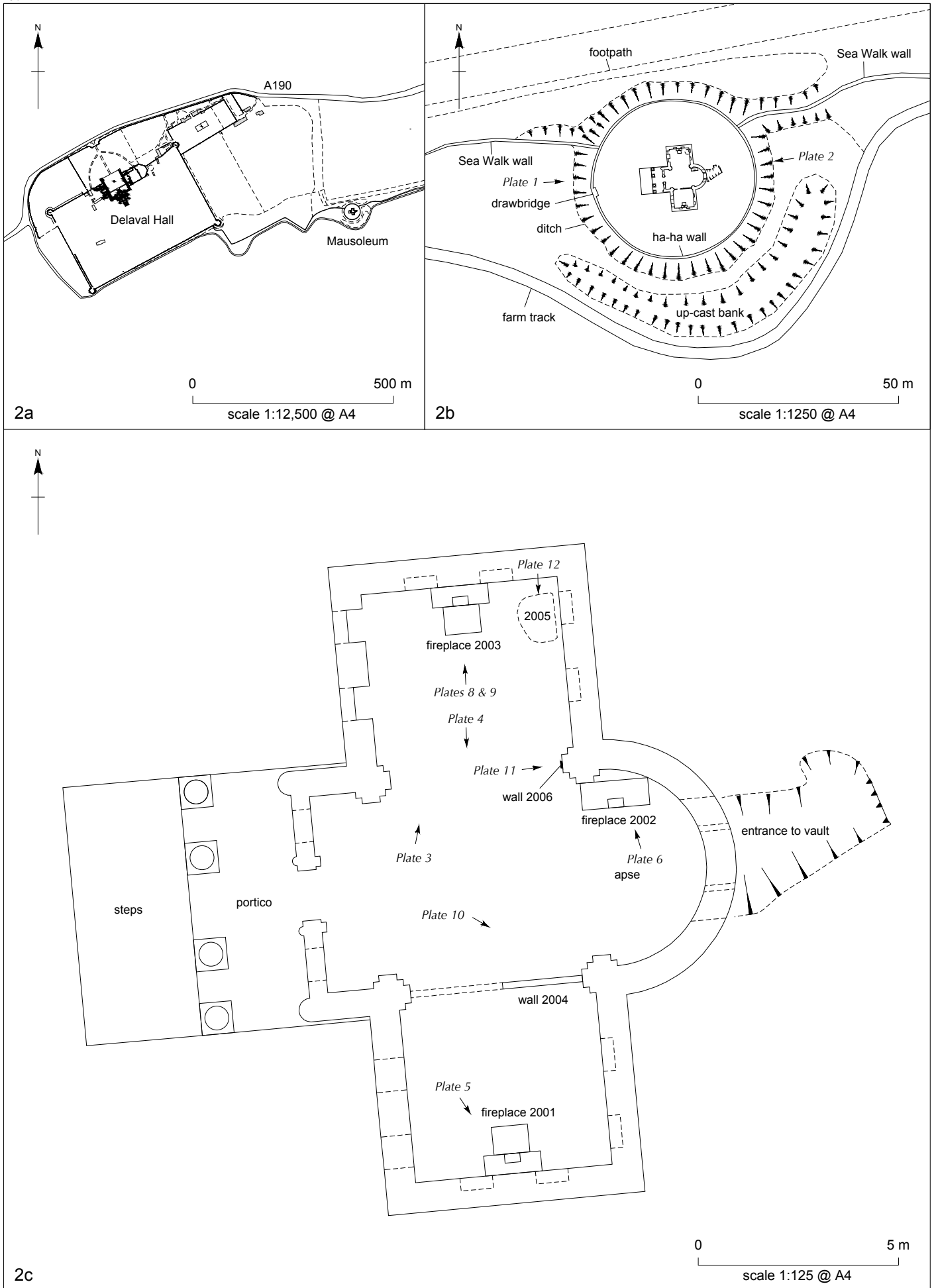
the floor was a later insert and the building was originally intended to be open to the roof). The east-facing (rear) elevation features a central apse with Venetian window above and below an arched opening to the vaults (Plate 2). The building was formerly topped by a lead-covered dome. Within the building there are round arches at the crossing, with moulded imposts and semi-circular openings above. The end and rear walls each feature a set of arched niches. The groin-vaulted vaults beneath follow the same cruciform plan, featuring partitioned shelves for c.40 coffins (Listing Description NHLE: 236062).



Plate 1: view across the ha-ha, showing the west-facing elevation and portico, with drawbridge masonry in foreground (between two white arrows).

- 1.6 In the past 60 years, the structure has suffered from vandalism and neglect, resulting in a rapid decline in condition. The programme of conservation proposed as part of The Curtain Rises project included the removal of vegetation and bursting growths, some isolated stonework replacement, and the consolidation of the wall heads and corncicing to stabilise the building subject to more extensive conservation in the future (Mosedale Gillatt Architects 2017). The scope of ground levelling work was later extended to include the removal of well-established tree roots and several tonnes of brick rubble in order to create a level working platform.

Ref:



The Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall: detailed site location, monitoring results and photographic locations

Figure 2

2.0 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Location

- 2.1 Seaton Delaval Hall is located between Seaton Delaval and Seaton Sluice (NGR NZ 32181, 76519), c.5km south of the Port of Blyth (Fig. 1). The Mausoleum is situated c.600m east of the main Hall complex and lies on the southern edge of an extended belt of woodland called the Sea Walk; both elements form a significant part of the 18th-century designed landscape (Fig. 2a).



Plate 2: east-facing elevation with apse and vault entrance at ground level.

Geology and soils

- 2.2 Seaton Delaval Hall is located above Devensian Diamicton: poorly sorted glacial till deposited during the last ice age. This deposit lies above the Carboniferous Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation – a compilation of mudstones, siltstones and sandstones created in shallow seas (BGS 2021).

Topography and land-use

- 2.3 The Mausoleum is today set in a small wooded area, largely obscured from view from the Hall. However, prior to the growth of the surrounding woodland it formed a prominent part of the landscape.

- 2.4 The building sits at the centre of a circular enclosure measuring c.40m in diameter and surrounded by an imposing 'drum' ha-ha that stands over 2m high. A wide circular ditch is associated with the ha-ha, separating the enclosure from the surrounding area. The Mausoleum is aligned very slightly off east-west (Fig. 2b). Access across the ha-ha, into the interior of the complex, was designed to be solely via a drawbridge on the west side (Plates 1 and 2), although this fell out of use and other, less substantial, accesses were added.
- 2.5 The surrounding ditch has a flat base c.1m wide and steep external sides falling from ground level broadly at the same height as the coping of the ha-ha wall. The external ground level to the south of the ditch is higher than the surrounding land. Associated with the ditch is a distinct, broad, flat-topped bank that is particularly evident when viewed from the adjoining field to the south. The effect is to completely obscure the masonry wall of the ha-ha from view, even from the relatively close adjacent farm track.
- 2.6 The ha-ha wall is flanked by two stone boundary walls with distinctive clinker copings. These form part of the Sea Walk that runs around the southern side of the Mausoleum enclosure. The ground level is slightly higher to the south of the boundary walls, producing a further ha-ha-like effect (Newman 2015).
- 2.7 Today, the site is surrounded by large, modern arable fields.

Designations

- 2.8 The Mausoleum is a Grade II* listed building (NHLE: 236062) and the encircling ha-ha a Grade II listed building (NHLE: 236063), both granted statutory protection under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The remains of the flanking walls are not directly specified in the listing but do form part of the curtilage and setting of the Mausoleum. The property is also considered to form part of the broader setting of the Grade I listed Seaton Delaval Hall (NHLE: 1041321).
- 2.9 The gardens and park (including woodland) are designated Grade II* on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (NHLE: 1001052). This includes the present site.
- 2.10 The site also forms part of the Seaton Delaval Conservation Area.
- 2.11 The Mausoleum was on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register, recorded as being in poor condition and subject to slow decay (Priority C).

Previous work

- 2.12 A number of surveys have been conducted across the Seaton Delaval estate in recent years to inform a greater understanding of its archaeological and historical evolution. Many of these have included references to the Mausoleum. In 2012, a Historic Park Management Plan was prepared by Southern Green, followed in 2014 (revised and updated in 2017) by a detailed Conservation Management Plan by Simpson and Brown.
- 2.13 Since acquiring the property in 2009, the National Trust has conducted clearance and limited investigative works to understand more about the construction of the site and inform a conservation strategy. In 2015, vegetation was substantially cleared from the interior of the building and the enclosure. Archaeological trial trenching and augering was carried out during these works. This was followed in July 2015 by the dismantling of a 3m section of the flanking boundary walls to prevent illegal access to the site. An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the dismantling works (Newman 2015).

3.0 SUMMARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The name Seaton is of Old English origin meaning ‘settlement by the sea’, suggesting there was probably settlement in the area before 1066 (Ekwall 1960, 410). However, no archaeological evidence dating to this period has been found on, or in the vicinity of, the estate.
- 3.2 After the Norman Conquest, the manor of Seaton was granted to the De Laval family. Guy de Laval is recorded as constructing a private chapel at Seaton in the later 11th century, consecrated by Bishop Flambard in 1102. This forms part of the Church of Our Lady to the south-west of the Hall and constitutes the only extant surface remains associated with the former medieval settlement (Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 24). The location of the medieval village remains uncertain, although the most likely site is Seaton Village Farm to the west of the Hall (Newman 2017). At Hare Park – c.140m to the north-west of the Mausoleum – an extensive area of well-preserved s-curve ridge and furrow cultivation survives, suggesting the whole area previously formed part of the medieval ploughlands associated with the village.

Seaton Delaval Hall

- 3.3 Seaton Delaval Hall, designed by Sir John Vanbrugh (1664–1726) for Admiral George Delaval (1668–1723), was built in the early 18th century. Construction on the Hall is

thought to have begun c.1719 but its patron died before completion following a fall from his horse in 1723. The estate then passed to his nephew, Captain Francis Blake Delaval (1692–1752), who continued work on house. The Central Hall was roofed a year later in the summer building season of 1724, with Vanbrugh reputedly in attendance (Simpson and Brown 2017, 53). The architect died two years later, on 26th March 1726. After his death, work continued on the complex, with the two flanking services ranges – the East and West Wings – added in the 1730s/40s

- 3.4 The development of the surrounding landscape ran parallel to that of the Hall. A significant planting campaign was conducted across the estate in the 1720s, during which the now-vanished South Avenue was probably set out (Newman 2017). Cut vistas through existing woodlands were also carefully planned. However, the bastions and ha-ha enclosure, which today has come to characterise the ‘castle style’ landscape, were not constructed until c.1743, some 17 years after Vanbrugh’s death (Newman 2017; Simpson and Brown Architects 2017).
- 3.5 Captain Francis Blake Delaval died in 1752 following a fall down the steps of the south portico. He was succeeded by his son Sir Francis Blake Delaval (1727–71). Sir Francis showed little interest in developing either the Hall or estate, generally preferring to spend his time in London where he accumulated considerable debt. In a bid to save the property from ruin, his brother, John Hussey Delaval (1728–1808), purchased the estate in 1761 in return for an annuity. Sir Francis remained living in the Hall while John took over the management of the estate, eventually inheriting and taking up residence in his own right on Francis’s death in 1771.
- 3.6 From 1771, John recommenced building works and improvement to the estate, including remodelling the South-East Range of the Hall, setting out the Walled Garden (to the east of the north-east bastion) and construction of the Mausoleum. This is thought to have been originally intended for use as a chapel, potentially to replace the old chapel (now Church of Our Lady), which would be demolished to facilitate views from a new South-West Range towards the south-west bastion. However, the range was never built, and the Norman chapel remained (Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 58).

Construction of the Mausoleum

- 3.7 On the death of Sir John’s son, ‘Jack’ Delaval, in 1775, plans for the construction of the new chapel were modified and the Mausoleum built as a memorial to him. However, the building was never consecrated, and the body therefore not interred. The reason for

this is unknown, although it is thought to have been because of an argument with the Bishop of Durham over the consecration fee (NHLE: 236062), although this is a rather unsatisfactory explanation given the significant sums involved in the building's construction (Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 185).

- 3.8 Accounts relating to the construction of the building are preserved in the Seaton Delaval archive (*ibid.*, 185). In November 1776, Alexander Bell, a mason, submitted invoices for work on the foundations and vault of the building, and later the same month a bill which, amongst other elements, included coping for the battlement, architrave and frieze for the portico, three large columns and 'eight slabs for fireplaces', each measuring 9ft (2.74m). Later, in the summer of 1777, William Staniforth, a plasterer from Alnwick Castle, wrote to offer his services, suggesting the main structure was largely complete by this date.
- 3.9 There is no mention in the accounts of an architect associated with the building, who remains unknown. However, there are some similarities with the Orangery in the Walled Garden, including the round-arched windows, Roman Doric columns and metope frieze, so it is credible that they were perhaps designed by the same architect and built at a similar time.
- 3.10 In 1778, Hutchinson describes the interior of the Mausoleum as follows:
- 'the inside is of the form of a chapel, having a nave in the middle, with an altar or communion table, above which a solemn dome is supported by semicircular arches, opening to an aile [sic.] on each side, in which are several arches and niches for the reception of tablets, inscriptions, and monuments'* (Hutchinson 1778, 333.).
- 3.11 When originally built, before the planting of the surrounding trees, the Mausoleum would have formed an impressive new element in the landscape, in significant views south-east from the South Pleasure Grounds. The surrounding ha-ha arrangements also demonstrate that the key views to and from the building were aligned north south, placing the building on the skyline when seen from the direction of the road to Seaton Sluice. It also became a decoration of the periphery of the great south park in its last years before disparking in the later 1780s (*ibid.* 178). The Mausoleum and Sea Walk are both depicted on the earliest surviving plan of the estate, prepared for Sir John in 1781 (Fig. 3).

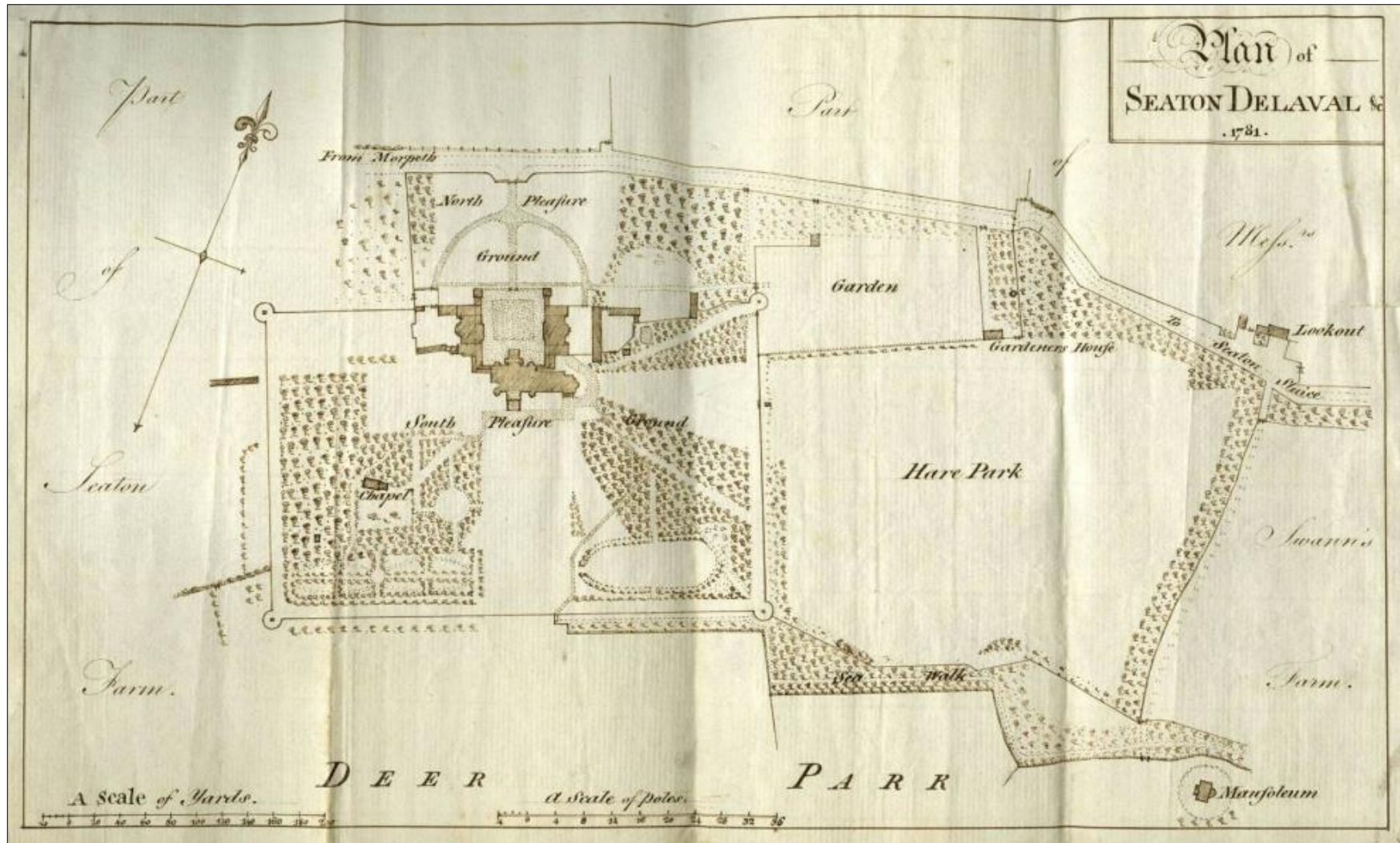


Figure 3: 1781 plan of the estate showing the Mausoleum and Sea Walk (NRO 740/Box 14)

Conversion to a dwelling

- 3.12 By the mid-19th century, the estate had passed to Jacob Astley (1797–1859), the 16th Baron Hastings. The First Edition six-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Fig. 4), published in 1865, shows the building little changed, although the belt of woodland associated with the Sea Walk has filled out considerably and trees are shown surrounding the circular enclosure, potentially obscuring views towards the Mausoleum. The access track and drawbridge across the ha-ha are also depicted for the first time.



Figure 4: extract from First Edition six-inch OS map, published in 1865, showing the former entrance.

- 3.13 The Mausoleum was probably converted for use as a dwelling in the 1880s or 90s. A postcard photograph of the Mausoleum taken c.1900 shows the building in good condition (Fig. 5). However, by the 1950s, the structure had been abandoned and was beginning to fall into disrepair. A survey by J. Kenneth Major in July 1950 shows holes in the roof of the dome where the lead had been removed (Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 189). This was probably the result of a theft of 2.5 tons of lead from the roof, which took place in January 1949 (Shields Daily News – Tuesday 25 January 1949). The 1950 survey shows a series of partition walls in place dividing up the interior space, although apart from this, little is known about how the building functioned.
- 3.14 By the 1970s, virtually all the lead had been stripped from the roof, and the structure reduced to a semi-derelict state (*ibid.*, 190). The dome had been set on fire by arsonists on several occasions and the walls covered with graffiti, and at some stage after 1984 the structure was dismantled. Timbers believed to be from the were found stored in the outbuildings adjacent to the Brewhouse when the National Trust took over the property

in 2009. These form part of the Seaton Delaval collection but have not as yet been catalogued (Moody *pers. comm.*)

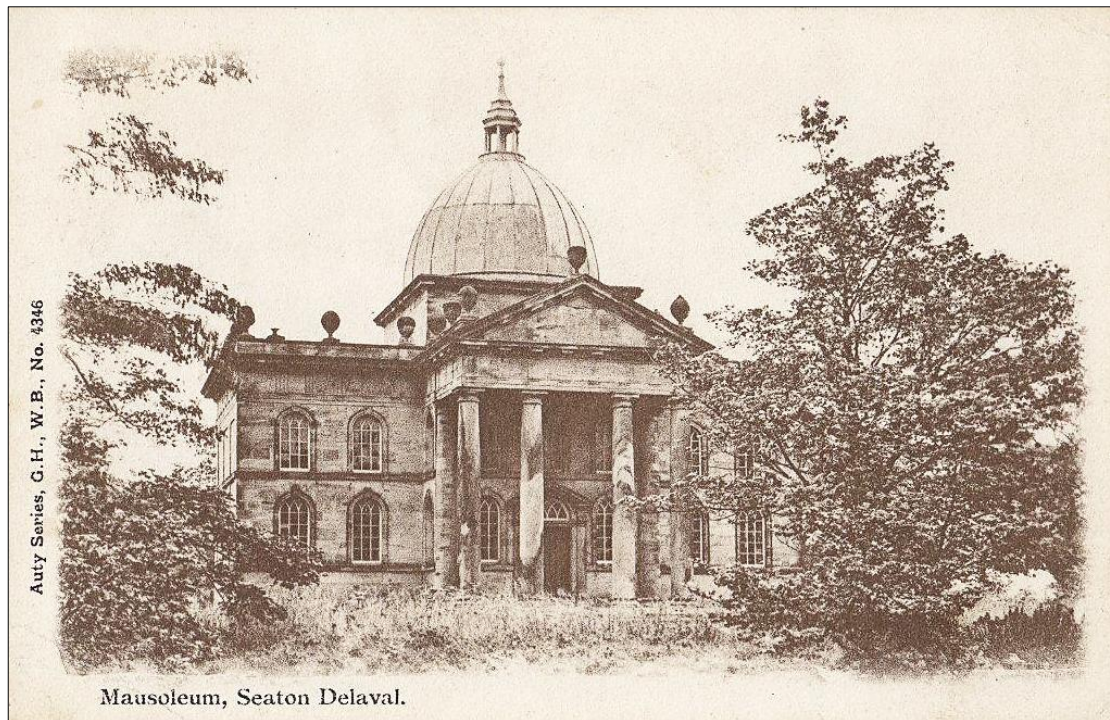


Figure 5: postcard of the Mausoleum c. 1900. Source unknown.

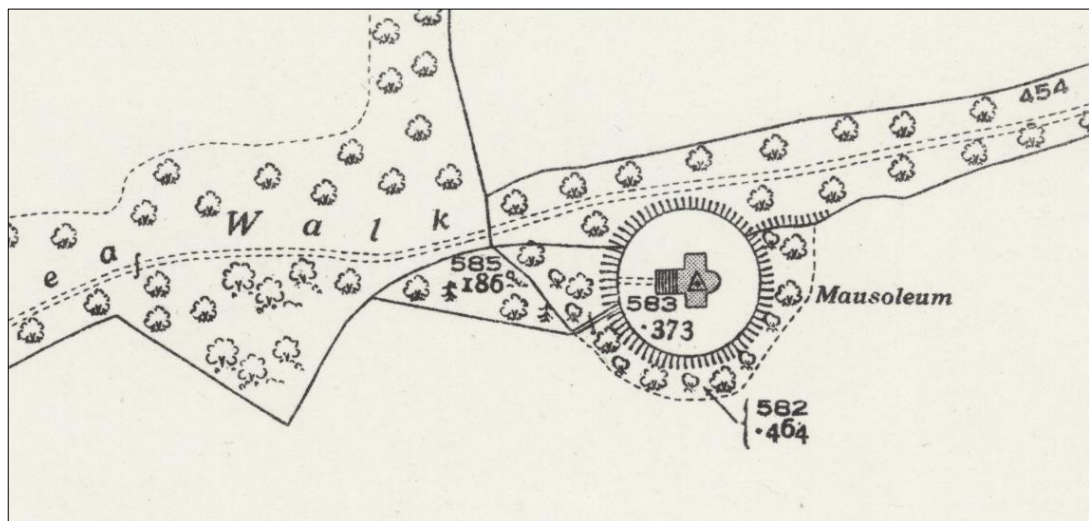


Figure 6: extract from 1947 25-inch OS map showing one of three later plank-bridges across the ha-ha, replacing the original entrance set slightly further north.

3.15 When the National Trust acquired the Seaton Delaval estate in 2009, the Mausoleum was in very poor condition and the structure posed a considerable potential risk to public safety. As noted in para. 2.12, in 2015, in an attempt to secure the building, the unenviable decision was made to dismantle part of the flanking wall to prevent planks

or tree-trunks being placed across the ha-ha ditch to provide access (all earlier bridges had been removed by this point). As part of The Curtain Rises project, vegetation was cleared from the interior of the building and limited consolidating work undertaken to stabilise the structure pending future conservation works (National Trust 2018b).

4.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

4.1 This report covers AWP 14 relating to the Mausoleum in accordance with the project brief (National Trust 2018b). Originally, this was intended to cover four elements as follows:

Item 1. preparation of a modular written scheme of investigation (WSI) detailing the works to be carried out.

Item 2. general recording of the roof structures of the porch prior to removal, once made accessible by the building works contractors.

Item 3. high-level recording of the building as made accessible by building works contractors to same standards.

Item 4. maintain a watching brief of the interior during vegetation clearance and any minor levelling required before weed membrane is laid.

4.2 Prior to work commencing, it was agreed that all elements would be carried out in accordance with an existing WSI prepared by the National Trust (2018c) and therefore Item 1 was not required.

4.3 The scope of repair work was also later modified following a drone survey undertaken by the architects, which revealed that the wall heads and dome base had all been recently capped with concrete (Mosedale Gillatt Architects 2017). As a result, there was a reduction in the work required to consolidate the wall heads. The drone survey also facilitated the filling-in of some of the elements previously missing on the high-level survey.

4.4 A further limiting factor was the nature and extent of the scaffold. Originally, it was intended to fully scaffold the exterior and interior of the building. However, a reduction in the scope of the conservation works meant that full scaffold was only erected around the exterior of the north two bays, limiting access for recording. A survey of the high-level sections of the three external walls was conducted in this area using Structure from

Motion (SfM) technology. (Fig. 7). Data was also captured from the scaffold of the interior, where feasible, although this was a lower resolution (Fig. 8).

- 4.5 In contrast to reduction in scope of Items 1–3, Item 4 – archaeological monitoring during levelling – proved to be more extensive than initially anticipated. A continuous watching brief was maintained over a 10-day period during the removal of soil and debris from the interior of the building.

5.0 STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

- 5.1 Work was carried out in accordance with the following published standards and guidelines of practice:

- *NPPF Planning Practice Framework* (MHCLG 2019, since updated 2021);
- *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2020a);
- *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (ClfA 2020b);
- *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2020c);
- *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2020d);
- *Code of Conduct*. (ClfA 2020e).
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015);
- *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. (Historic England 2016)
- *Written Scheme of Investigation, Seaton Delaval Hall* (National Trust 2018c).

6.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Building recording

- 6.1 The aim of the building recording was to provide a record of the high-level structures of the roof and portico prior to commencement of conservation works before they were removed or obscured behind new fabric (National Trust 2018c).
- 6.2 The objectives of the building recording were to:

- produce a written, photographic and measured survey of high-level elements suitable to enhance the existing architect's plans (although these were later enhanced by an independently commissioned drone survey);
- prepare an illustrated report that discusses the form, use, development and date of the elements recorded, and
- prepare a labelled and catalogued digital photographic record and measured survey (to the satisfaction of the planning conditions) to be deposited with the NCC Historic Environment Record (HER) and National Trust Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

Archaeological monitoring

- 6.3 Given the high potential for the survival of post-medieval remains associated with both the construction and use of the 18th-century Mausoleum (including its later use as a dwelling), the NCC Assistant County Archaeologist requested archaeological monitoring be conducted during vegetation clearance and ground levelling. This work also subscribed to, and met, the National Trust's conservation management practices.
- 6.4 The aim was to identify any archaeological remains revealed by the works and, where present, either ensure their survival through a modification of the clearance proposals or 'preserve by archaeological record' where that was not possible.
- 6.5 The objectives of the archaeological monitoring were to:
- establish the presence, nature, extent, preservation and significance of any archaeological remains;
 - provide a detailed record of any such archaeological remains;
 - where preservation *in situ* was not achievable, recover and assess any associated structural, artefactual and environmental evidence;
 - undertake a programme of investigation that meets with national and regional standards (Historic England 2015; ClfA 2020a–e); and
 - prepare an illustrated report on the results of the archaeological monitoring (to the satisfaction of the planning conditions) to be deposited with the NCC HER and National Trust SMR.

7.0 METHODOLOGY

Historic building recording

- 7.1 A survey of the high-level structure was conducted within the limitations discussed above (Section 4). An accurate orthographic photomontage of the high-level elements was produced using SfM technology. This was taken using a Canon EOS5d MkII digital camera (21 megapixels). This fulfilled both the measured and photographic record of the survey. A written description of those elements accessible was produced based on the data collected on site.

Archaeological monitoring

- 7.2 All groundworks were conducted by the contractor, Heritage Property Restoration (HPR). Limitations to access meant that all material was excavated by hand. This involved:
- the removal of vegetation where in contact with the masonry to prevent further damage to the building fabric;
 - review of the local topology across the enclosure and reduction of any prominent areas of debris;
 - separation of brick rubble and soil during reduction to facilitate reinstatement;
 - laying of a surface of non-mortared bricks in the interior of the building once a levelled surface had been achieved. These were then covered with raked and tamped soil to create a firm, relatively level working surface for future conservation works, and
 - the careful excavation and recording of structural features prior to full or partial reburial.
- 7.3 A continual watching brief was conducted during the clearance of undergrowth and the levelling of the interior. Where structures, features, deposits or finds of archaeological interest were exposed, the attending archaeologist was given adequate time to clean, assess, excavate by hand and record features and finds.
- 7.4 A full record (written, drawn and photographic, as appropriate) was made using pro-forma record sheets. Plans and section drawings were created at 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 scales as appropriate. The location of archaeological features was recorded in relation to the architect's plans (Fig. 2).

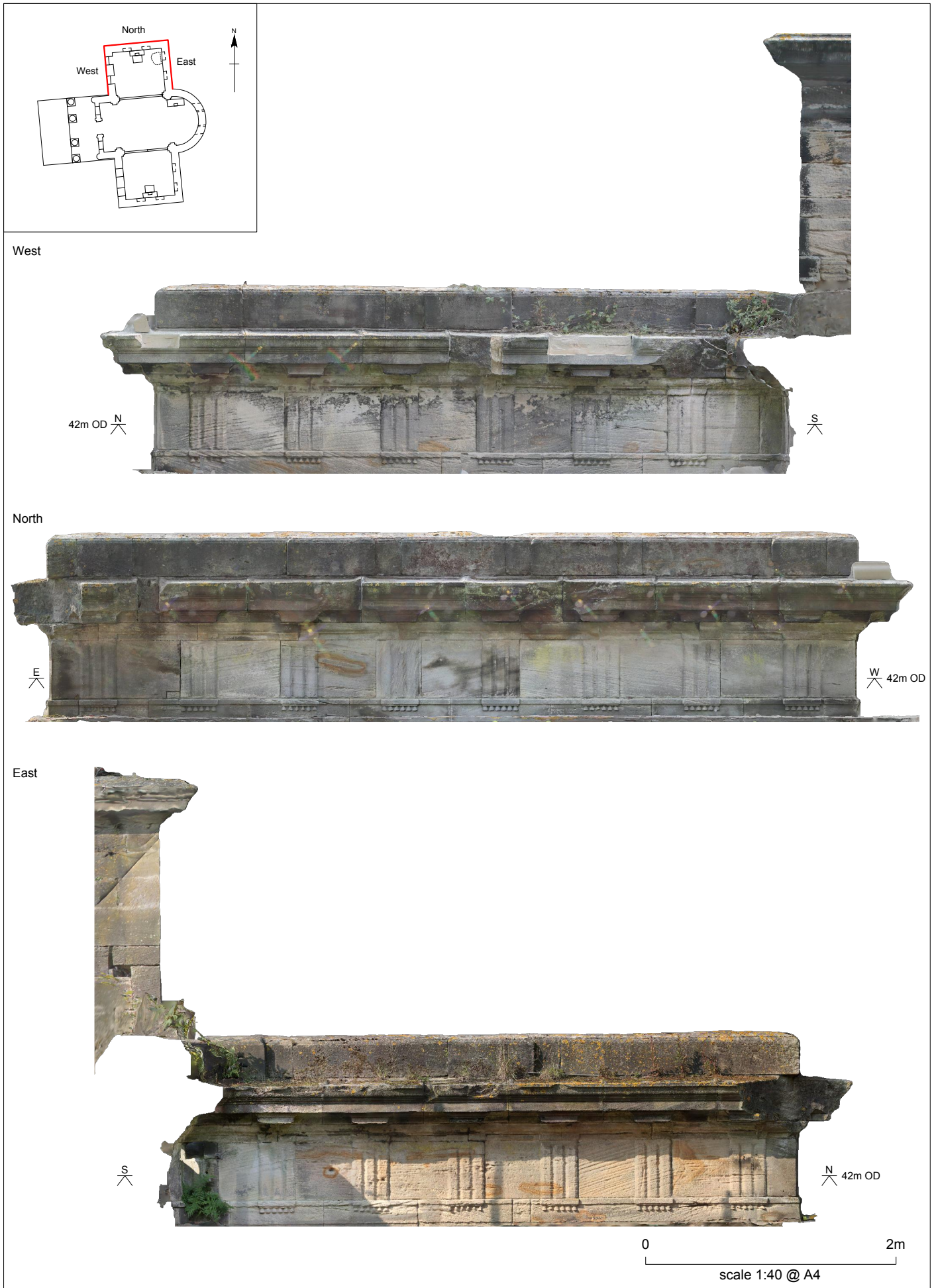
- 7.5 A full photographic record was created in digital format. This included general site shots, views of each excavation area, and photographs of individual features and groups of features. All photographs included a suitable scale and were recorded on a photographic register, noting the subject and direction of each shot. An ordered catalogue of all photographs is included with the site archive.
- 7.6 All architectural elements and hearth furniture uncovered during the work was recorded and then reburied in a specific location (noted in the text) to ensure they can be easily relocated if required in the future.
- 7.7 All finds retrieved were from unstratified rubble deposits. The assemblage comprised only fragments of architectural detail and ceramic building material, which were recorded on site prior to reburial. All other material recovered was modern in date and was discarded on site.
- 7.8 No undisturbed deposits were identified that were considered suitable for environmental sampling.
- 7.9 All other aspects of the WSI (National Trust 2018c) were followed.

8.0 RESULTS

- 8.1 High-level building recording was conducted on the 10th of September 2020 when scaffold was in place around the north end of the building. NAA was then informed by HPR that the scope of the work had changed and there were no plans to scaffold the rest of the building (Figs 7, 8).
- 8.2 The archaeological monitoring work took place over a 10-day period in November 2020 during vegetation clearance and ground reduction/levelling.

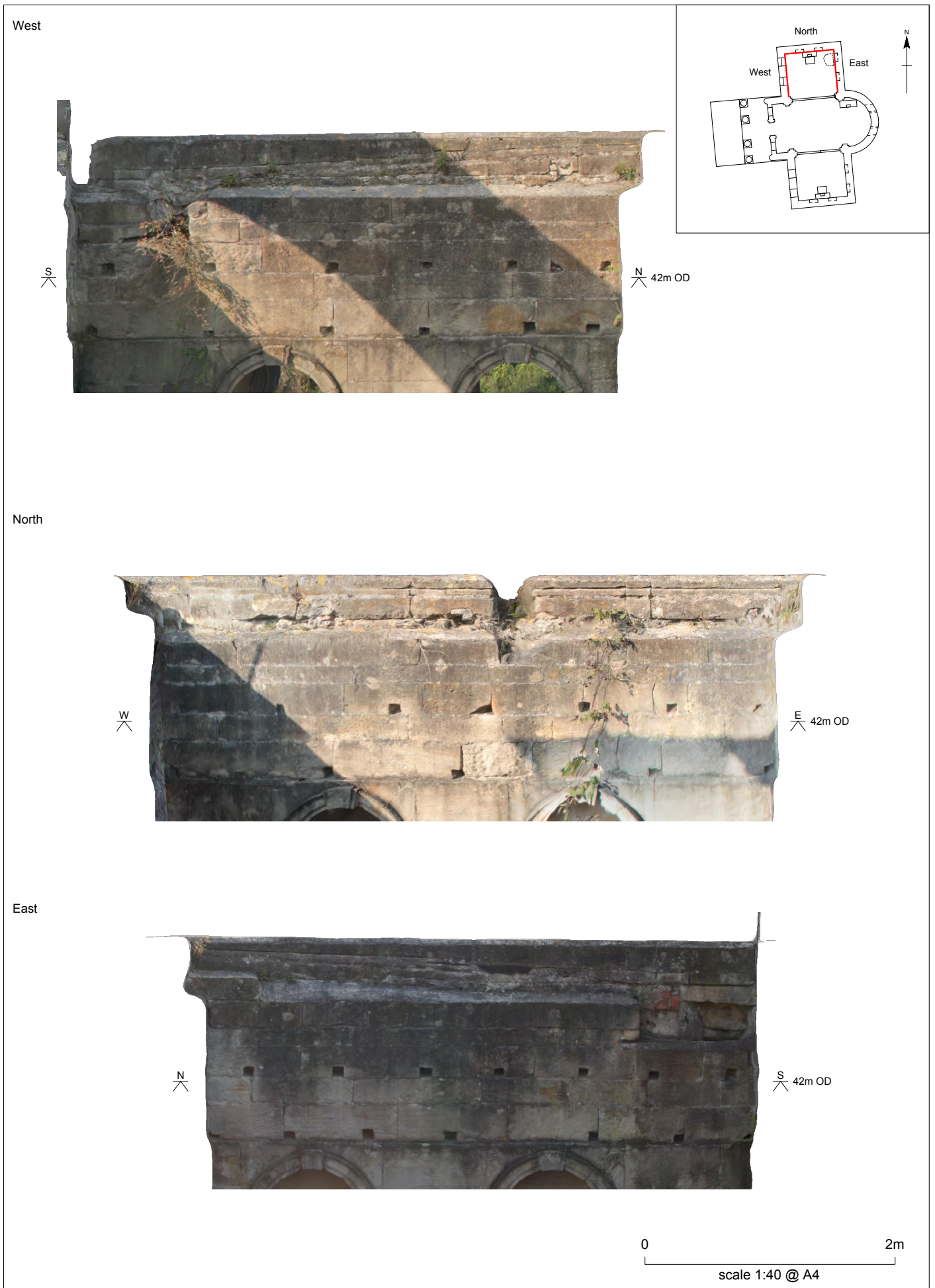
Building recording

- 8.3 The entablature, like the columns below, was of the Roman Doric order, comprising a triglyph and metope frieze, set with guttae, above which was a denticulated cornice (Fig. 8). Both elements ran around the entire building and were set just above the upper string course, which divides the high-level elements from the upper set of round-arched windows below. All elements were constructed of stone. The wall head was capped with modern concrete. There were no other features or elements of interest.



The Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall: exterior elevations of north bay entablature

Figure 7



The Mausoleum, Seaton Delaval Hall: interior upper elevations of north bay

Figure 8

- 8.4 Within the interior, a double line of joist holes was visible just above the line of the window archivolt (Fig. 8). These were associated with the roof structure, although no timber elements remained *in situ*. No other features or elements relating to the construction of the building were noted.

Archaeological monitoring

- 8.5 At the commencement of the work, the interior of the building was overgrown with vegetation, including several young trees (Plate 3). One of these had been cut down to ground level on at least two occasions in the past, making its removal problematic. Clearance of the undergrowth uncovered a considerable quantity of brick rubble (Plate 4) within a matrix of cream-coloured crushed mortar and render (2000), mixed with decades of leaf mould and decayed vegetation



Plate 3: interior during initial clearance, facing north.

- 8.6 The bricks presumably came from the demolition of the 19th-century partition walls. The bricks were of two slightly different sizes, one measuring 0.23m by 0.12m by 0.08m and the other 0.24m by 0.115 by 0.07m. Both were unfrosted and made of a similar orange/red fabric, with a blue-grey interior when broken. Some bricks included a thin accretion of cream/white mortar.

- 8.7 Mortared brickwork structures were uncovered close to the surface. These proved to be the remains of three fireplaces and a partition wall, all associated with the previous habitation of the building (Fig. 2c). These were sensitively uncovered and cleaned before being recorded.



Plate 4: separation of brick rubble and topsoil 2000, facing south.

Fireplace 2001

- 8.8 Fireplace 2001 was situated against the base of the south wall of the building. A single course of bricks lined the face of the wall behind the main body of the fireplace (Plate 5). The remains of the brickwork measured 1.42m by 0.56m, with 0.32m visible above the original floor level. The height of the former floor surface was evident from the location of the hearthstone. This measured 0.93m by 0.66m and was 0.12m thick. The bricks used in the construction of the fireplace were the same as those found in 2000.
- 8.9 In addition, two other types of firebricks were used to form the inner face of the fireplace. It was not possible to record the full dimensions of the bricks due to their placement within the structure. One had a speckled orange, semi-glazed, exterior and measured (?) by 0.115m by 0.08cm, and the other measured (?) by 0.13m by 0.05m with a shallow rectangular frog on one face and a light grey/cream exterior. Both types comprised a grey/cream fabric.

- 8.10 The inner face of the south wall showed traces of the former fireplace, revealing that the body of the fireplace was 0.84m wide and 1.20m tall, with walls 0.16m thick. No evidence of a brick chimney (or other type of flue) was visible above the internal string course at window level.



Plate 5: fireplace 2001, showing marks on the wall above associated with the fireplace, the level of the hearthstone but the absence of surviving original floor.

- 8.11 Clearance of a small area around the hearthstone revealed no traces of the original floor surface. Documentary evidence suggests this was probably flagged with stone, which had been removed at some stage in the past as part of the abandonment or demolition of the interior. The hearthstone may have been left because, as an integral part of the fireplace, it would have been difficult to remove without a great deal of work.

Fireplace 2002

- 8.12 Fireplace 2002 was situated in the central nave, built up against the north side of the apse. The surviving brickwork measured 1.07m by 0.68m and was visible to a height of c.0.45m above the required level of the groundworks. The original hearth/floor level was not exposed by the depth of excavation required in this area. The structure was of the same construction as 2001 and employed the same types of brick. It was built

perpendicular to the inner face of the archway, with the space between the curve of the apse and the back of the brickwork being infilled with soil and rubble (Plate 6).



Plate 6: fireplace 2002, with arch pier and north wall of the apse behind.

8.13 Two complete bricks were removed from the damaged upper portion of **2002** (Plate 7) and a corroded iron grill was recovered from the surrounding debris. These elements were recorded prior to reburial within the hearth of fireplace **2003** and are described below:

- **Brick 2009**
Soot-stained yellow/cream fabric measuring 0.23m by 0.11m by 0.06m with a stamp 'FOSTER' running slightly skew to the brick face.
- **Brick 2010**
Orange/cream, slightly glazed surface with a light cream fabric measuring 0.23m by 0.115m by 0.08m, with a sharply defined bevelled rectangular frog. The letters 'SDC' were pressed in relief in the frog and there were also discs in relief on the face on either side.
- **Fire-grill 2008**
Comprised three bars of wrought iron riveted to form a crude fire-grill, presumably associated with fireplace **2002**. Fire-grill **2008** was reburied within the fireplace **2003**.



Plate 7: firebricks 2009 and 2010 from fireplace 2002.



Plate 8: fireplace 2003.

Fireplace 2003

- 8.14 Using the same brick type and construction method as the other fireplaces, **2003** was built against the north wall of the building and measured 1.40m by 0.60m (Plate 8). The cream/white mortared brickwork survived above the original ground level and sat above

a hearthstone that measured 1m by 0.60m by 0.08m. During excavation, part of a cast-iron fire-surround with a foliate design (2007) was found (Plate 9). It was recorded and reburied in the interior of the fireplace.



Plate 9: cast-iron fire surround 2007 from fireplace 2003.

Partition wall 2004

8.15 The lower courses of a narrow wall were uncovered in the archway separating the nave of the Mausoleum from the south aisle (Plate 10). The wall was originally 0.16m wide and consisted of sparsely mortared bricks of the same type as that used in the fireplaces. The bricks were laid end-to-end in a single course forming a thin partition, with 0.06m of coarse mortar render applied to the exterior surface.

8.16 Traces of the wall were visible as staining on the arch reveal, and iron fittings in the stonework showed the wall had continued across the face of the masonry. The brickwork of the wall butted against the lower courses of the eastern arch pier and extended west for over 2m (Plate 10). The remains of a doorway were visible west of the dividing wall, close to the entrance and portico.

Partition wall 2006

8.17 The iron ties noted in the masonry above wall 2004 were also visible on the north supporting arch of the dome. Within the arch, sections of timber planking were attached to the body of the masonry. These measured 0.50–0.60m by 0.16m by 0.015m. The

timber would have served to infill the gaps caused by the decorative moulding of the piers and curvature of the arch (Plate 11).



Plate 10: partition wall 2004.



Plate 11: timber remains of wall 2006.



Plate 12: ball finial elements partially buried in the north-east corner of the interior.

Finial elements 2005

- 8.18 The ground in the north-east of the Mausoleum was more disturbed than the rest of the interior. The removal of debris and fill in this area uncovered three elements of

decorative architecture partially buried in the corner of the building (Plate 12). These objects proved to be fragments of a ball finial and possibly the base of an urn. They were fully recorded prior to reburial within the hearth of fireplace **2003** (Plate 13).



Plate 13: ball finial elements and the possible base of an urn.

9.0 THE FINDS

9.1 Bricks **2009** and **2010** were both sourced locally and were a common by-product associated with the mining industry.

- Brick **2009** was produced by H. Foster and Company at the Hotspur Brickworks adjacent to Backworth Colliery 'C' Pit, making firebricks from 1877 until 1945, when domestic brick production ceased (Tyne and Wear HER ref. 2217).
- Brick **2010** was produced at Seaton Delaval Colliery, which operated from 1838 until 27 May 1960. In 1929, the SDC Company merged with Cramlington Coal Company to form Hartley Mains Collieries Ltd. (burradonhistory.co.uk 2013)

9.2 All finds associated with the groundwork were fully recorded *in situ* prior to reburial. The upper brickwork associated with the fireplaces were dismantled under archaeological supervision, so little evidence now survives above ground after landscaping.

10.0 DISCUSSION

- 10.1 Although the nature of the Mausoleum works was fairly limited in scope – being restricted only to the removal of modern debris and overburden from the interior of the building – it has nevertheless provided an opportunity to find out more about the latest period of the building's use and history.
- 10.2 The three fireplaces and remains of partition walls (Fig. 2.2c) all correlate with features recorded in the survey of the interior made by J. Kenneth Major in 1950 (Fig. 9). This shows the ground floor was divided into four rooms comprising (1) apse and nave, (2) north aisle, (3) south aisle, and (4) loggia, with a connecting corridor running from east to west along the north side of the central nave. Traces of brickwork, timber and wrought-iron fixings recorded during the monitoring showed the partitions spanned the north and south arches of the central dome. The height of the partitions also indicates the existence of an upper floor, inserted when the building was converted for use as a dwelling.
- 10.3 The creation of a domestic space within the building appears to have involved the construction of a largely free-standing timber framework, possibly tied-into the roof joists, and resting on the architectural features within the structure. The single stretcher-laid partitions served only to divide the space rather than bearing any structural load.
- 10.4 Fireplaces **2001** and **2003** were constructed against the north and south walls of the ground-floor side aisles. Fireplace **2002**, in what was possibly the main central reception room, was situated on the north side of the apse to create a rather homely space away from the front door. Excavation showed that the area to the rear of the feature had been infilled with rubble and soil to accommodate the curvature of the wall. No trace of brickwork or other chimney structure was visible on the masonry wall behind.
- 10.5 During levelling in the north-east corner of the building, two fragments of a ball finial and the possible base of an urn were found (**2005**) partially buried beneath the brick rubble. Both types of features are shown on an early 20th-century photograph of the building (Fig. 5) and were perhaps discarded during either theft of the roof lead or later demolition of the dome.

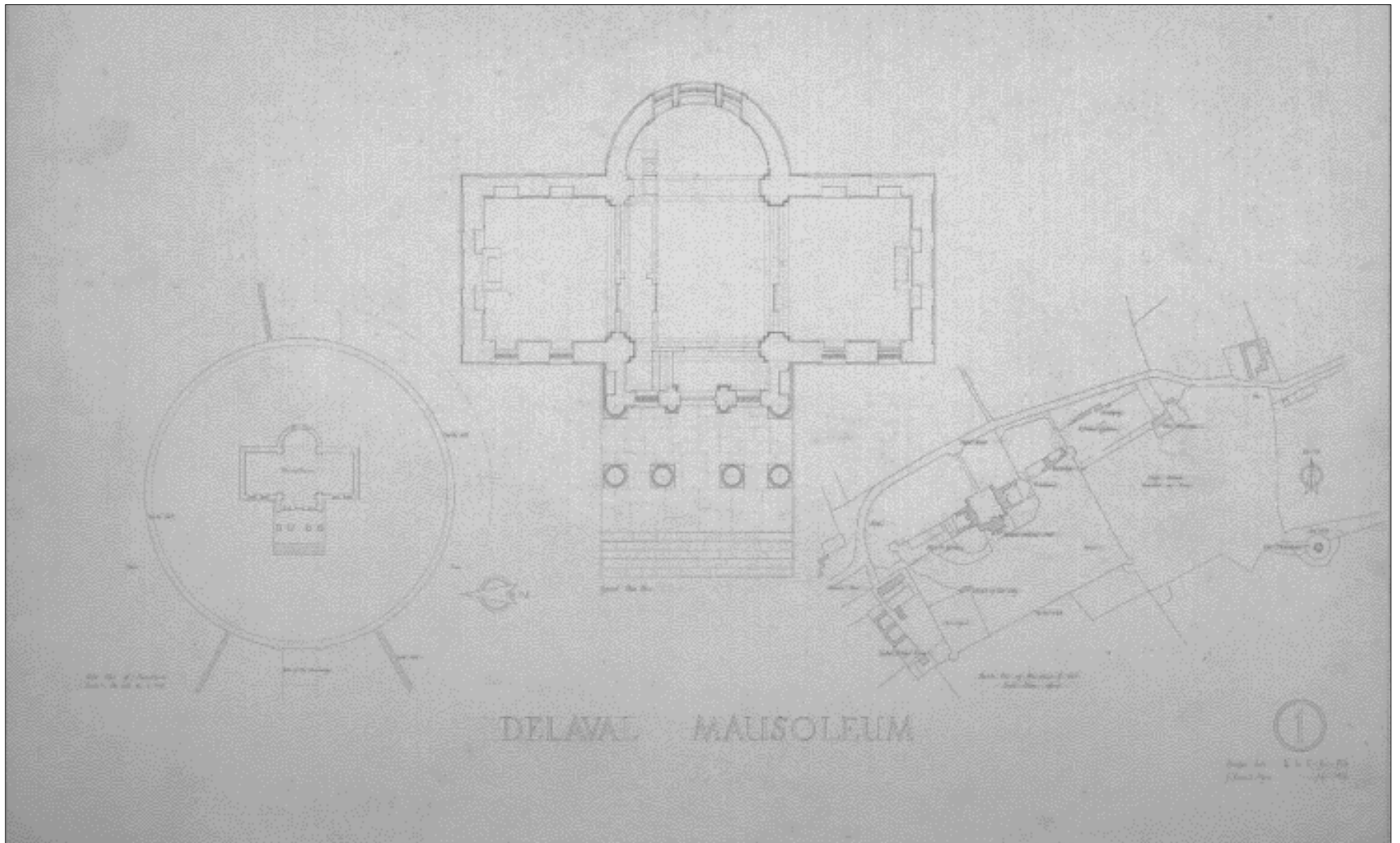


Figure 9: survey of the Mausoleum made by J. Kenneth Major, July 1950 © National Trust (image taken from Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 186

- 10.6 Dating of the conversion of the Mausoleum into a dwelling is problematic. The provenance of the brickwork in hearth 2002, coupled with the foliate design on the cast-iron grate, suggests this may have been inserted in the 1870s–90s. However, an article appearing in *Archaeologia Aeliana* in 1888 (cited in Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 189) notes that ‘until a few years ago’ the property was ‘used as a dwelling house’ but that it was the intention of the then Lord Hastings to restore the building ‘to its original condition’. This would suggest that the Mausoleum had been converted a number of years previously. Indeed, if it had never been consecrated and was not used as a chapel, then this may have occurred fairly early in its history.
- 10.7 However, one element that is puzzling is the reference to ‘slabs for fire places’ mentioned in the September 1775 bill for the construction of the building (Simpson and Brown Architects 2017, 185). It seems unusual to have fireplaces in a mausoleum. Potentially, they could have been intended to heat the ground-floor chapel, although this was not common. It is also unclear exactly what the ‘slabs’ relate to – 9ft (2.74m) would seem inordinately large for a hearthstone, so perhaps a fireback. All three of the fireplaces found are clearly later inserts built against the internal masonry of the building, presumably originally with a brick flue and chimney against the wall and extending into the roof. No evidence of an internal flue running up through the walls was observed at ground level, although this warrants further investigation at height.
- 10.8 The 1950 survey, together with various historic photographs, all indicate the building remained in use as a domestic property into the early 20th century. Nevertheless, without water or foul drainage, the building would not have proved an attractive prospect as a post-war dwelling, which probably led to its final abandonment.
- 10.9 When originally converted, it would have presumably been quite a desirable dwelling. However, while little internal decoration survives to indicate the status of the interior, the fragment of decorated iron grate suggests it was not purely utilitarian in nature. The general absence of decorative and structural material (e.g. roof timbers, plasterwork, window glass, timber moulding, etc.) suggest the building was at some stage stripped and cleared rather than left to gradually decline, an assumption supported by the discovery of the dome timbers in the Brewhouse outbuilding (*Moody pers. comm.*). This was possibly as part of the improvement works conducted by Lord Hastings in the late 20th century.
- 10.10 A detailed historic study (review of census data, 1911 Finance Act, etc.) was beyond

the scope of this report but would certainly be warranted in the future and may yield some important information. This topic might make an interesting project for the National Trust volunteers. Further monitoring and recording during any future conservation work is highly recommended.

11.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

- 11.1 The full archive from the archaeological investigations, including paperwork, drawings, photographs, digital data and the finds assemblage, is to be deposited with the National Trust at Seaton Delaval Hall. Deposition will be in accordance with written guidelines on archive standards and procedures (ClfA 2020d). Copies of the digital data will be archived with the Archaeology Data Service.

12.0 REFERENCES

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Maps and Plans:

Northumberland Record Office (NRO) 740/Box 14 Seaton Delaval Hall 1781 estate map.

Ordnance Survey First Edition six-inch map (1865).

Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (1847).

APPENDIX A
CONTEXT CATALOGUE

| Context | Phase | Interpretative description | Area | Notes |
|---------|-------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 2000 | 1960+ | demolition rubble and vegetation | interior mausoleum | overgrowth and litter over interior of Mausoleum included demolished brick walls 2004 & 2006 and buried finial elements 2006. |
| 2001 | 1900+ | brick fireplace against south wall | southern room | |
| 2002 | 1900+ | brick fireplace in apse | central room | fire grill 2008 |
| 2003 | 1900+ | brick fireplace against north wall | northern room | art deco fire surround 2007 |
| 2004 | 1900+ | brick partition wall | southern room | |
| 2005 | 1776+ | finial elements | northern room | 3 finial elements buried in NE corner of room |
| 2006 | 1900+ | timber elements of partition wall | northern room | remains of upper storey to partition wall for north room. |
| 2007 | 1900+ | part of fireplace 2003 | northern room | art deco fire surround for fireplace 2003 |
| 2008 | 1900+ | part of fireplace 2002 | central room | wrought-iron fire grill for fireplace 2002 |
| 2009 | 1900+ | part of fireplace 2002 | central room | frogged & stamped brick - FOSTER |
| 2010 | | part of fireplace 2002 | central room | frogged & stamped brick - SDC |