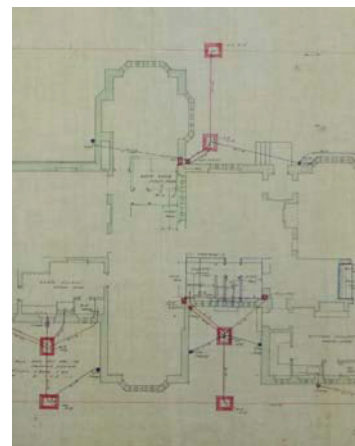


ABBAY HOUSE HOTEL AL FRESCO DINING AREA, ABBEY ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Heritage Assessment



Client: Abbey House Hotel

NGR: 321664 472102

Planning Application Refs.
B18/2018/0342 and
B23/2018/0343

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Summary

Following the submission of retrospective planning applications for the creation of an al fresco dining area adjacent to the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, Greenlane Archaeology was commissioned to produce a heritage assessment in order to establish the likely impact of the structure on any remains of archaeological interest. The hotel, which is a Grade II* Listed Building, is located within the precinct of Furness Abbey, which is a Scheduled Monument. The work for the project, including a site visit, was carried out in June 2018.

The area around Furness Abbey contains remains ranging from the end of the last Ice Age onwards and there have been a number of prehistoric, Roman, and early medieval finds from the wider area. The site is located within the precinct of the abbey, which was established in 1127, and it became one of the most powerful monastic houses in the country. The map evidence shows that the proposed development area is within a field named 'Bull Copy' on the earliest maps, which is presumably a reference to it being where bulls were kept, and it was essentially undeveloped until the construction of what became the Abbey House Hotel to the designs of Sir Edward Lutyens in 1914. Abbey House was originally built by Vickers to form a guesthouse for visitors and residence for the director and a number of plans relating to the construction of the Abbey House, dated 1913 and 1914, provide considerable detail about the various elements of the building and its grounds, even including the position of the drains. It became an old people's home in 1951 and was converted to a hotel in 1985.

A geophysical survey carried out within the grounds of the hotel in 1988 revealed a number of features of potential archaeological interest, although none of these have been investigated. Groundworks associated with the extension to the north end of Abbey House in c2000 and the installation of new signage at the hotel in 2014 were subject to archaeological watching briefs. Neither of these pieces of work revealed any particularly significant archaeological remains, although a section of wall, perhaps part of the precinct boundary, was revealed during the watching brief. An archaeological evaluation carried out in 2017 recorded a pit of unknown date in one trench, but of more interest was a fragment of Roman ceramic building material, probably roofing tile, recovered from the topsoil. This added to the growing list of stray finds of Roman date recovered from the immediate area and points to the possibility of a Roman structure being present nearby; however, if structures of that date were indeed present within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel, they are likely to have been damaged or destroyed by construction and landscaping carried out during the construction of the hotel. A site visit confirmed that the area in which the dining area was constructed was evidently terraced as part of the construction of the hotel and disturbed by the creation of services, which are shown on some of the original drawings.

Although the site is in an area of some archaeological interest and potential, the development area is likely to have been disturbed by previous work relating to the construction of the Abbey House. Any groundworks associated with the new development are also likely to be of limited depth and so the impact on any surviving archaeological remains is likely to be minimal.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Abbey House Hotel for commissioning the project. Special thanks are due to Tim Kilroe at Bethell and Brian Conroy, Operations Director at the Abbey House Hotel, for their help with access during the site visit.

The project was managed by Dan Elsworth, who also carried out the heritage assessment and site visit, and wrote the report with Tom Mace, who produced the illustrations. The final report was edited by Jo Dawson.

1. Introduction

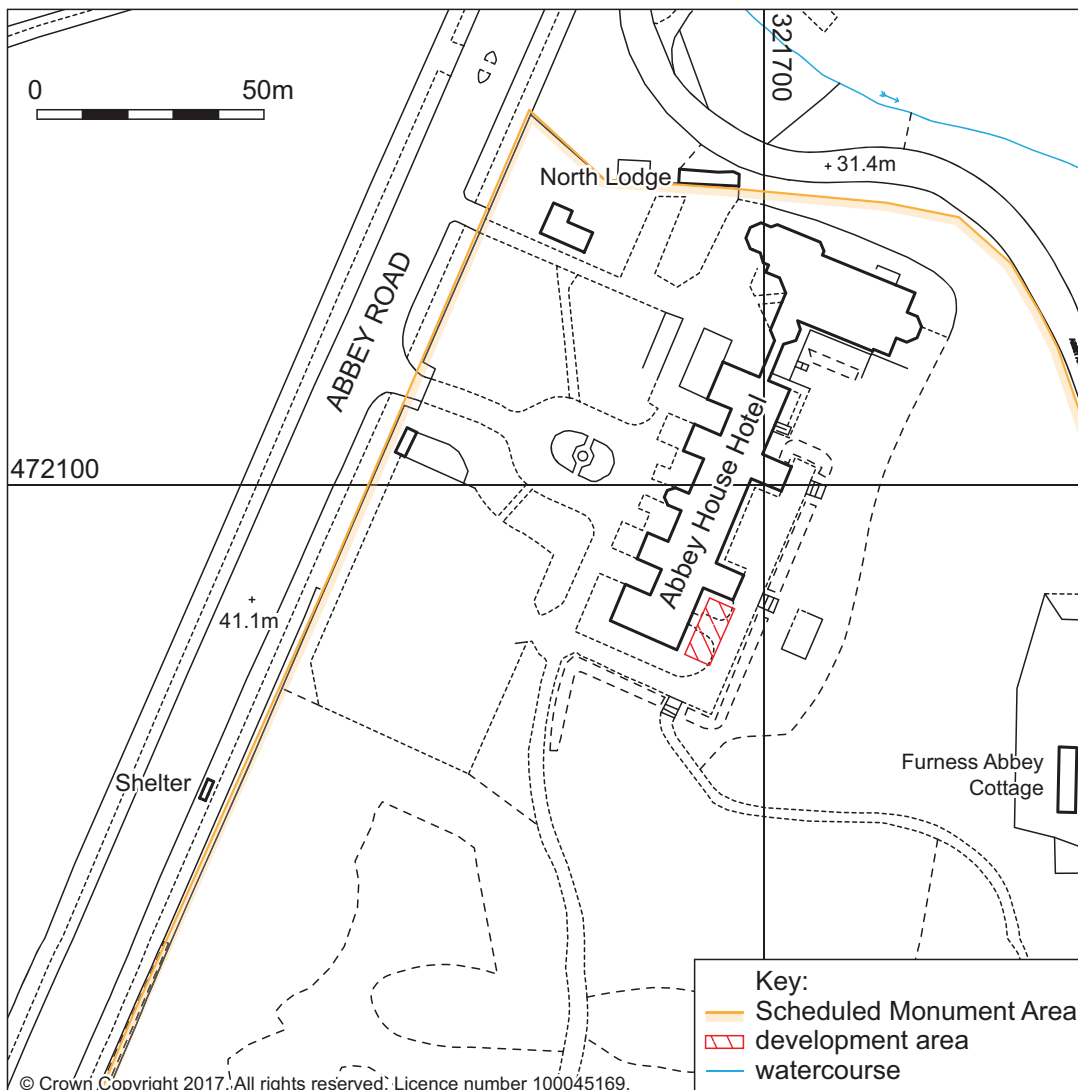
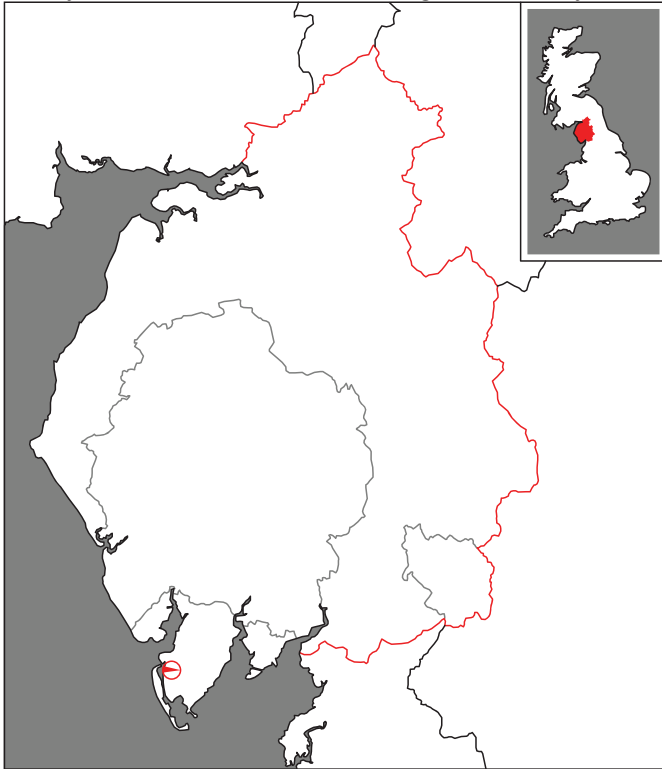
1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Following the submission of a retrospective planning applications (Ref. B18/2018/0342 and B23/2018/0343) for the creation of an al fresco dining area at the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (centred on NGR 321664 472102) Greenlane Archaeology were appointed by the Abbey House Hotel (hereafter 'the client'), through Tim Kilroe at Bethell, to produce a heritage assessment. This was intended to examine the extent to which the structure might have impacted on archaeological remains present on the site, and was undertaken in June 2018.

1.1.2 The development area comprises an *al fresco* dining area to the south end of the east side end of Abbey House Hotel (Figure 1).

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Furness Abbey is located towards the south-west end of the Furness Peninsula between the towns of Dalton-in-Furness and Barrow-in-Furness, in southern Cumbria. This area is on the north side of Morecambe Bay on a sandy coastal plain, consisting of gently undulating pastureland, and the Furness low fells begin a short distance to the north (Countryside Commission 1998, 65). The Abbey is situated at the base of the west edge of the steep-sided and wooded Vale of Nightshade; this sheltered valley is fed by Mill Beck which has cut deep into the Sherwood sandstone geology of the area (Moseley 1978, fig 1). The Abbey House Hotel is situated on higher ground to the west of the Abbey, adjacent to the main road between Dalton-in-Furness and Barrow-in-Furness, and the site ranges from approximately 20m to 40m above sea level.



Client: Abbey House Hotel

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Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Heritage Assessment

2.1.1 The study area for the heritage assessment was restricted to the immediate environs of the Abbey House Hotel. Information relating to the wider area was also taken into consideration, but the only other historic sites of interest within this area were those relating to or forming part of Furness Abbey. The heritage assessment was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and is largely derived from information compiled as part of an early Heritage Assessment (Greenlane Archaeology 2017a). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site and published secondary sources, although the following sources were examined:

- **Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (HER):** this is a list of all the known sites of archaeological interest within the county (excluding the Lake District National Park, which has a separate list maintained by the Lake District National Park Authority) and is the primary source of information for an investigation of this kind. This was consulted in order to establish whether there were any sites of archaeological interest within the proposed development area beyond those associated with Furness Abbey;
- **Cumbria Archive Centre, Barrow-in-Furness (CAC(B)):** the majority of original and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness. Of principal importance are early maps of the site. These were examined in order to establish the development of the site, date of any structures present within it, and details of land use. In addition, any details of the site's owners and occupiers were acquired where available;
- **Historic England:** a copy of a geophysical survey report carried out within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel was obtained from the archives of Historic England (formerly English Heritage);
- **Greenlane Archaeology library:** additional secondary sources and unpublished reports were examined to provide information for the site background.

2.2 Site Visit

2.2.1 A brief site visit was carried out covering the development area and other areas that might be affected. Particular attention was paid to the identification of features of historical or archaeological interest, but other relevant features were recorded such as later aspects of the site that may have impacted on archaeological remains or could constrain further investigation. Colour digital photographs showing the general arrangement of the site and any features of interest were taken.

2.3 Archive

2.3.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design and current CIfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness following the completion of the project. A copy of this report will be provided for the client and a copy will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition, at a suitable time a digital copy will be provided for the Cumbria County Council HER, and a record of the project will be made on the OASIS scheme.

3. Results

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The development area comprises a rectangular block, aligned north-east/south-west, at the south end of the east side of the Abbey House Hotel. It is situated within the grounds of Abbey House Hotel, which in turn lie within the precinct of Furness Abbey. The only other sites of archaeological interest within the immediate vicinity form part of the same complex.

3.2 Heritage Assessment

3.2.1 The results of the heritage assessment have been used to produce two main elements. Firstly all available maps of the area were compiled into a map regression, demonstrating how the site has physically developed (*Section 3.3*). The second purpose of the heritage assessment is to produce a background history of the site. This is intended to cover all periods, in part to provide information that can be used to assess the potential of the site, but more importantly to present the documented details of any sites that are known (see *Section 4*).

3.2.2 Once this information has been compiled the significance of those sites of archaeological interest within the study area, their potential, and the degree to which they are likely to be affected is considered (*Section 5*) and based on this any suitable mitigation work is then suggested, where appropriate.

3.3 Map and Image Regression

3.3.1 **Introduction:** although there are early, typically county-wide, maps that include the area, they are generally very small scale and so typically the first useful maps of the area do not appear until the early 19th century. However, in this case there are earlier estate plans of late 18th century date, although these cannot be reproduced for copyright reasons. As a result, it is maps from that date onwards that are discussed below. In addition, various early 20th century plans relating to the building of the Abbey House Hotel are held at the archive centre in Barrow-in-Furness, although several of these are undated.

3.3.2 **Estate plan, c1775:** part of an estate plan, the original of which is apparently at Holker Hall, is reproduced in the most recent guidebook to Furness Abbey (Wood 1998, 31). This does not show the site but does show the land to the south and is essentially identical to the later map of c1783 (see *Section 3.3.3* below).

3.3.3 **Estate plan c1783:** an estate plan of land formerly belonging to Furness Abbey held as part of the Devonshire family collection at Chatsworth House (Chatsworth House 4132 c1783) shows a similar arrangement to that in the later Ordnance Survey maps. The site is part of a field named 'Bull Copy', presumably a reference to it being where bulls were kept.

3.3.4 **Estate plan 1806:** a slightly later estate plan, again held in the collection at Chatsworth House (Chatsworth House 4130 1806), shows the same arrangement as the earlier plan, with the field name 'Bull Copy' again given.

3.3.5 **Ordnance Survey 1851:** the site has clearly seen little development by this date (Plate 2). It is located within part of a single field. In addition, some contours are shown, indicating that the land was not entirely level at this time and sloped down steeply to the east.

3.1.6 **Ordnance Survey 1873:** this is a revised version of the previous map site, which shows that the site was essentially unchanged by this time, although a new road had been cut through the north-east corner and across the north side of the field and a new building had been constructed to the east (Plate 2).



Plate 1: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1851

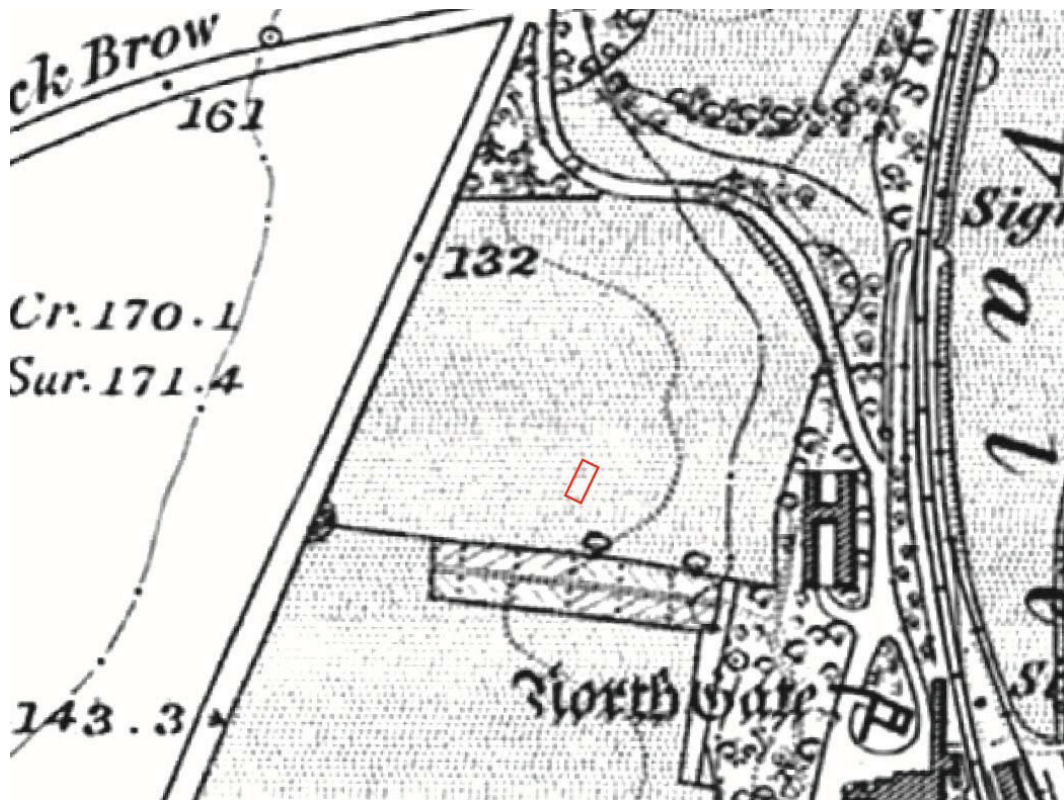


Plate 2: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1873

3.3.6 **Ordnance Survey 1891:** although this map is more detailed as it is at a larger scale, it is apparent that the site is essentially unchanged since 1851 (Plate 3; cf. Plate 2).

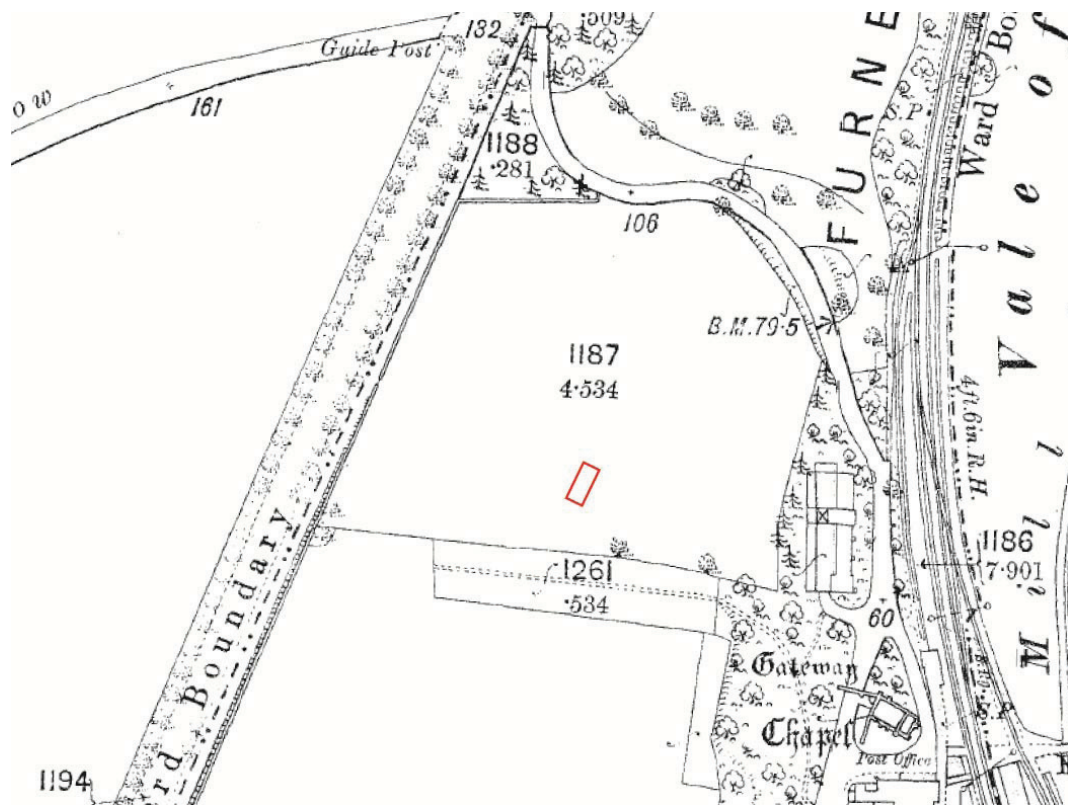


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1891

3.3.7 **Ordnance Survey 1913:** the site remains essentially unchanged since 1891 (Plate 4).

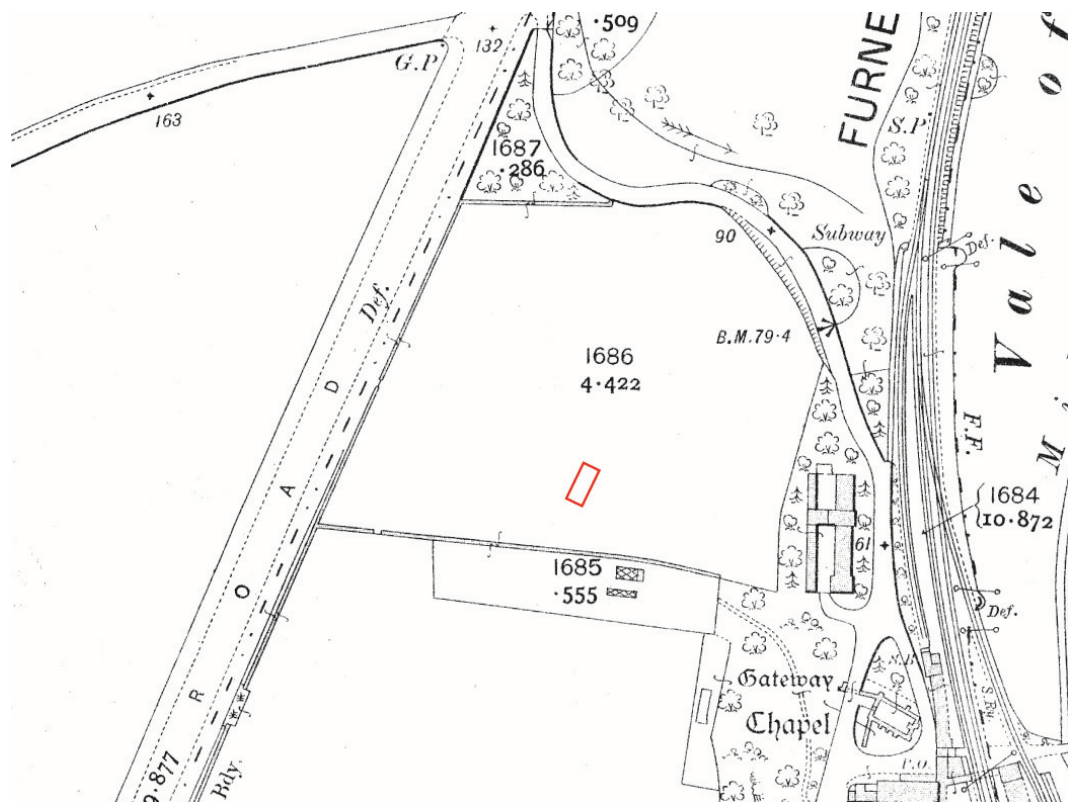


Plate 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1913

3.3.8 **Plan of 1913:** this is one of two plans of the building, originally known as the 'Abbey House' (see Section 4.5.2), produced by Lutyens that are clearly proposals for the new guesthouse that were not

used (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960; Plate 5). Of the two this is the closest to what was finally built but it has some key differences such as being somewhat narrower.

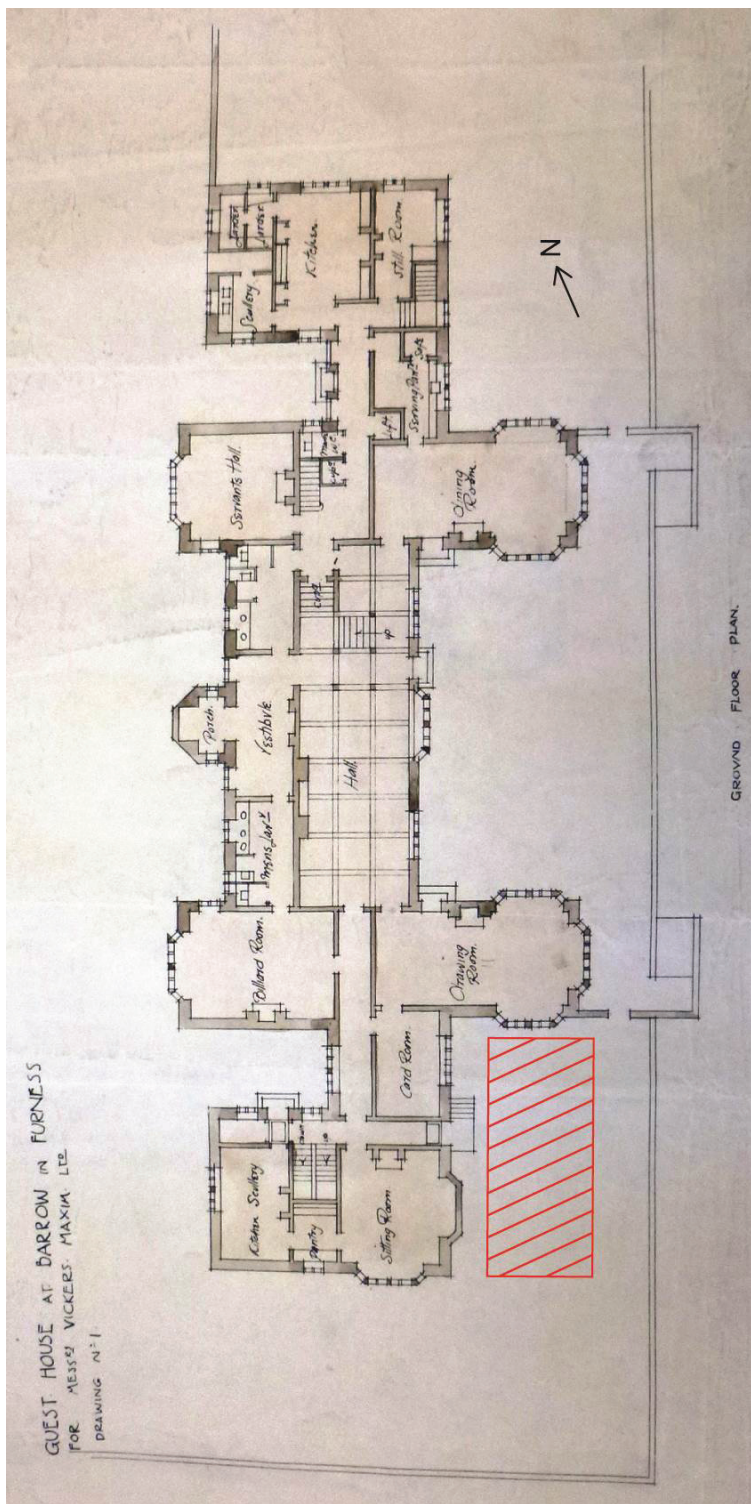


Plate 5: Proposed plan for the guest house, c1913 (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

3.3.9 **Blueprint c1914:** this blueprint of Abbey House shows the proposed layout for the drive and associated grounds around the building (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960; Plate 6). It is not clear how much of this was actually constructed, although some elements do match with later plans. The development area is shown as being made up of two walkways, which the later photographs show are most likely sunken areas of gravel (Plate 9 and Plate 10).

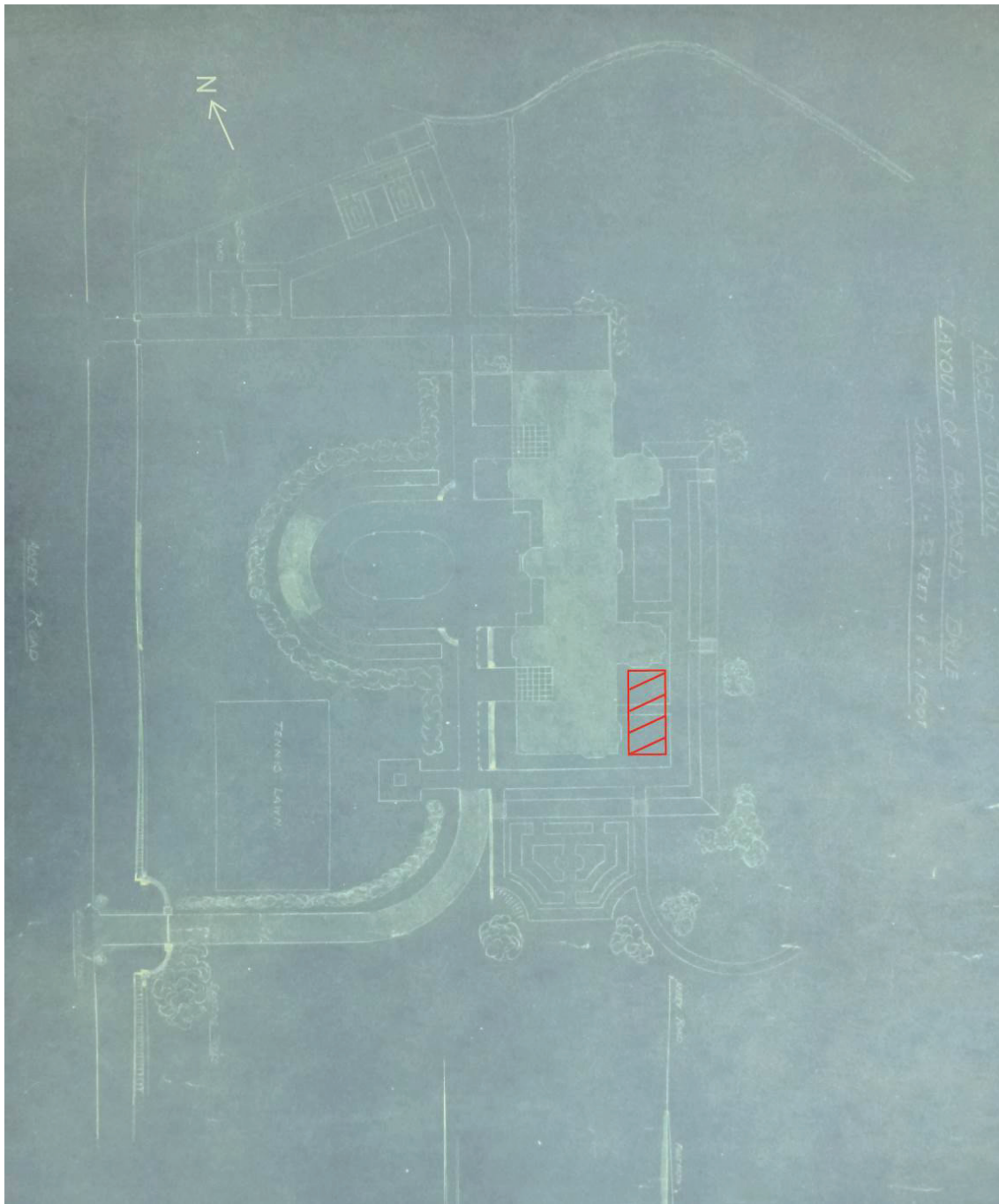


Plate 6: Proposed plan for the drive at Abbey House, c1914 (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

3.3.10 **Plan 1914:** this plan is dated 1914 and shows the drainage at the Hotel (CAC(B) BA/S/H/23 1914; Plate 7). Its primary interest is in showing the areas of likely disturbance around the building. A drain is marked along the north-east side of the area.

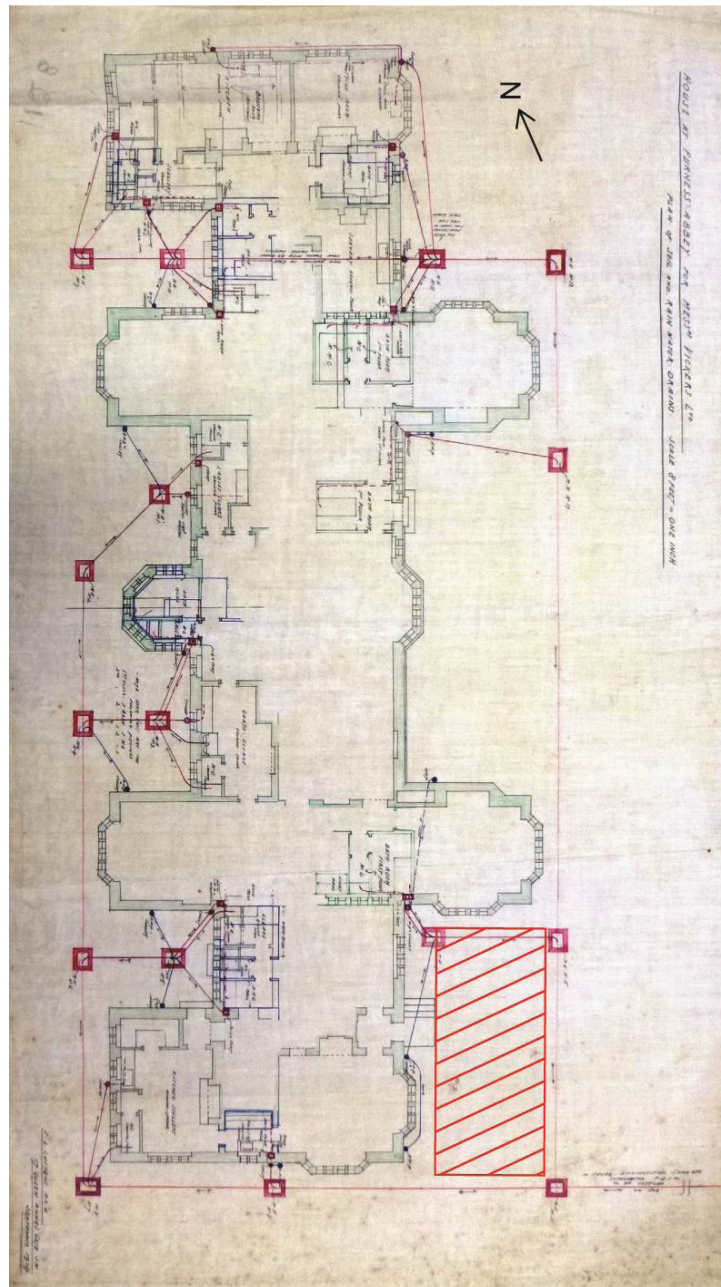


Plate 7: 1914 plan of the Hotel, showing drainage (CAC(B) BA/S/H/23 1914)

3.3.11 **Plan, early 20th century:** this plan appears to relate to the addition of or alteration to several bathrooms on the ground floor (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960), but it is otherwise similar internally to the plan dated 1914 (Plate 8; cf. Plate 7). There is a track across the centre of the area to the south-east of a patio area and the location of the drains is shown in detail. A manhole is shown in the north-west corner of the area and a drain connects it to another manhole in the path outside the area to the east. The manhole in the path to the side connects to another manhole to the south-west of the area via another drain, which cuts across the area, and there is another drain running perpendicular to this on a north-west/south-east alignment from a point below the south-east end of the track. Whether or not this plan is reliable is uncertain, especially given that the arrangement of the drains shown is not consistent with the earlier plan (see Plate 7).

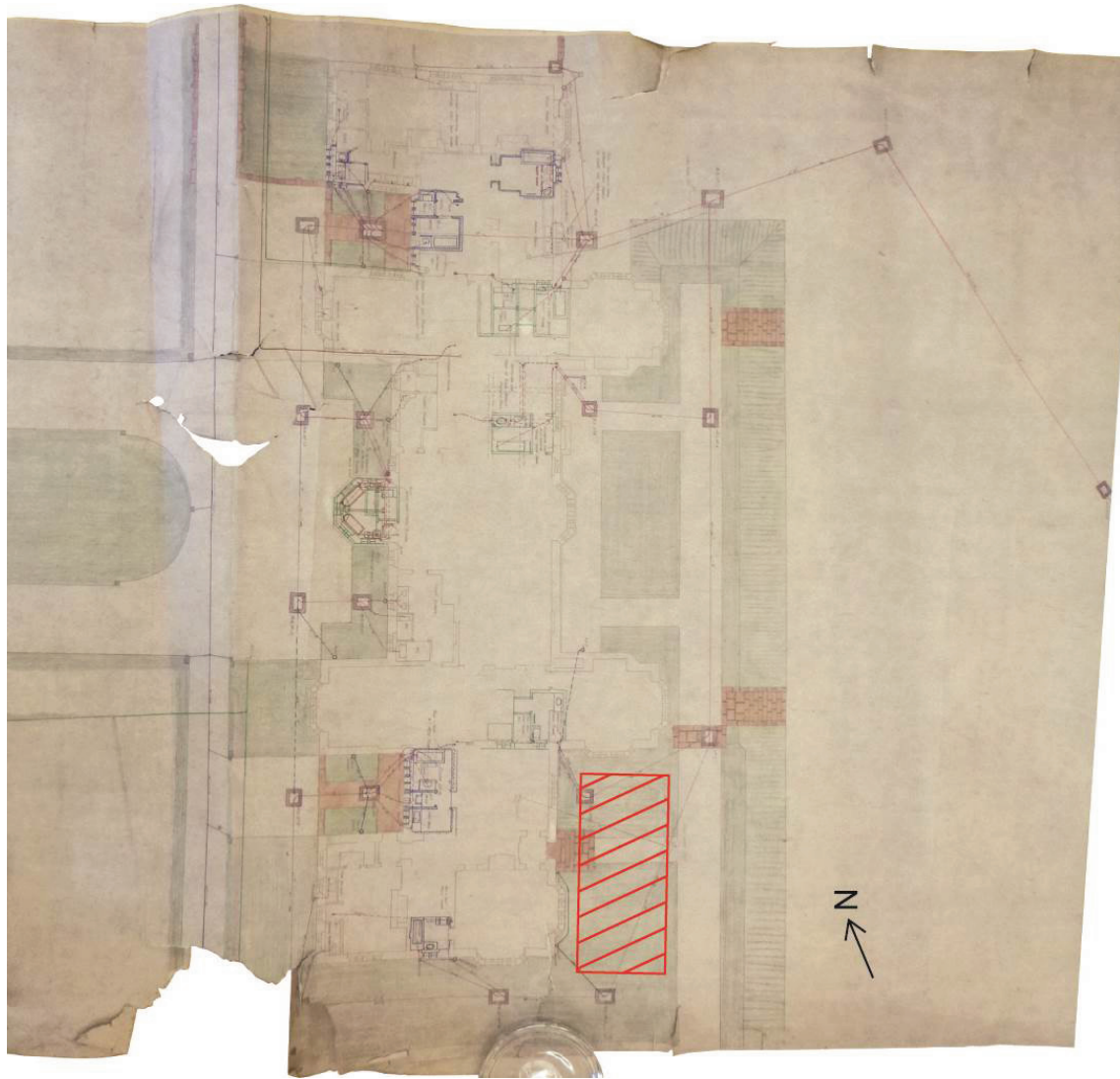


Plate 8: Early 20th century plan of the Hotel, showing location of proposed bathrooms (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

3.3.12 Photographs, 1921: a series of photographs of the building are reproduced with an article in *Country Life* magazine (Hussey 1921). The most relevant of these are of the exterior of the building (Plate 9 and Plate 10). They are significant in showing that the external gravel drives and walkways to the front, as depicted on several of the other plans, were clearly sunk into the ground, while the terraces to the rear must have involved considerable landscaping and also had similar gravel walkways.

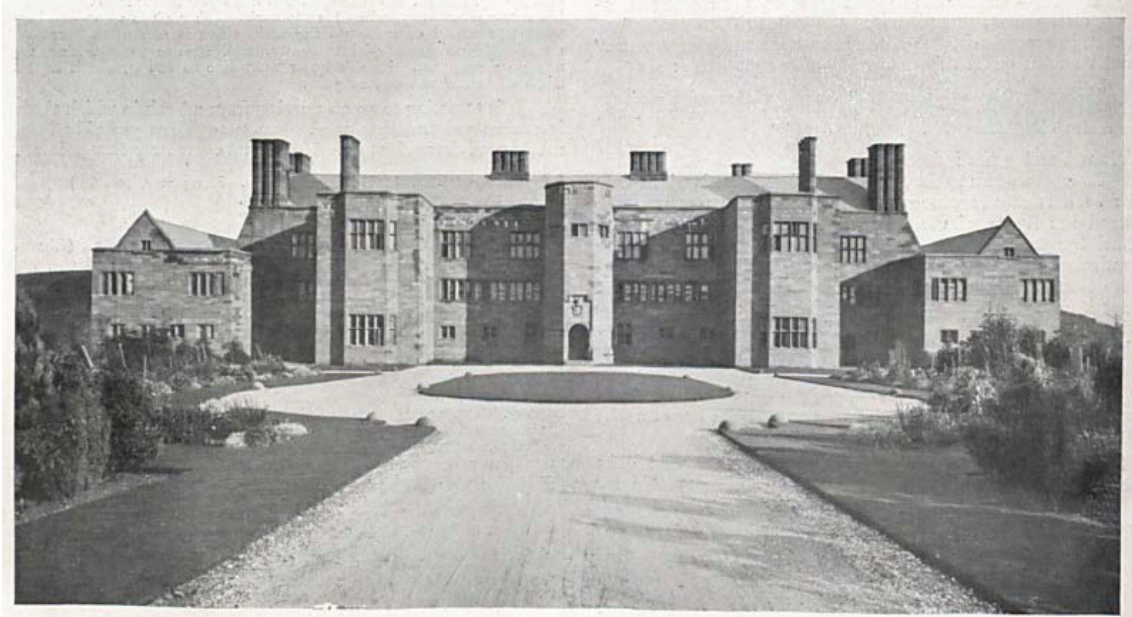


Plate 9: View of the entrance drive to the front from 1921 (from Hussey 1921, 398)



Plate 10: View of the terraces to the rear in 1921 (from Hussey 1921, 400)

3.3.13 **Ordnance Survey 1933:** this is the first Ordnance Survey plan to postdate the construction of the Abbey House (Plate 11). The area is to the south-east side at its south end and is crossed by a north-west/south-east aligned track indicated on several of the earlier maps.

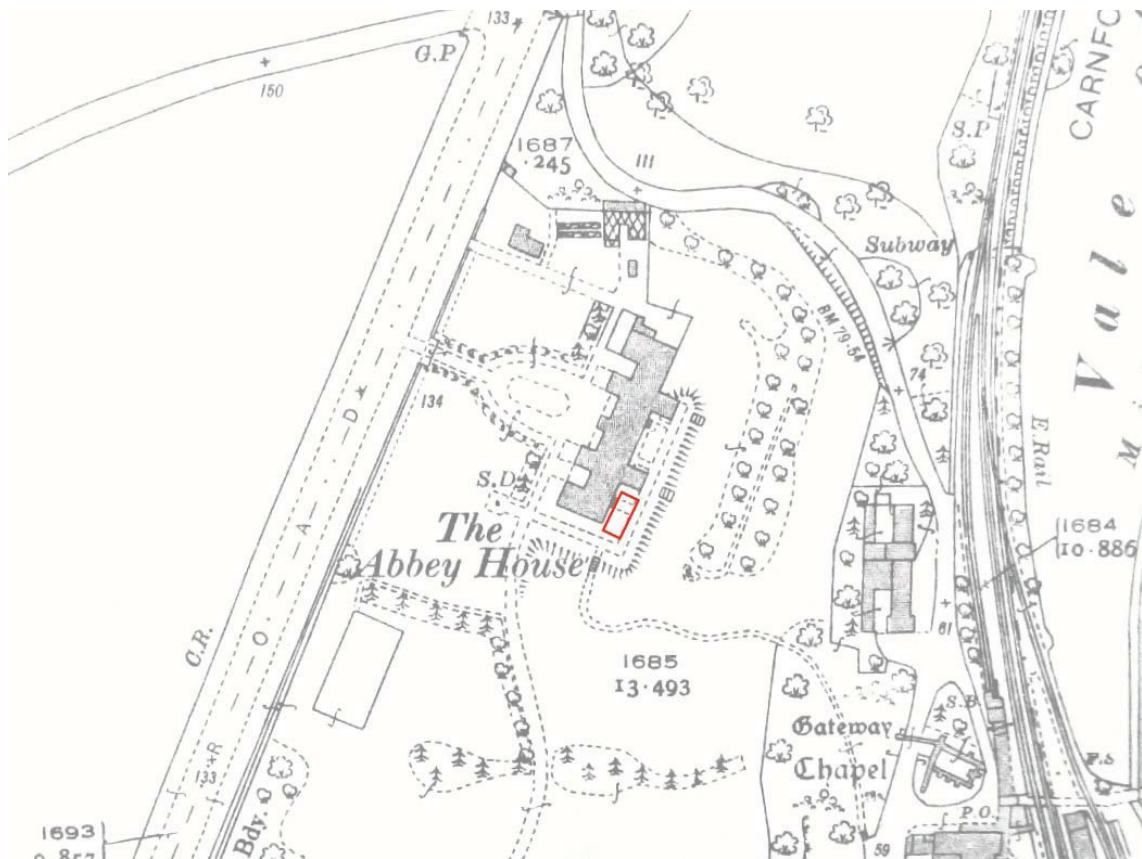


Plate 11: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1933

3.3.14 **Plan for the conversion of Abbey House Hotel to Accommodation for Aged Persons c1950:** this plan shows the proposed alterations to the layout of the Hotel as part of its conversion to accommodation for ‘aged people’ (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184 c1960 – note the archive gives a date of c1960 but it must be earlier than this as it was opened in 1951; see Section 4.5.2; Plate 12).

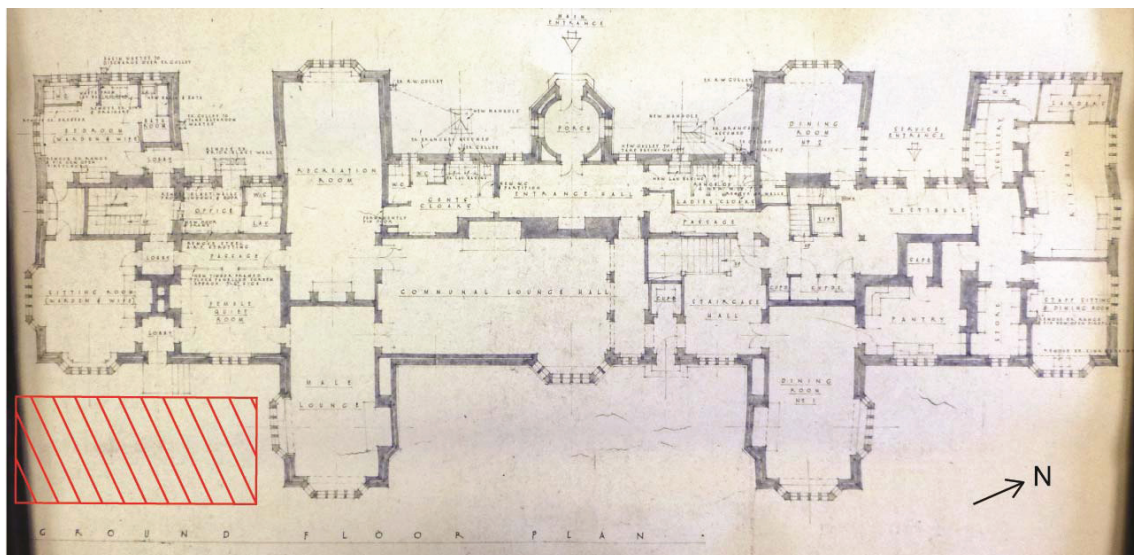


Plate 12: (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184 c1960)

3.3.15 **Ordnance Survey 1956:** the proposed development area is unchanged from the earlier edition of the Ordnance Survey map (Plate 13; cf. Plate 11).



Plate 13: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1956

3.3.16 **Summary:** it is evident from the cartographic sources that the site was part of a field from at least the late 18th century until the Abbey House was built after 1913. A track is shown to cut across the centre of the site on a north-west/south-east alignment on several maps from approximately this date onwards.

3.4 Site Visit

3.4.1 **Site Arrangement and Character:** the new al fresco dining area is immediately adjoining the south end of the east external elevation of the Abbey House Hotel. It comprises a rectangular structure with a monopitch roof (Plate 14) of steel frame construction on nine foundation pads set into the ground 0.45m deep, now infilled around with loose gravel (Plate 15 and Plate 16). Internally the floor is finished with flags but with an inspection cover in the north-west corner, broadly corresponding to the line of the services shown in the early plans (see Plate 7 and Plate 8).



Plate 14 (left): General view of the al fresco dining area, from the south-east

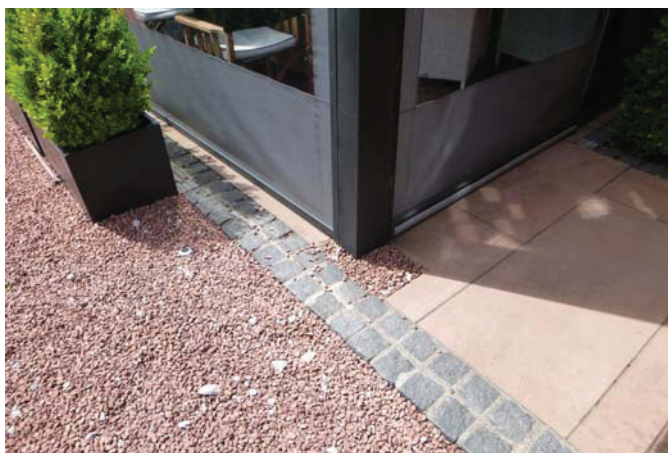


Plate 15 (right): Example of a corner foundation pad covered by gravel, viewed from the north-east

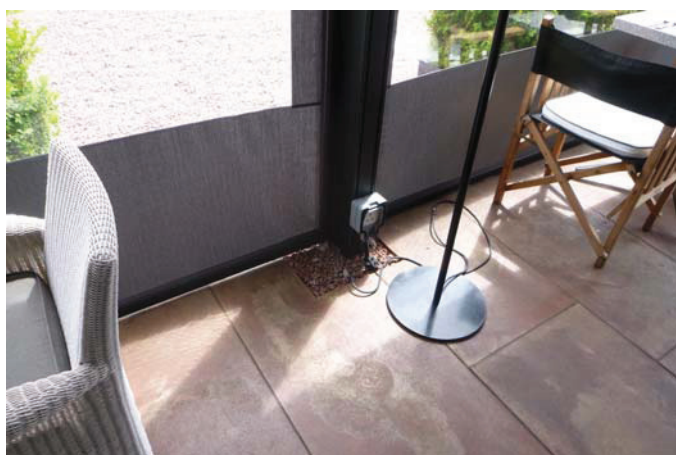


Plate 16 (left): Example of a foundation pad, viewed from the interior



Plate 17 (right): Internal floor with inspection cover, viewed from the east

3.4.2 **Constraints:** it is apparent from the site visit that this area was substantially terraced during the construction of the Abbey House Hotel, as is evident from the early plans and photographs. It is also crossed by a number of services, again as demonstrated by some of the early plans, but also by the presence of inspection covers both within the footprint of the al fresco dining area and without.

4. Site History

4.1 Background History

4.1.1 The background history to the site helps us understand the development and use of the site, where known, and makes use of the map evidence presented above (see *Section 3*) where relevant. The background to the site places the results of the project in its local context and in order to do so a brief discussion of the earlier history of its wider environs is also necessary.

4.2 Prehistoric Period (c11,000 BC – 1st century AD)

4.2.1 While there is limited evidence for human activity in the county in the period immediately following the last Ice Age, what there is has been found in the southernmost part, on the north side of Morecambe Bay. Excavation of a small number of cave sites has found artefacts of Late Upper Palaeolithic type and remains of animal species common at the time but now extinct in this country (Young 2002).

4.2.2 The county was clearly more densely inhabited during the following period, the Mesolithic (c8,000 – 4,000 BC), as large numbers of artefacts of this date have been discovered eroding from sand dunes along the coast and during field walking (Cherry and Cherry 2002). Coastal areas and river valleys are notably places where such material is frequently found in the wider region (Middleton *et al* 1995, 202; Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 151-152; Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 26) and in the area around Morecambe Bay there is generally quite plentiful evidence for activity in this period (Elsworth 1998).

4.2.3 In the following period, the Neolithic (c4,000 – 2,500 BC), large scale monuments such as burial mounds and stone circles begin to appear in the region and one of the most recognisable tool types of this period, the polished stone axe, is found in large numbers across the county, having been manufactured at Langdale in the central Lake District (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 45). Remains other than monumental structures or stray finds are generally rare but in Furness a number of sites have now been found containing evidence of what might be settlement remains of this date, including two groups of features in the Roose area (Headland Archaeology 2001; OA North 2002) and substantial remains at Stainton Quarry (Matt Town pers comm). In addition, flint finds of various dates, including the Neolithic, have been found during ploughed field walking from the wider area around the site (Evans 2008).

4.2.4 During the Bronze Age (c2,500 – 600 BC) monuments, particularly those thought to be ceremonial in nature, become more common still (see Barrowclough 2010, 105-191), although settlements start to become more readily identified during this period, many of which probably continued to be occupied into the Iron Age and beyond. Stray finds of Bronze Age date are found throughout the county, often deliberately deposited in wetland areas (*op cit*, 169-191).

4.2.5 As mentioned above, it is likely that settlement sites thought to belong to the Iron Age have their origins in this period, although few have been studied in enough detail to be certain of this. Sites of this type are recorded typically as cropmarks revealed in aerial photographs, but they are typically undated and little understood. The classic site of the Iron Age is the hillfort and, while these are not well represented in the immediate area, there was possibly one where there is now a park on the edge of Barrow and there are others recorded in the local area, for example on Hoad hill near Ulverston (Elsworth 2014) and Skelmore Heads near Urswick, although evidence for activity in the Neolithic was also associated with the latter (Powell 1963). There is likely to have been a considerable overlap between the end of the Iron Age and the beginning of the Romano-British period and it is evident that in this part of the country, initially at least, the Roman invasion had a minimal impact on the native population in rural areas (Philpott 2006, 73-74). Stray finds are rare from this period, although part of a beehive quern of either Iron Age or Roman date was found within the precinct of Furness Abbey near the 'Abbey Mill' in 1881 (Spence 1935, 180).

4.3 Romano-British to Early Medieval Period (1st century AD – 11th century AD)

4.3.1 There have been occasional finds of Roman coins from the general area (e.g. Shotter 1989), but evidence has yet to be confirmed of settlement in the area from the period. There has been discussion about the likelihood of Roman military occupation in the Cartmel and Furness Peninsulas for some time, and although a good case can be made for a Roman presence the evidence for it is limited and not yet totally convincing (see Elsworth 2007). It is noteworthy that of the various finds of Roman date found in the area, many came from the vicinity of Furness Abbey. These include four Roman coins found in 1915 and 1916 of second and fourth century date, and although these were not located at the time beyond having been found in the garden of 'Mr Archibald Miller, director of Vickers' near Furness Abbey (Anon 1916, 292), this is presumably a reference to the Mr Miller of Dunlop House (now named Oaklands) immediately to the south of the Abbey House Hotel (see Section 4.5.2 below). These form part of a remarkable number of Roman coins found within the precinct of Furness Abbey (Shotter 1989), to which a Roman statue thought to be of Hercules and apparently also found at Furness Abbey can also be added (Elsworth 2007, 43).

4.3.2 The early medieval period is not well represented in the area in terms of physical archaeological remains, which is a common situation throughout the county. The local area as a whole has a complex mixture of place-names of Celtic British, Anglian (Old English), and Norse type, which suggests that the early medieval period was a time of dynamic and rapid population change (Edmonds 2013); however, physical evidence for settlement of this date is very limited. While the name 'Furness' is Norse the valley in which the abbey now stands was known as Beckansgill, suggesting an Irish influence (Ekwall 1922, 138), although probably due to the movement of Norse people from that area into Cumbria in the early 10th century (Griffith 2010, 48-66). Finds of early medieval date in the immediate vicinity of the site are rare, although a lead weight decorated with a reused piece of Anglian metalwork was found near Breast Mill Beck and is now in the Dock Museum. In addition, a further early medieval weight, again made from a piece of reused metalwork, of ecclesiastical origin, may also have been found near Furness Abbey (it is currently held in the British Museum, Ref. 1870,0609.1, who list its find spot as 'Furness abbey, near'; British Museum 2017).

4.4 Medieval Period

4.4.1 The site is situated within the precinct of Furness Abbey, which inevitably therefore dominates the relevant history of the site during this period. The following historical background is largely taken from the Victoria History of the County of Lancashire (Farrer and Brownbill 1914). The Abbey was founded by Stephen, Count of Boulogne and Mortain, later king of England. In 1124 he gave a site at Tulketh near Preston to monks of the Savignac order, before granting them land in Furness in 1127 at which point they established a monastic house there. By 1147 the Savignac order had been incorporated into the Cistercian tradition making Furness Abbey the first Cistercian house in England, and further expansion of the site began. The remains of the Savignac monastery are still present above and below ground as well as the more extensive Cistercian monastery, as revealed during recent excavation work carried out as part of recent stabilisation work (Jeremy Bradley pers comm). The monastery grew in prosperity, and at the time of its dissolution in 1537 it was the second richest Cistercian monastery in England. The Abbey had acquired extensive property in the Lake District, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire and the deep-water port at Piel allowed access and trade with the Isle of Man and Ireland. Sheep farming played an important part in the Abbey's growing wealth, due to the price of wool, as did the continued exploitation of the Furness iron ore deposits, which paved the way for the region's post-medieval development.

4.4.2 It is unclear how all the various elements of the outer part of the precinct were used during the abbey's lifetime; however, a possible cist found in an outbuilding and human remains found on associated land to the south of the Abbey House Hotel (HER No. 5743) might suggest that this area was home to a lay cemetery or similar (Close in West 1805, 366; Dickinson 1967, 64n).

4.5 Post-Medieval Period

4.5.1 After the Dissolution the monastery was handed to the crown and the land was subsequently granted to the king's minister Thomas Cromwell. Two years later it passed to Sir Thomas Curwen, the head of a leading local family. Thomas Curwen passed the property to his son-in-law John Preston, and in 1671 the then owner Thomas Preston built a mansion house on the grounds. The mansion deteriorated until it was sold to the railway company and rebuilt into a hotel during the 1850s and the 1860s (Wood 1998, 34). The hotel suffered bomb damage in 1941 and was demolished in 1953 (*ibid*). Some traces of the north wing have been incorporated into the Abbey Tavern, which now stands in its place. The hotel was designed to serve the railway, which opened in 1847. In 1923 Richard Cavendish placed the ruins in the care of the Ministry of Works (*ibid*). As is apparent from the map regression (see *Section 3.3*) the site was essentially undeveloped until the construction of Abbey House in 1914, an event that came to dominate this part of the area within the precinct of Furness Abbey.

4.5.2 **Abbey House:** the Abbey House Hotel originated as a private house, known as Abbey House or 'The Abbey House', which was built for Vickers Ltd shipbuilders of Barrow; they had gone through a considerable period of expansion in the years leading up to the First World War and had nowhere suitable to house and entertain visitors (Melville 1978a). In addition the managing director at the time, James (later Sir) McKechnie, who was living at the County Hotel in Ulverston and commuting to Barrow by horse had been forced to leave after the County Hotel was destroyed by fire on October 18th 1911 (*ibid*). As a result it was decided to build a guesthouse close to Barrow but with its own grounds, and a plot of land at the Abbey, all of which was the property of the Cavendish family, was chosen (*ibid*). The well-known London-based architect Edward Lutyens (also later Sir) was commissioned, although it is clear from some of the plans available, the earliest of which date to 1913, that at least two different designs were proposed (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960). The chosen design is an H-shaped plan in a mix of broadly Tudor and Elizabethan styles (Hussey 1921), but very minimal, in red ashlar sandstone (see *Appendix 2*; this gives the dates 1910-1914) and was only partially finished at the outbreak of the First World War, although McKechnie and several guests were able to move in (Melville 1978a). After the war Abbey House became the residence of Commander Charles Craven, who had been appointed at Vickers (Melville 1978b). He was succeeded by Commander Micklam, who did not live in the area, who was succeeded in turn by Sir Charles Simon who did reside at Abbey House (*ibid*). After his departure its future was sealed – the increasing cost of maintaining the building and staff made it too expensive, and eventually it was offered, together with its grounds, to the local corporation 'at a nominal sum, for use as a home for elderly people' (*ibid*). A series of plans of the proposed alterations, dated c1960, exist in the archives (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184 c1960), but these must be closer to c1950 as it was officially opened on March 1st 1951 (Melville 1978b). The neighbouring property to the south, initially called Dunlop House, was built for Vickers' secretary Mr Miller, but clearly remained on land belonging to Vickers and was effectively part of the Abbey House estate as it too was sold to the corporation and opened as a children's nursery by 29th November 1951 (*ibid*). By the late 1970s the unsuitability of Abbey House as an old peoples' home was becoming apparent (Melville 1978a) and it was converted into a hotel in 1985.

4.6 Previous Archaeological Work

4.6.1 A number of recent small pieces of work have been carried out at the Abbey House Hotel (Figure 3):

- a geophysical survey was carried out at Abbey House Hotel in January 1989 (Geophysical Surveys 1989; see Figure 2 – note that the number 8 at the top edge of area A is a reference to the grid used during the original survey and is not relevant to the interpretation). Unfortunately, the grid reference for the location of the work is a generic one for Furness Abbey, which is some distance to the south. The written description does not include pertinent details, such as the survey area or the size of the grid squares; the figures in the report do not include a scale, and it is suspected that the orientation of the plans is also incorrect, so it is not possible to accurately locate the survey. The location of the survey on Figure 3 is therefore a best guess: the location is based on the limited topographic detail shown on the 1989 plan, the grid has been resized to be

20m squares, and the plan has been rotated to better align the 1989 plan with the location of tracks on modern mapping;

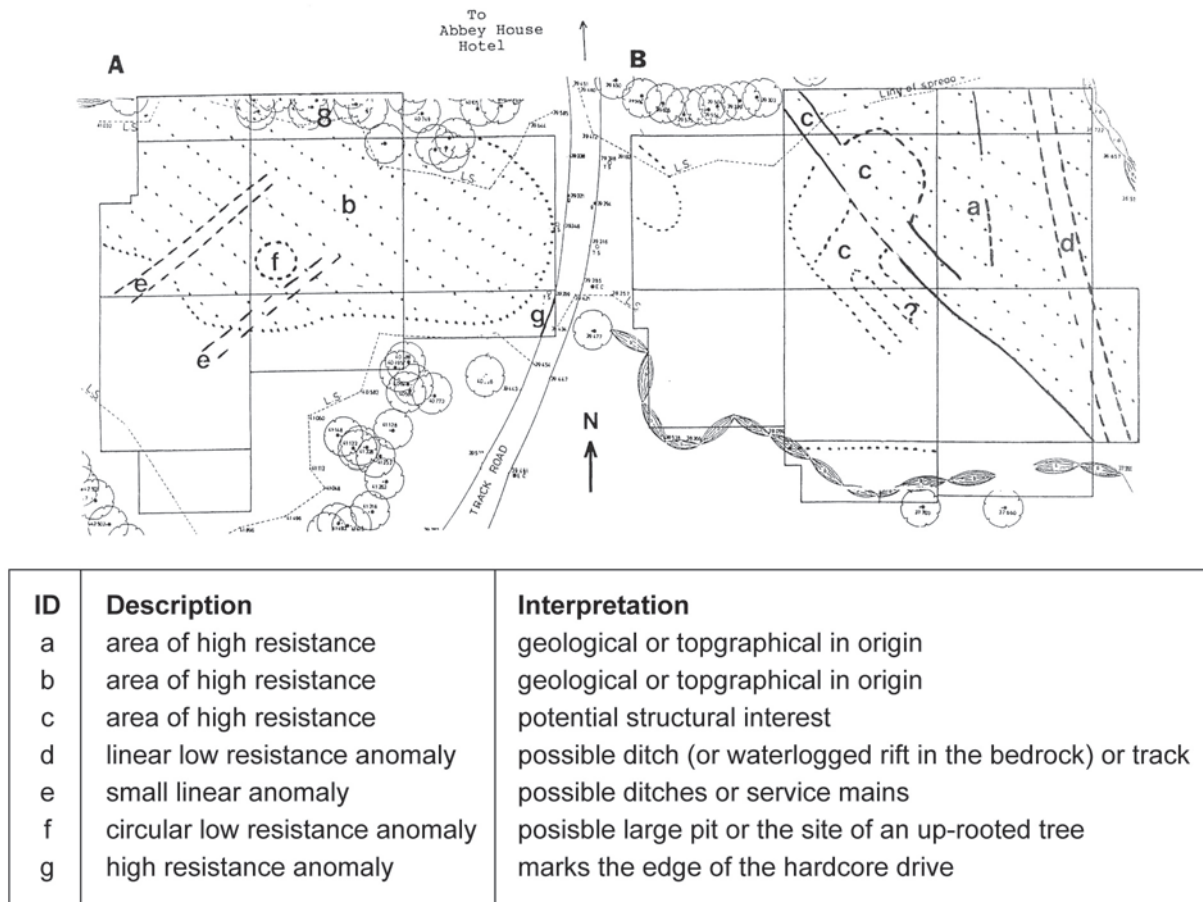
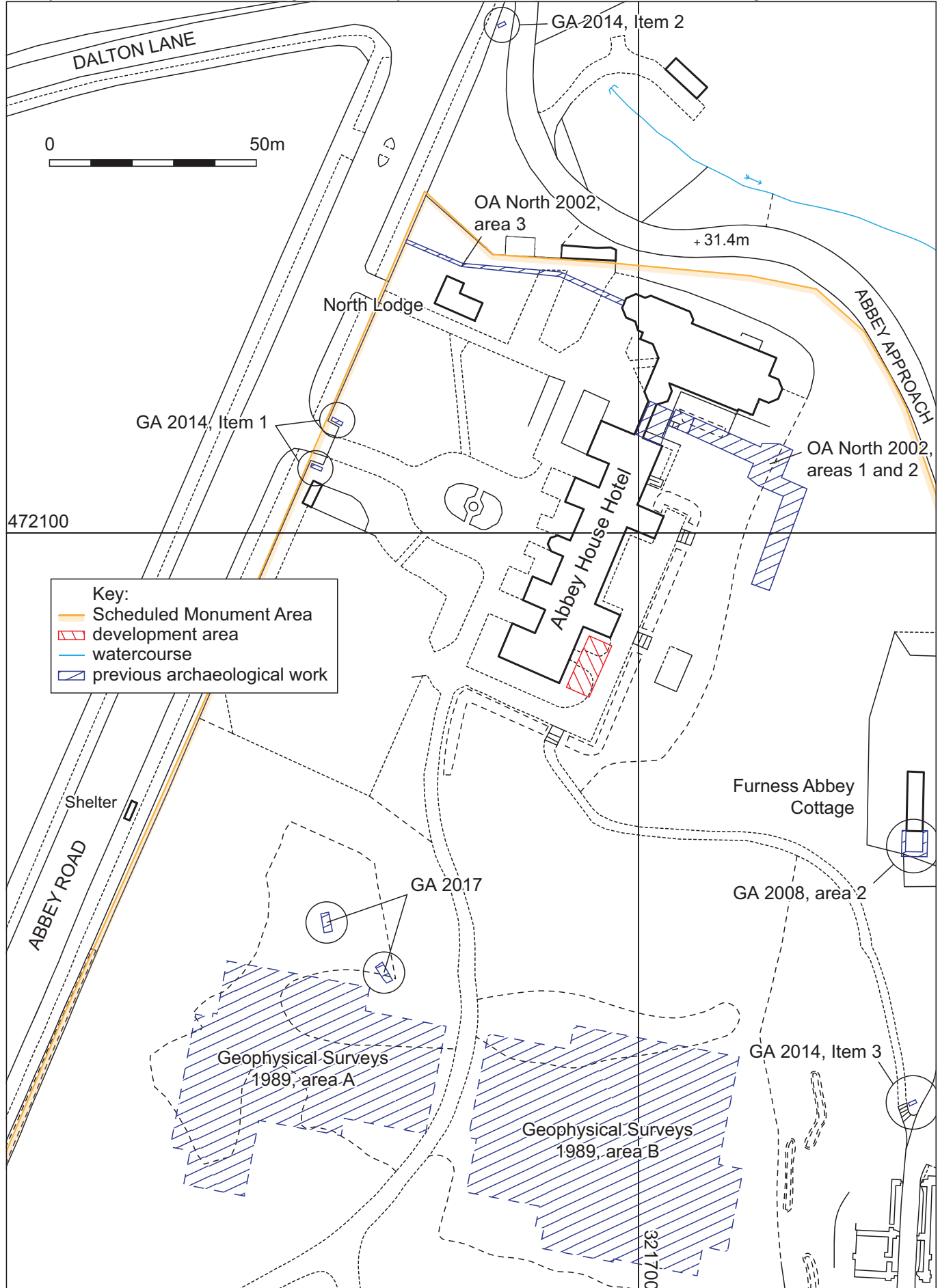


Figure 2: Results of the geophysical survey (after Geophysical Surveys 1989, figure 5)

- groundwork associated with the construction of the north extension to the hotel, involving excavation of a small area adjacent to the north wall of the hotel (area 1) and trenches to the east and north-west of the hotel (area 2 and area 3 respectively), was monitored by watching brief between June and September 2000 and April 2001 (OA North 2002, 2). Post-medieval activity was apparent in the first two areas but in the third area, north of the North Lodge, a sandstone wall was uncovered of uncertain date; it probably represented an earlier continuation of the stone wall of post-medieval date but may have been an earlier boundary which coincided with the precinct wall surrounding Furness Abbey (*ibid*);
- a desk-based assessment and watching brief was carried out for the construction of a two storey extension, garage, and new porch at Furness Abbey Cottage, Abbey Approach (NGR SD 21778 72039) in December 2007 (Greenlane Archaeology 2008). The property was built c1873 for the Furness Railway Company. The watching brief revealed that the footprint for the new extension followed the outer line of the demolished coach house, whose walls survived below ground level. The result of this was that backfilled foundation trenches were probably re-excavated. The situation was the same in the porch area, where the foundations for an earlier porch had disturbed the ground. Excavations in the area of the garage revealed that some infilling and landscaping had occurred in this area, probably at the time the house was constructed or later. No earlier archaeological features were encountered;
- an archaeological watching brief was carried out as part of a scheme to provide new signage within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel in May 2014 (Greenlane Archaeology 2014). The watching brief monitored the excavation by hand of a pair of new postholes for one of the new

signs. The postholes were excavated in areas that have been disturbed by tree roots and pre-existing signage, and no archaeological finds or features were observed;

- a heritage assessment was carried out for the core area of the Abbey House Hotel in 2017 as part of a range of proposed alterations to the site. This involved the compilation of all of the available early maps of the site and other known historical information, including that held in the relevant Historic Environment Record and information about previous archaeological work and included a site visit (Greenlane Archaeology 2017a);
- two evaluation trenches were excavated in the grounds of the hotel in February 2017 (Greenlane Archaeology 2017b). A possible pit with an irregular shape was encountered at the south-east end of Trench 1, but it was not possible to date it. A fragment of Roman ceramic building material, probably roofing tile, was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2, which was otherwise void of archaeological finds and features. This may have been brought to the site from elsewhere, but the presence of a nearby Roman structure should not be ruled out. If structures of that date were indeed present within the grounds, they may have been obscured on the surface or partially destroyed by construction and landscaping carried out in the post-medieval period.



Client: Abbey House Hotel

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Figure 3: Previous archaeological work

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The discussion of the results of the heritage assessment and site visit is intended to determine the archaeological significance and potential of any known remains (above or below ground) and the potential of these remains and for any further, as yet unidentified, remains being present. The system used to judge the significance of the remains identified within the development area, or those thought to have the potential to be present within the development area, is based on the criteria used to define Scheduled Monuments (DoE 1990, annex 4; *Appendix 1*).

5.2 Significance

5.2.1 The entire site is located within the Scheduled Monument area for Furness Abbey (No. 13572), and is therefore considered to be part of a monument of national importance and is statutorily protected. The Abbey House Hotel is also a Grade II* Listed Building (see *Appendix 2*) and as such is of regional significance and the effect of any development on its setting needs to be taken into consideration.

5.3 Potential

5.3.1 At present this part of the Furness Abbey precinct has seen relatively little investigation, primarily because it is some distance from the main area of the abbey buildings but also because it is within the private grounds of the Abbey House Hotel. Previous archaeological work in association with other developments at the Abbey House Hotel (OA North 2002; Greenlane Archaeology 2014; 2017) have not revealed any archaeological remains of significance, but these have been very limited. The site's proximity to and association with Furness Abbey means that there remains the potential to find remains of medieval date relating to it. In addition, the discovery of Roman coins from nearby and the piece of Roman tile during the recent evaluation within the Abbey House Hotel grounds (Greenlane Archaeology 2017) might indicate that there is the potential for earlier activity in this area, but this is by no means certain.

5.4 Disturbance

5.4.1 The early plans and photographs show that the construction of the Abbey House Hotel, including the associated terraces and walkways, would have had a substantial impact on any below-ground remains that might have been present in the development area, given its proximity to the Hotel. Early 20th century plans and the site visit also indicate that there are historical and current services across this area, which will have caused additional disturbance.

5.5 Impact

5.5.1 The construction of the al fresco dining area required relatively shallow excavation for the foundation pads, in an area that has potentially already seen considerable disturbance associated with the construction of the Abbey House in 1914 and the installation of associated drains and services. The impact of these on any surviving below ground archaeology is therefore likely to be minimal.

5.6 Conclusion

5.6.1 It is apparent from the results of this assessment that while the site is archaeologically significant and there is some potential for remains of at least medieval date to be present these are likely to have been substantially disturbed across much of the site by previous construction work and associated activity related to the construction of the Abbey House Hotel.

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Appendix 1: Significance Criteria

After DoE 1990, Annex 4: '*Secretary of State's Criteria for Scheduling Ancient Monuments*'

- i) *Period*: all types of monuments that characterise a category or period should be considered for preservation;
- ii) *Rarity*: there are some monument categories which in certain periods are so scarce that all surviving examples which retain some archaeological potential should be preserved. In general, however, a selection must be made which portrays the typical and commonplace as well as the rare. This process should take account of all aspects of the distribution of a particular class of monument, both in a national and regional context;
- iii) *Documentation*: the significance of a monument may be enhanced by the existence of record of previous investigation or, in the case of more recent monuments, by the supporting evidence of contemporary written records;
- iv) *Group Value*: the value of a single monument (such as a field system) may be greatly enhanced by its association with related contemporary monuments (such as a settlement and cemetery) or with monuments of different periods. In some cases, it is preferable to protect the complete group of monuments, including associated and adjacent land, rather than to protect isolated monuments within the group;
- v) *Survival/Condition*: the survival of a monument's archaeological potential both above and below ground is a particularly important consideration and should be assessed in relation to its present condition and surviving features;
- vi) *Fragility/Vulnerability*: highly important archaeological evidence from some field monuments can be destroyed by a single ploughing or unsympathetic treatment; vulnerable monuments of this nature would particularly benefit from the statutory protection which scheduling confers. There are also existing standing structures of particular form or complexity whose value can again be severely reduced by neglect or careless treatment and which are similarly well suited by scheduled monument protection, even if these structures are already listed historic buildings;
- vii) *Diversity*: some monuments may be selected for scheduling because they possess a combination of high quality features, others because of a single important attribute;
- viii) *Potential*: on occasion, the nature of the evidence cannot be specified precisely but it may still be possible to document reasons anticipating its existence and importance and so to demonstrate the justification for scheduling. This is usually confined to sites rather than upstanding monuments.

Appendix 2: Listed Building Details

From: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1197910>

Name: Abbey House Hotel

List entry Number: 1197910

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 10th November 1949

Date of most recent amendment: 20th December 1993

Mansion. 1910-1914. By Edwin Lutyens. For Vickers Ltd. Irregularly coursed red ashlar sandstone, graduated slate roof. 3 storeys in H-plan extended by 2-storey cross-wings. Elizabethan style; symmetrical. Recessed, chamfered mullioned windows with leaded lights in metal casements; parapets with copings formed from topmost wallstones; cast-iron rainwater goods with square down-pipes and decorative hoppers. Central entrance in semi-octagonal projection with double-chamfered plinth and double door in round arch; oversailing course steps over panel with date 'A.D. 1914' and cartouche bearing Vickers arms. 2-light windows to 2nd floor. Main range to each side has two 2-light windows and cross-window to ground floor; 3 first-floor windows each having king mullion and 4 round-arched lights; paired cross-windows to 2nd floor. Front wings have canted 3-storey bay windows of 1:4:1 lights with transoms; 1st floor lit from side by round-headed mullioned windows. Main range continues beyond these wings and has round-arched doors flanked by 2-light windows; upper floor windows as before. Crosswings at each end of main range have gables set behind their parapets. Main-range parapet has corner chimneys each with moulded plinth and caps to 5 linked octagonal flues; similar 3-flue stacks to outer returns of the front wings and 4-flue ridge stacks to each side of centre. Rear: central recess with canted bay-window lighting the Great Hall. Wings to each side have canted bay windows to their ends and outer returns; to inner returns are projecting stacks, each with 4 flues above the parapet. The 2-storey cross-wings also end in canted bay windows. INTERIOR not fully inspected: ashlar-lined vestibule with pilasters and half-columns. Great Hall: oak panelling and staircase; bolection-moulded fireplace with tiled fireback; coffered ceiling. Restaurant in rear right wing has marble fireplace with wreath over; saucer-dome ceiling.