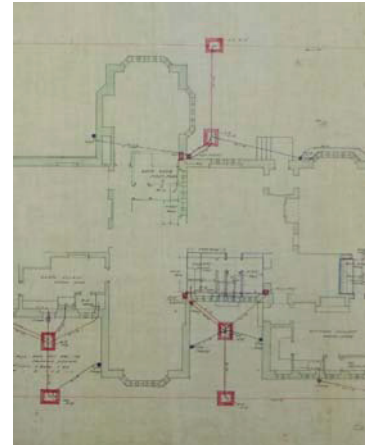


ABBNEY HOUSE HOTEL, ABBNEY ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Heritage Assessment



Client: Abbey House Hotel

NGR: 321664 472102

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July 2017



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Summary

Prior to the submission of a planning application for a range of alterations to the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria and its grounds Historic England was consulted. The hotel, which is a Grade II* Listed Building, is located within the precinct of Furness Abbey and therefore within a Scheduled Monument. Following this consultation it was requested that a heritage assessment of the site be compiled and as a result Greenlane Archaeology was commissioned to carry this out. This was intended to establish at an early stage whether there were likely to be any sites of archaeological interest within the proposed development area and assess how the proposals might affect these sites. The work for the project, including a site visit, was carried out in February 2017, with a further visit to cover an additional area (**Area 6**) in July 2017.

The map evidence revealed that the proposed development area was primarily located within two fields, one named 'Marrs' on the earliest maps, although the significance of this is uncertain. 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 and a tennis court.

The site is located within the precinct of the Furness Abbey, which was established in 1127 and became one of the most powerful monastic houses in the country. However, the wider area contains remains ranging from the end of the last Ice Age and there have been a number of significant Roman and early medieval finds from the area around the abbey. The site was essentially undeveloped until the construction of the Abbey House, to the designs of Sir Edward Lutyens, in 1914. It was built by Vickers to form a guest house for visitors and also as a residence for the director, but became an old people's home in 1951 and was converted to a hotel in 1985. A new addition was built on the north end in c2000, and elements of this work were subject to archaeological monitoring at the time. Further monitoring for the installation of new signage was also carried out in 2014; 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 in the early watching brief. An earlier geophysical survey was carried out on land immediately to the south of the site in 1988, which revealed a number of features of interest, although none were investigated further at the time.

The assessment demonstrated that while the site is located in an area of some archaeological interest and potential most of the proposed development areas are likely to have been disturbed by previous work relating to the construction of the Abbey House and its subsequent extension. The exception is the area of proposed overflow car parking (**Area 5c**), which is some distance from the buildings. In addition, **Area 6**, is situated across the line of the supposed medieval precinct boundary although this area too has seen some more recent disturbance. In most cases the associated ground works are likely to be of limited impact so it is recommended that an archaeological watching brief would be appropriate mitigation. However, in the case of **Area 5c** some investigative work in the form of an archaeological evaluation or geophysical survey would be more appropriate, although the appropriate consents would be needed for work of this type within the Scheduled Monument.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Abbey House Hotel for commissioning the project. Special thanks are due to Tim Kilroe at Bethell and John Horton, General Manager at the Abbey House Hotel, for providing further information about the site. Further thanks are due to the staff of the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness (CAC(B)) for their help in accessing the archive material. Special thanks are also due to Neil Linford, Kirsty Stonell Walker, and Graham Deacon at Historic England for their assistance in obtaining a copy of the geophysical survey report from 1988.

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 Prior the submission of a planning application for alterations to and the creation of an overflow carpark at the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (centred on NGR 321664 472102), and following consultation with Historic England, it was recommended that a heritage assessment be compiled for inclusion with the application. Greenlane Archaeology were therefore appointed by the Abbey House Hotel (hereafter 'the client'), through Tim Kilroe at Bethell, to carry out the work, which was undertaken in February 2017. Following this an addition area (**Area 6**) was added to the proposals and the report was modified to include this in June and July 2017.

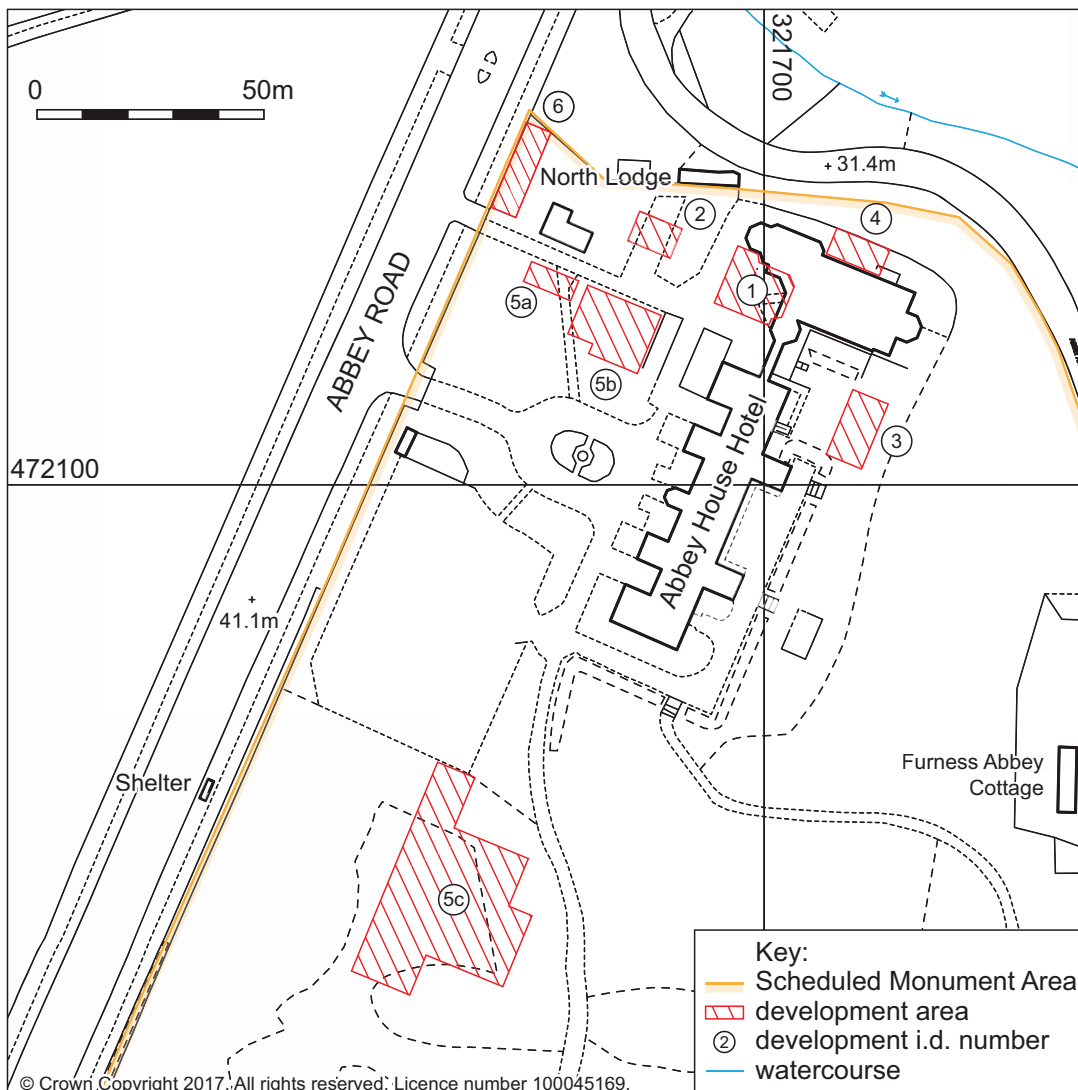
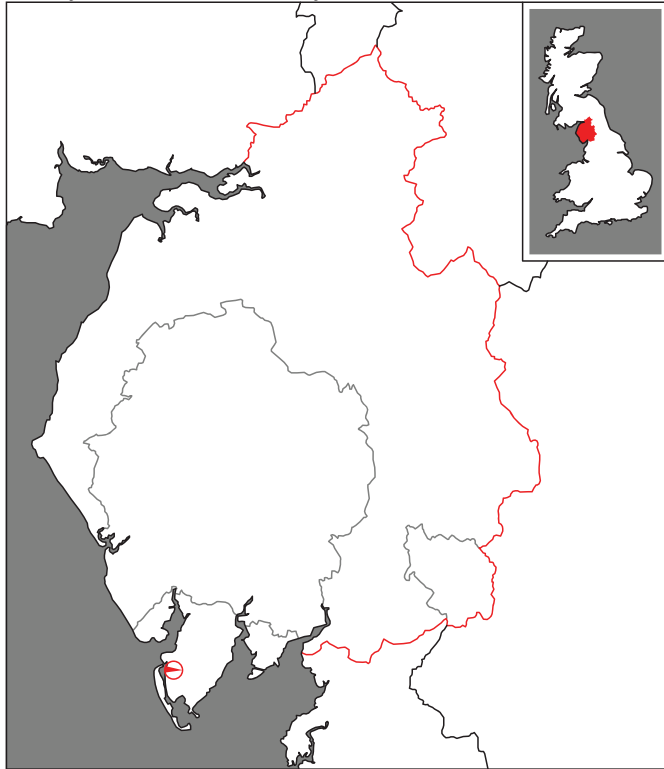
1.1.2 The Abbey House Hotel was constructed in 1913-1914 to the designs of Sir Edwin Lutyens by Vickers of Barrow as a place to entertain guests and potential clients (Hyde and Pevsner 2010, 360). More pertinently, it is situated within the precinct of Furness Abbey, which was established in 1127 (Wood 1998) and is therefore lies within boundary of the Scheduled Monument for Furness Abbey (SM 13572).

1.1.3 The proposed redevelopment areas (see Figure 1) comprise:

- **Area 1:** new entrance to the Cavendish Suite;
- **Area 2:** wedding gardens, temporary gazebo, and parking;
- **Area 3:** rear wedding gardens and temporary gazebo;
- **Area 4:** Cavendish Suite terrace/patio area;
- **Area 5:** additional parking (three parts, labelled **5a**, **5b**, and **5c**).
- **Area 6:** general position for a new wedding car garage.

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 and 40m above sea level.



Client: Abbey House Hotel

Figure 1: Site location

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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). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site and published secondary sources:

- **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, equivalent to an English Heritage Level 1 survey (English Heritage 2007), was carried out covering the proposed 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 the earlier 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 site comprises a number of areas situated within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel, which in turn lie within the precinct of Furness Abbey. The only other sites of archaeological interest within the immediate vicinity of it 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 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 possible mitigation work is then suggested.

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 shown to be primarily spread across two separate fields at this time; a larger one to the south and a smaller one to the north. This plan is of particular interest, however, because it gives the field names: the larger field is named 'Marrs' while the smaller is named 'Bull Copy', presumably a reference to it being somewhere bulls were kept. While the meaning of the latter of these two names is essentially self-explanatory, the former is less certain. It is possible that it derives from the Old English (ge)maere meaning boundary as found in cases such as Mersey and Mere Beck (Ekwall 1922, 15) but it is also likely to relate to the surname Marr and so simply refer to land belonging to someone of that name. **Area 6** evidently lies across the northern boundary of the northernmost of these two fields; the area to the north apparently comprises part of a series of trackways or roads, the nearest field being a small island among these named 'Creak Close'.

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 names 'Marrs' and 'Bull Copy' again given. Again, **Area 6** lies across the northern boundary of Bull Copy, extending into an area cut by a track running approximately east/west and then into the adjoining field to the north, which is named 'Broom Close Brow'.

3.3.5 **Ordnance Survey 1851:** this shows a very similar arrangement to the earlier maps, with the site split over two main fields but extending with **Area 6** across the edge of one of the field boundaries. This boundary is clearly at this time defining the area of the abbey precinct and is labelled elsewhere on this map 'Park Wall'.

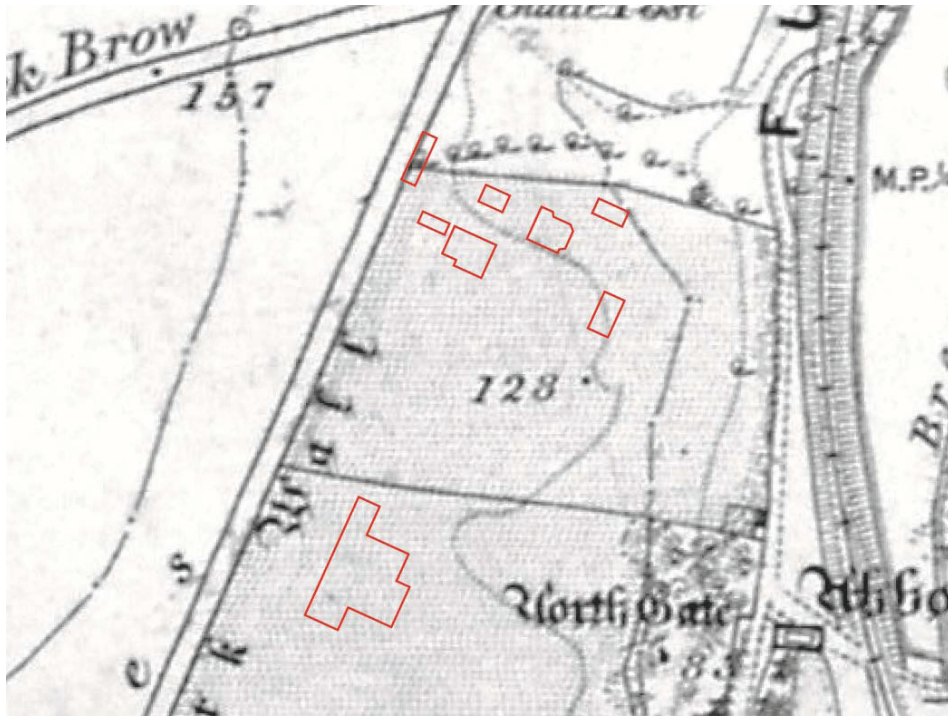


Plate 1: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1851

3.3.6 **Ordnance Survey 1873:** this is a revised version of the earlier map, and the site has clearly seen some development by this date (Plate 2). As shown in the earlier maps, the site occupies three fields divided by two field boundaries. The southern of these fields has what appears to be an area of gardens positioned along the eastern end of its northern field boundary. The central field is largely unchanged but now cut by a road running on a winding course north-west/south-east from the main road to the north-west. The field to the north is wooded and also partially cut through by this road. In addition, some contours are shown, indicating that the land was not entirely level at this time and sloped down to the east.

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). It is clear, however, that the boundary crossed by **Area 6** is substantial and presumably represents the line of the precinct boundary, which is clearly what is being depicted to the south-west.

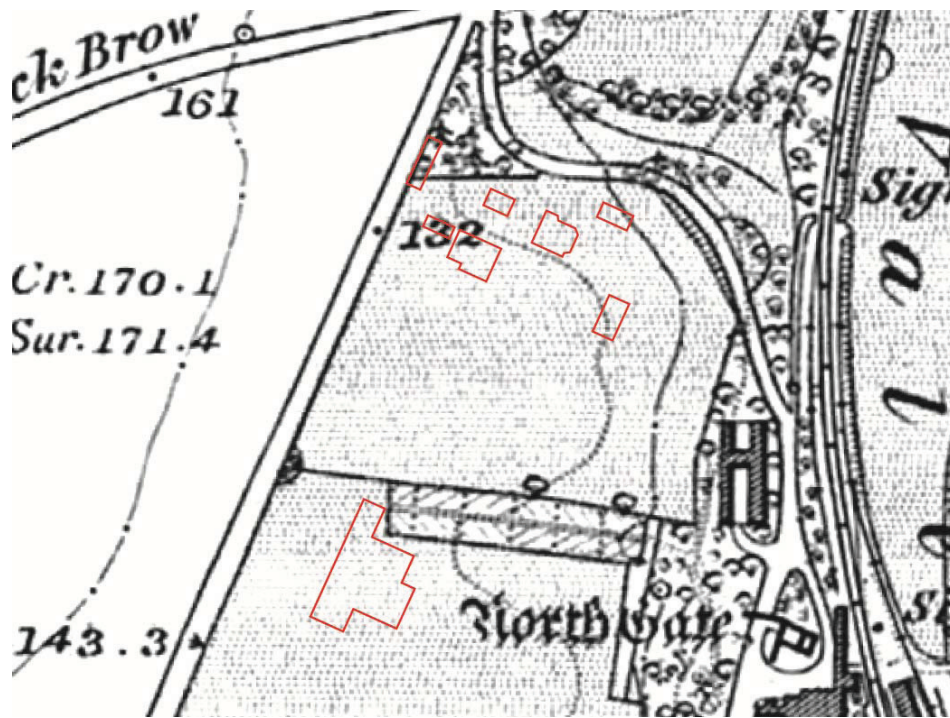


Plate 2: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1873

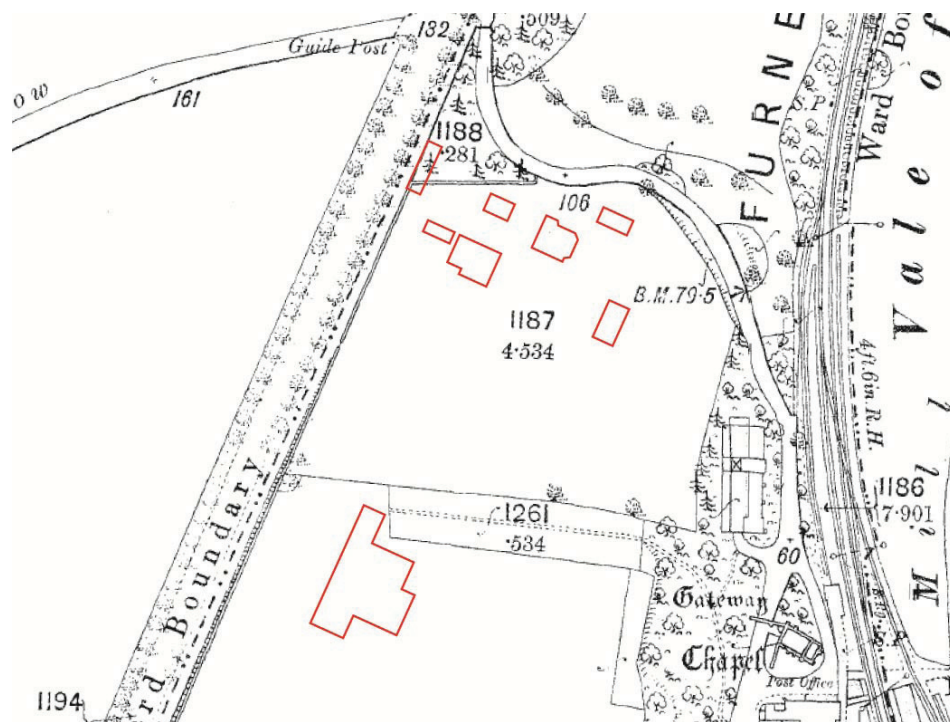


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1891

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

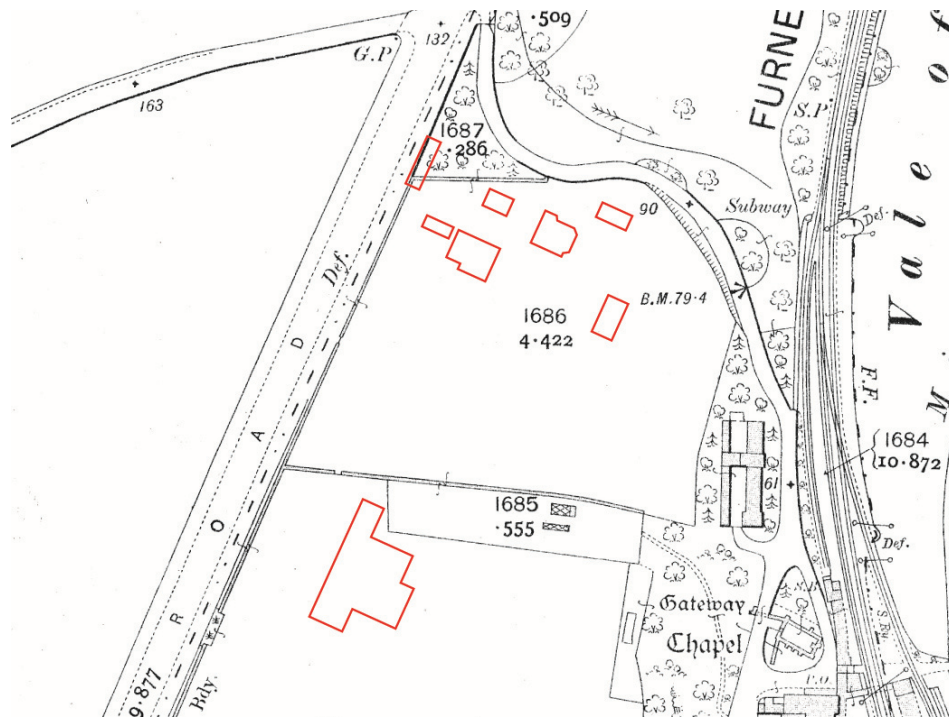


Plate 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1913

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 guest house 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.

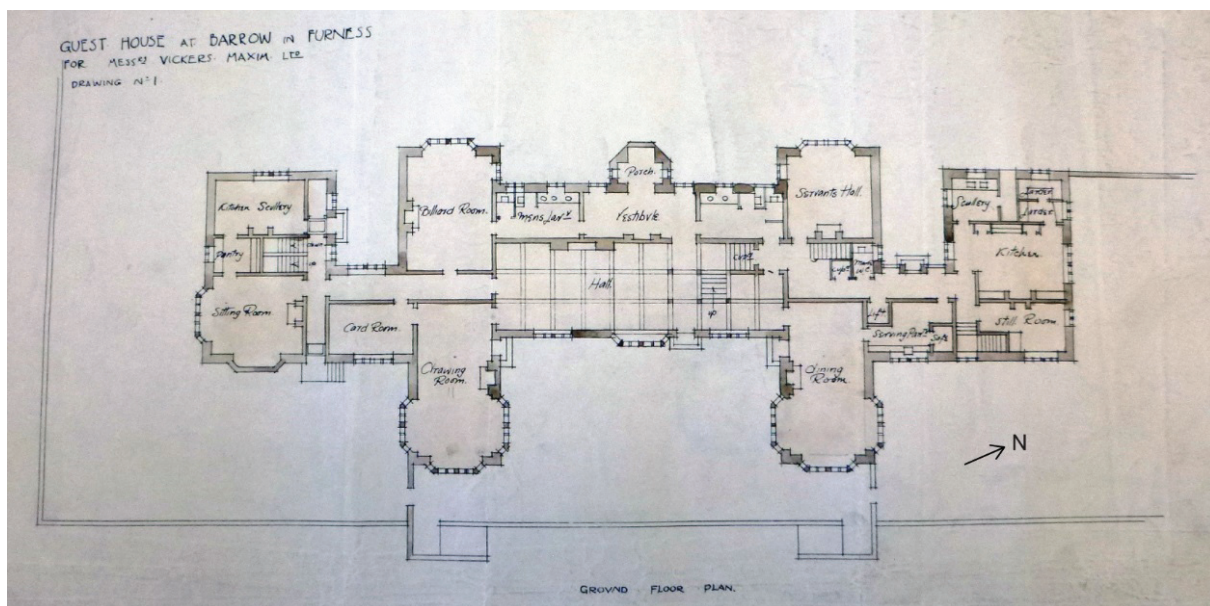


Plate 5: Proposed plan for the guest house, c1913 (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

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, but there is a ‘Tennis Lawn’ near the main entrance that was seemingly built in that location, and the main entrance itself is some distance to the south of where it now is. More pertinently to the proposed development, it also shows a north-east/south-west hedge passing through the middle of **Area 1** and an east/west track passes through the north side of **Area 2**. A building is shown adjacent to the north side of this track, but it

is not described in detail here. The other areas are undeveloped, although the boundary that **Area 6** lies across is still present.

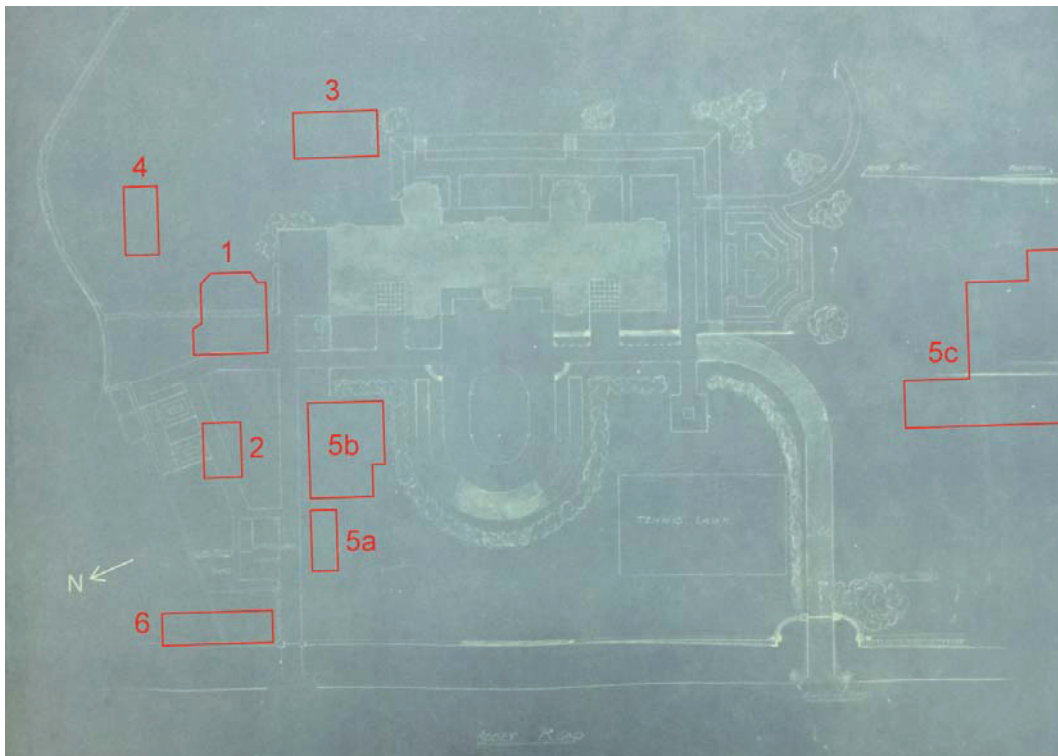


Plate 6: Proposed plan for the drive at Abbey House, c1914 (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

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.

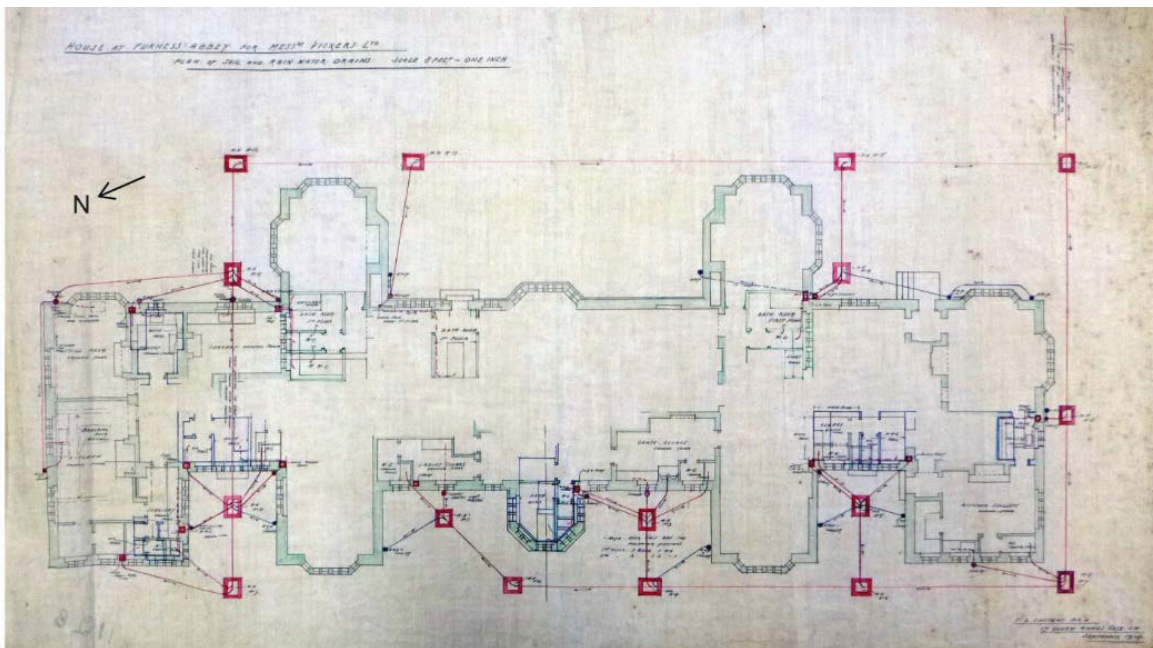


Plate 7: 1914 plan of the Hotel, showing drainage (CAC(B) BA/S/H/23 1914)

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). More significant is the detail of the external terracing and driveway and the location of drains. An east/west drain passes through the south end of **Area 3**, but

whether or not this plan is reliable is uncertain, given that the arrangement of the drains is inconsistent between it and the earlier plan.

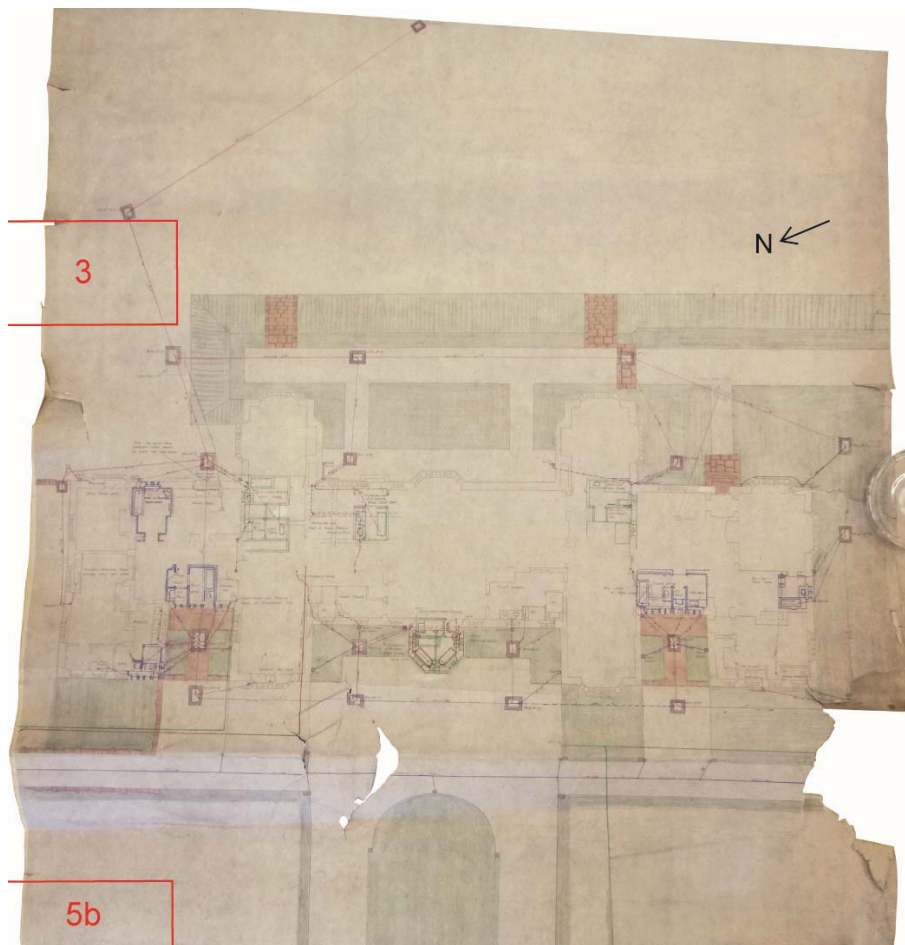


Plate 8: Early 20th century plan of the Hotel, showing location of proposed bathrooms (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

3.3.12 *Early 20th century plan of the potting shed and lodge*: this plan is presumably approximately the same date as the blueprint, since the layout of the buildings to the north and east of the Abbey House is approximately the same in both (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960; Plate 9; cf. Plate 6). The main difference in the layout of the site at this end, however, is that on the blueprint a hedge is shown cutting across the centre of **Area 1** and a track from the building north-east of **Area 2** (identified as a potting shed here) just passes **Area 1** to the north-west. In this plan, the track aligns with the centre of the potting shed, and the hedge to the east side of it follows the line of the track and cuts across **Area 1** on a north/south alignment. As noted above, the blueprint might be 'proposed' plans rather than what was actually built. This map shows the gardener's lodge (the North Lodge), to the west, and the potting shed to the east in detail. The potting shed is aligned east/west, with a heating chamber to the west, supplying tanks in the buildings attached to the south side. The buildings with tanks are presumably the glasshouses shown on the Ordnance Survey maps from 1933 and 1956 (see below; Plate 12 and Plate 14). Cabling and drainage from the lodge crosses the entrance path at this end of the site and passes north-west/south-east through the north-east side of the proposed new parking area (parts of **Area 5a** and **Area 5b**). There is also possibly a garden wall at the south-east side of the eastern part of the proposed parking at this end (**Area 5b**). Two walls are shown near **Area 6**; the east/west wall to the south matches the field boundary of the earlier maps but the one on a north-west/south-east alignment to the north-east side of the area has not been shown before. This is shown as a very feint line, however, and is perhaps a trackway rather than a wall, unlike the boundary that this area crosses to the south, which is still present from the earlier maps and clearly represents a substantial feature.

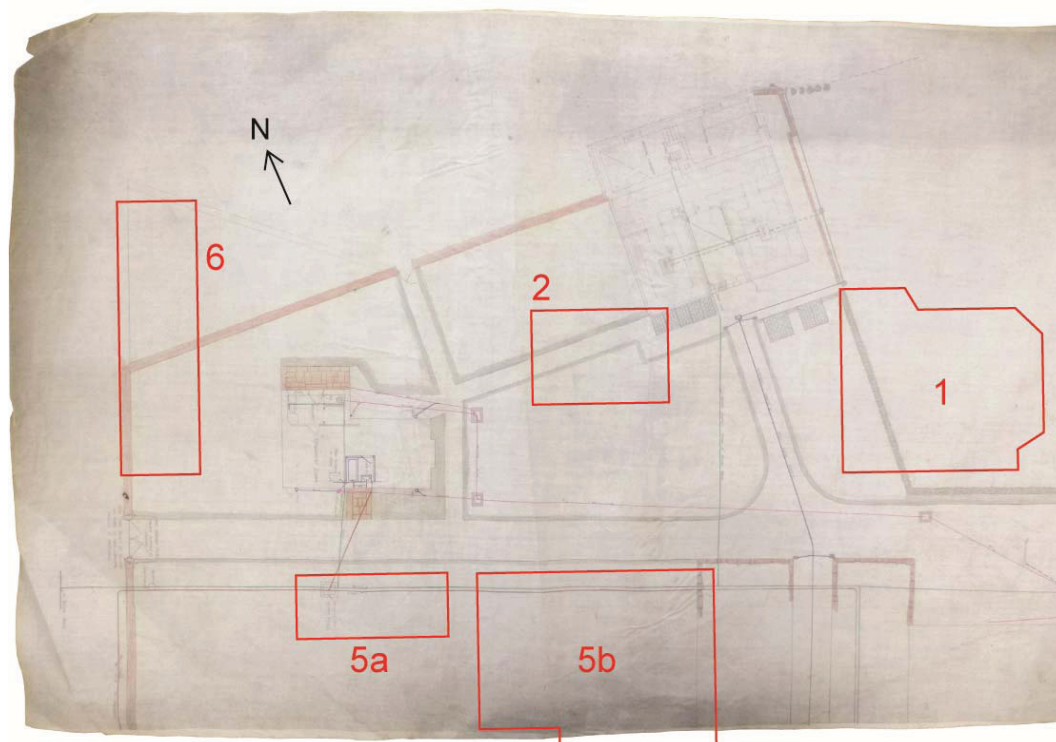


Plate 9: Early 20th century plan of the potting shed and lodge (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960)

3.3.13 **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 10 and Plate 11). They are significant in showing that the external 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.

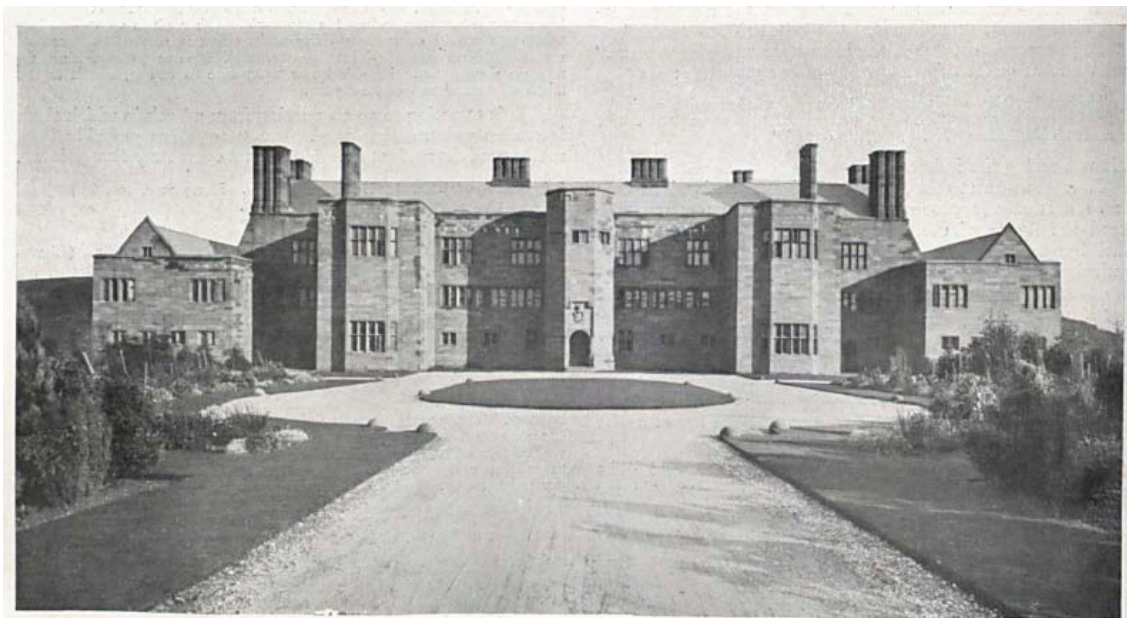


Plate 10: View of the entrance drive to the front from 1921 (from Hussey 1921, 398)



Plate 11: View of the terraces to the rear in 1921 (from Hussey 1921, 400)

3.3.14 **Ordnance Survey 1933**: this is the first Ordnance Survey plan to post-date the construction of the Abbey House and it shows a range of associated structures, including a probable tennis court adjacent to **Area 5c** (Plate 12). These evidently include at least three glasshouses: two are aligned east/west and a section of a third, aligned north/south, intrudes into the area. The two east/west glasshouses are not shown on the early 20th century plan of the potting shed and lodge (Plate 12; cf. Plate 9). The north/south section of the glasshouse was to the south side of an east/west building, which still stands in this area (to the north-east of **Area 2**), identified as a potting shed on earlier plans (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960; Plate 9). Of particular interest is the wall that formerly stood in the north corner of the site, the east/west boundary to the south of **Area 6**, which was present on the earlier Ordnance Survey maps but has apparently been totally or partially removed by 1933. It is possible that this formed part of the precinct wall of the abbey and appears to correspond to a section revealed during the earlier watching brief (OA North 2002; see Section 4.6.1 below). There is a north-west/south-east aligned wall crossed by **Area 6**, which may correspond with the one marked on the early 20th century plan of the potting shed and lodge (see Plate 9; allowing for some errors in survey on one or other map), and there is a small building beyond that to the north, again within the footprint of **Area 6**.

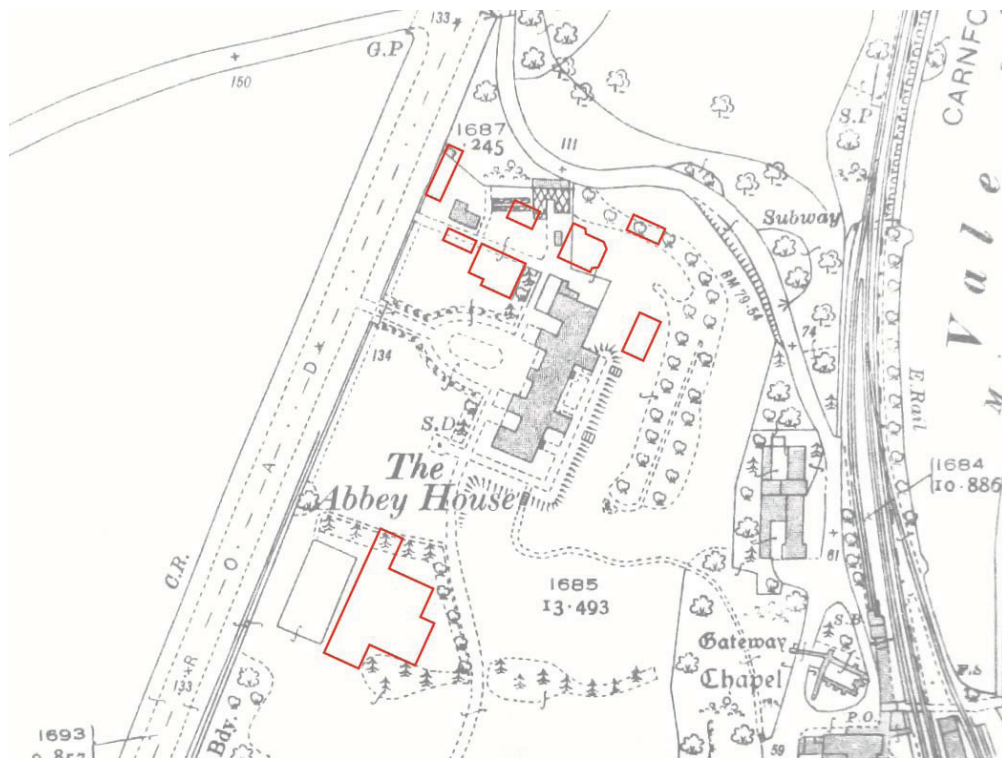


Plate 12: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1933

3.3.15 **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 13).

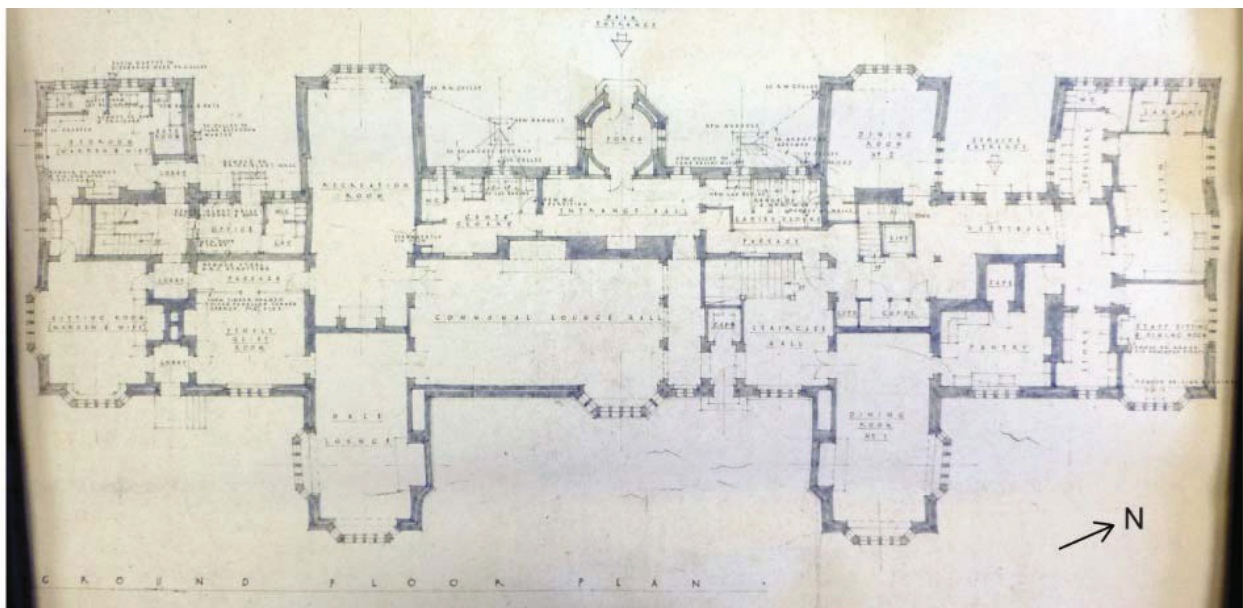


Plate 13: (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184 c1960)

3.3.15 **Ordnance Survey 1956:** the proposed development areas appear to be largely unchanged from the earlier edition of the Ordnance Survey map (Plate 14; cf. Plate 12). The small building to the north side of the wall running through **Area 6** has been removed but the tennis court next to **Area 5b** is still present.



Plate 14: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1956

3.3.16 **Summary:** it is evident from the cartographic sources that the site was open fields from at least the late 18th century until the Abbey House was built after 1913. Glasshouses presumably associated with Abbey House were present to the north end of the proposed development (within **Area 2**) by 1933 and remained until at least 1956, but these have since been removed. The north extension to Abbey House, which is due to have the main entrance modified (**Area 1**), was not built until c2000 (see OA North 2002).

3.4 Site Visit

3.4.1 **Site Arrangement and Character:** the proposed development areas comprise two distinct types; those that are close to the standing buildings of the Abbey House Hotel and are either hard standing such as tarmac or lawn (Plate 15 to Plate 18), and a separate area of lawn set amongst woodland and scrub vegetation to the south of the current carpark (Plate 19 and Plate 20).



Plate 15 (left): The modern addition to the Abbey House Hotel (Area 1), viewed from the west



Plate 16 (right): Terracing to the east of the Abbey House Hotel (Area 3), viewed from the south



Plate 17 (left): Area adjoining the former gardener's house (Area 2), viewed from the east



Plate 18 (right): Area of proposed additional car parking (Area 5b), viewed from the north-west



Plate 19 (left): Area of proposed over flow car parking to the south (Area 5c), viewed from the north



Plate 20 (right): Area of proposed over flow car parking to the south (Area 5c), viewed from the north

3.4.2 **Area 6** also comprises an area of lawn set within corner formed by the boundary walls (Plate 21). Of note were the presence of two drain inspection hatches in the ground, but also the various evident phases of alterations to the boundary wall. It appears that the northernmost part of the west boundary wall is relatively early, and incorporates some re-used decorated blocks of probable medieval date (Plate 22 and Plate 23). The section to the south of this, immediately to the north of the gateway, is clearly a later phase of rebuild, probably in association with the construction of the gateway, and includes a projecting section topped with thick slabs. The return to the east from this is clearly a later rebuild (Plate 24), and all of these apparent phases can be related, but it is clear that the west face of the west wall has been entirely clad in stone to a similar finish at a relatively late stage. All of these elements can, to some degree, be matched with what is shown in the map regression (see *Section 3.3*).



Plate 21 (left): General view of Area 6



Plate 22 (right): The junction of sections of the west boundary wall



Plate 23 (left): Re-used decorative masonry in the west boundary wall



Plate 24 (right): The north boundary wall

3.4.3 **Constraints:** the areas close to the Abbey House Hotel (**Areas 1-5b** in Figure 1) have likely to have been substantially disturbed in most cases, with various services evident through the presence of inspection covers (as well as earlier services demonstrated in the map evidence; see *Section 3.3* above). In addition, the area to the east of the hotel has clearly been substantially terraced to match the terraces to the south, and it is apparent that the ground levels have been altered to the north as well. Any archaeological remains that would have been present in these areas are therefore likely to have been substantially disturbed or even destroyed; the previous archaeological monitoring, carried out during the previous development at the site, essentially revealed that this was the case across much of the affected area (Figure 2; OA North 2002). The area to the south of the extant car park (**Area 5c**), by contrast is evidently less disturbed although it seems likely that it has seen some landscaping perhaps as part of a programme of formal tree planting. It also clearly had a tennis court adjacent to it in in at least the 1930s (see Plate 12) although no particularly evidence for this is now present. **Area 6** is slightly different to all of the other areas in that it while has certainly has seen some disturbance due to the excavation of at least one water pipe across it (OA North 2002) it is in general some distance from the main buildings but close to and across the line of the precinct boundary of the abbey.

4. Site History

4.1 Background History

4.1.1 The background history to the site helps our understanding of the development and use of the site, where known, making use of the map evidence presented above (see *Section 3*) where relevant. The background to the site is intended to place 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 the remains of animal species common at the time but now extinct in this country and artefacts of Late Upper Palaeolithic type (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 during field walking and eroding from sand dunes along the coast (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 ascertain this with any certainty. Sites of this type are recorded typically as crop marks 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, although there was possibly one at what is now the site of 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). What is of note is that of the various finds of Roman date that have been discovered in the area, many came from the vicinity of Furness Abbey. These include four Roman coins found in 1915 and 1916 of 2nd and 4th century date, which, although 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) is presumably a reference to the Mr Miller of Dunlop House (now named Oaklands) immediately to the south off 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 suggesting 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. Many local place-names demonstrate the mixture of Anglian and Norse influence, such as Dalton, while such as Roose and Leece suggest the late survival of British people (Ekwall 1922; Coates and Breeze 2000, 317). 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 re-used 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 re-used 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) although it's provenance is less certain (Edwards 1998, 38-39).

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 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, 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 not clear 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 over to the crown and the land was subsequently granted to the king's minister Thomas Cromwell, two years later it was 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 re-built into a hotel during the 1850's and the 1860's (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 was 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 guest house 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 to the extent that 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*). However, with his departure its future was sealed – the increasing cost of maintaining the building and staff made it too expensive and eventually it was offered, 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 initially effectively part of the Abbey House estate as it too was sold to the corporation and opened as a children's nursery on 29th November 1951 (*ibid*). By the late 1970s the unsuitability of it as an old peoples' home was becoming apparent however (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;

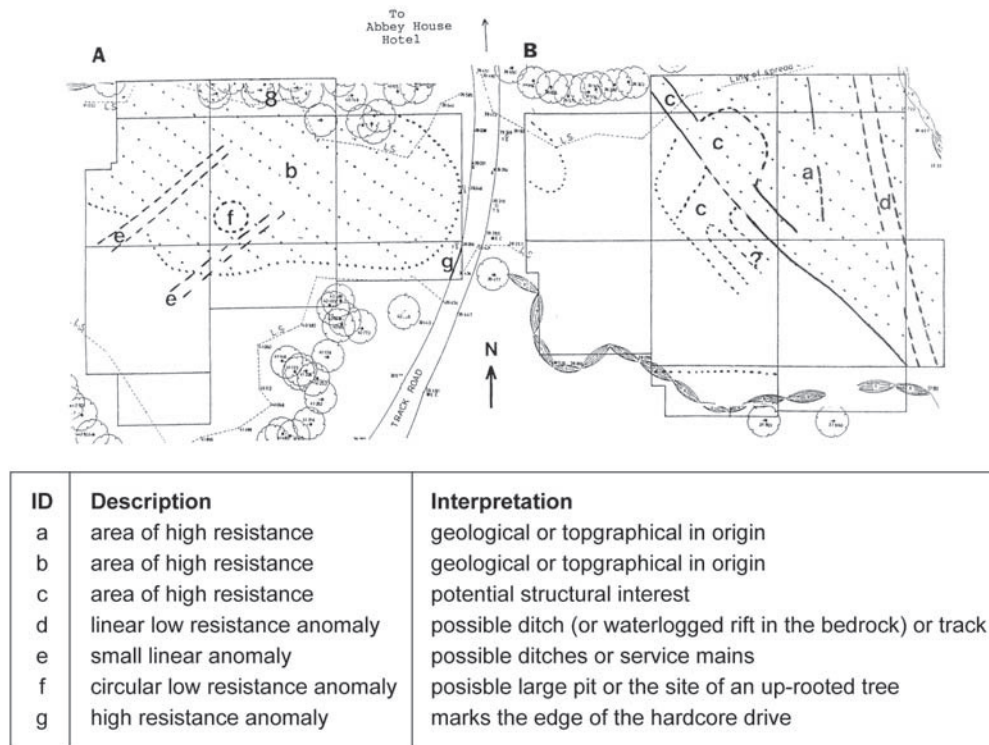
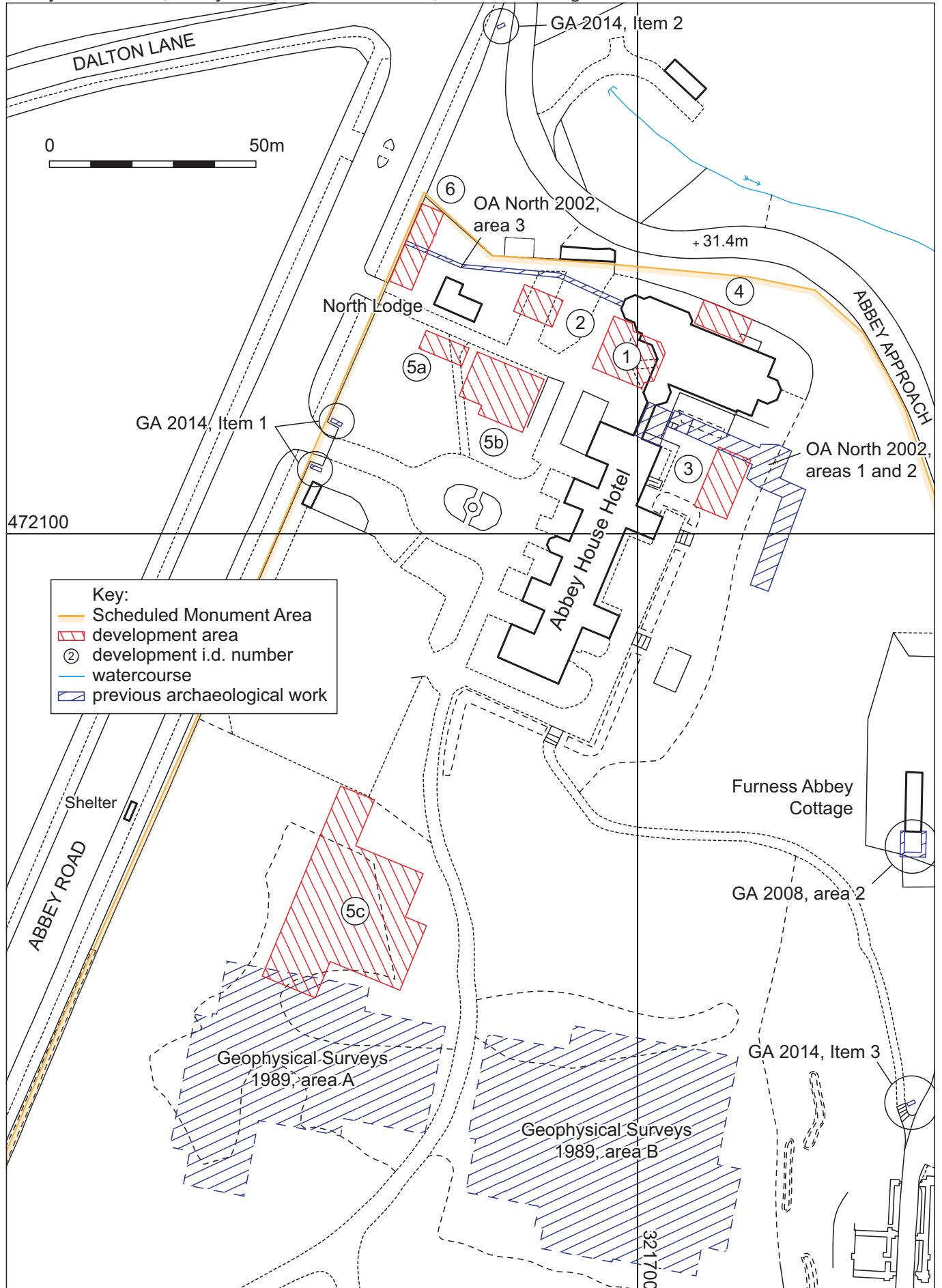


Figure 2: Results of the geophysical survey (after Geophysical Surveys 1989, figure 5)

- ground work 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 and partially within **Area 6**, a sandstone wall was uncovered of uncertain date; it was thought this probably represented an earlier continuation of the stone wall of post-medieval date but may have been the earlier medieval precinct boundary 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; here the foundations for an earlier porch had disturbed the ground. Excavations in the area of the garage revealed that the base of the quarry was possibly deeper than the current ground level and 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.



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*). The development site only comprises a number of small areas within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel and so covers a relatively limited area.

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. The only element of the actual structure of the abbey that is known and potentially affected by the proposal is the former line of the precinct boundary wall in **Area 6**, which is known to survive below the current ground surface (OA North 2002).

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) 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, especially in **Area 6**, which crosses the line of the precinct boundary. In addition, the discovery of Roman coins from nearby 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 building, including the associated terraces, driveway and walkways, would have had an impact on any below-ground remains that might have been present in the areas immediately adjoining the original part of the Abbey House. More pertinent are the early 20th century plans of the potting shed and lodge on the north side of the, which indicate that **Area 2** has probably already been disturbed as are result of their construction and the proposed new parking areas to the north of the area (**Areas 5a** and **5b**) have probably already been disturbed by the installation of as well as a wall to the south-east. Similarly, there may be drainage from Abbey House Hotel passing through **Area 3**, as shown on an early 20th century plan of the Hotel, and a wall or hedge may pass through **Area 2**. **Area 1** and **Area 4** may have been disturbed by work carried out in relation to the north extension to the Hotel c2000 and there may be overlap at the north-east end of **Area 3**. The remainder of the proposed development areas have probably only been affected by less intrusive factors, such as maintenance of the grounds at the hotel. In **Area 6** there is probably less likelihood of extensive disturbance but it has obviously been cut by at least one water pipe and will have been affected by the alterations to the boundary wall shown on the maps in the early 20th century.

5.5 Impact

5.5.1 In general, all of the proposals are likely to require either relatively shallow excavation or narrower, deeper excavation for services such as cables. They are also, with the exception of **Area 5c**, in areas that will have already seen considerable disturbance associated with the construction of the Abbey House in 1914, the installation of associated drains and services, and the subsequent extension of c2000. However, in **Area 6** there is certainly the potential for the line of the former monastic precinct boundary to be impacted upon.

5.6 Conclusion and Recommendations

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 Abbey House. The only potential exception is **Area 5c**, which is further from the hotel and perhaps therefore less likely to have been disturbed, although **Area 6** clearly crosses the line of a former section of the abbey's precinct boundary. It is recommended that in **Areas 1-5b** an archaeological watching brief be maintained on all associated ground works. In addition, in **Area 5c** some form of earlier evaluation would be useful, either through the excavation of archaeological evaluation trenches, which would require Scheduled Monument consent, and/or geophysical survey, which would require a Section 42 licence. In **Area 6** it is recommended that the proposed garage be constructed at the more northerly end of this area so as to avoid the line of the former medieval precinct boundary, and even then some further monitoring would be necessary to identify whether any remains associated with it were present especially since the garage would presumably also need new associated access.

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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.