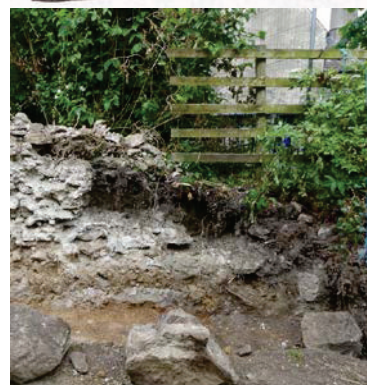
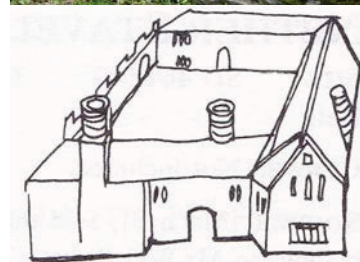
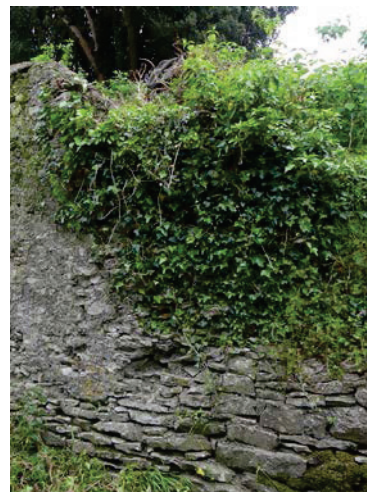


LOW LEVENS FARM, LEVENS, KENDAL, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording and Watching Brief



Client: Dallam Tower Estates

Planning ref: SL/2021/0007 and
SL/2021/0013

NGR 348841 485103 (centre)

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August 2021



The Site	
Site Name	Low Levens Farm, Levens, Kendal
County	Cumbria
NGR	348841 485103
Listing Status, Level, and number	Grade II*
Brief description of building/buildings to be recorded	Part of boundary wall running north-east/south-west from south-east corner of building and alongside road

Client	
Client Name	Dallam Tower Estates
Client's agent	Wendy Sockett, WS Planning
Client's architect	Kitson Architecture
'As existing' drawings available?	Yes

Planning	
Pre-planning?	No
Planning Application No.	SL/2021/0007 and SL/2021/0013
Plans (e.g. conversion, extension, demolition)	Demolition and rebuilding of existing boundary wall
Condition number	
Local Planning Authority	South Lakeland District Council
Planning Archaeologist	Libby Mee, Conservation Officer, South Lakeland District Council/Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer, Cumbria County Council
Level of Building Recording required	Photographic part of Level 2/3 (as defined by Historic England) and other parts as appropriate
Groundworks subject to watching brief	Rebuilding of wall

Staffing	
Desk-based assessment	Dan Elsworth
Building recording	Dan Elsworth
Watching brief	Dan Elsworth
Report writing	Dan Elsworth
Report editing	Jo Dawson
Illustrations	Tom Mace
Date(s) site work carried out	Building recording: 27/05/2021 Watching brief: 03/06/21, 09/06/21 and 23/06/2021

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Summary

Following the submission of an application to demolish and rebuild part of the boundary wall at Low Levens Farm, Levens, Kendal, Cumbria, a condition was made that it be subject to an archaeological building recording and watching brief. The wall formed a section of curtain wall to the property, which is Grade II* Listed and has medieval origins. Low Levens Farm, originally Nether Levens, is thought to have developed around a pele tower of perhaps 14th or 15th century date, and ultimately formed a courtyard arrangement with the entrance through a gateway on the north side and with a defensive curtain wall with battlements on the east side, although there is some uncertainty about when this was constructed or whether it genuinely was for defence. The site had probably reached its peak when it was recorded by Thomas Machell at the end of the 17th century, and in the following century and a half elements of it were gradually removed or became ruinous, specifically the north and south wings, and it became a farm house.

The building recording examined the wall prior to any demolition work taking place and once ivy had been removed from the affected section, and allowed some additional interpretation of the structure. The demolition was subsequently monitored, revealing a range of phases of alteration and repair to the wall, all of which appear to be post medieval and modern, although structural elements probably relating to the earlier north range were also revealed.

The investigation allowed some additional interpretation of the building to be carried out, with it concluded that the relationship between the wall and the north and south wings seemed to suggest that it was later, so at best late medieval. Its position, almost directly against the River Kent, also indicates that it cannot have been truly defensive, especially when the main entrance was to the north. The evidence from the watching brief shows that it was possibly deliberately undermined in the post-medieval period, perhaps as part of an attempt to demolish it when other parts of the site had been removed. It, and the extension of the wall to the north, were also subject to some more recent phases of repair and rebuilding.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Dallam Tower Estates for commissioning the project. Special thanks are due to Alan Morphet and colleagues for their help during the project and the tenant farmer at Low Levens Farm.

1. Introduction

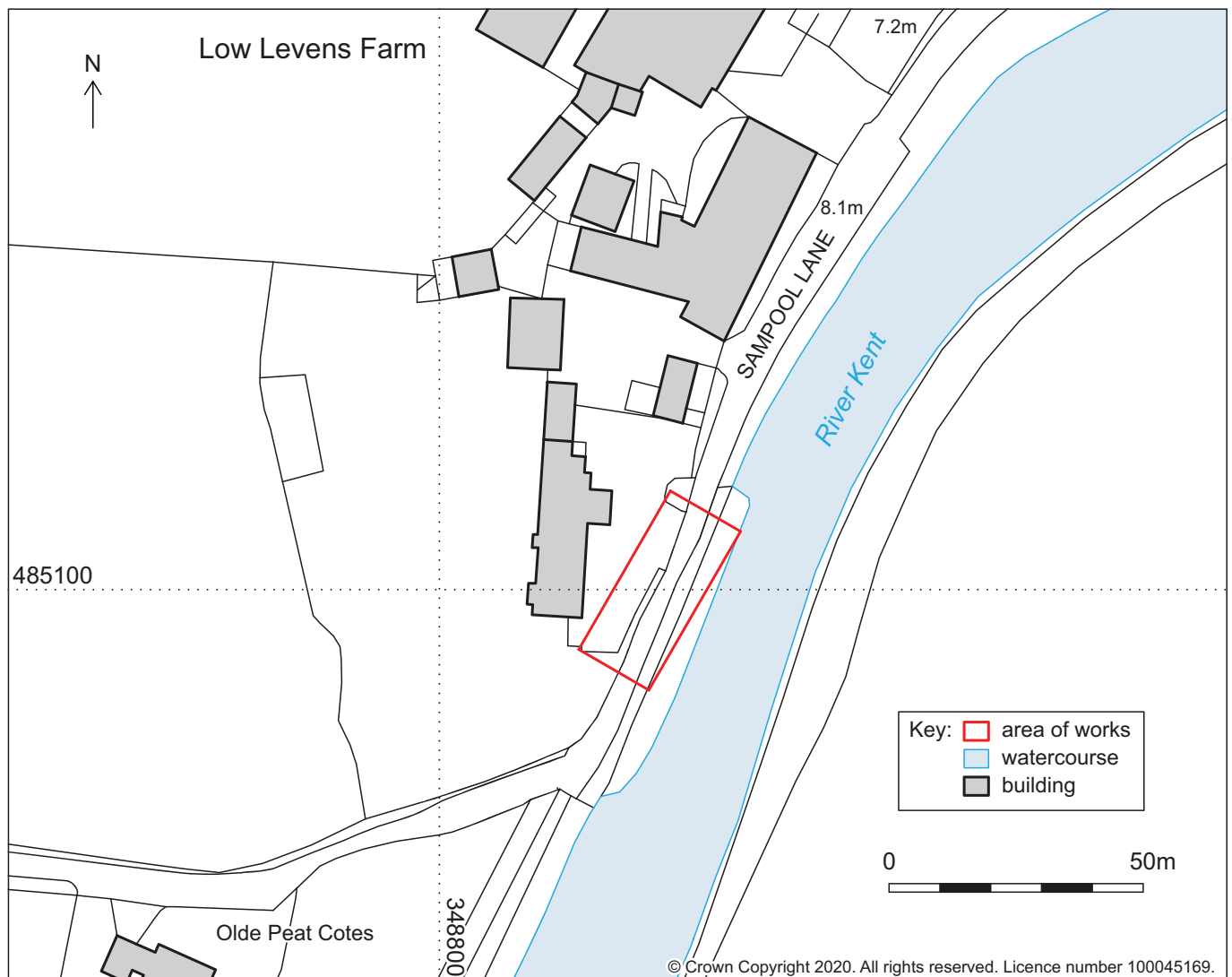
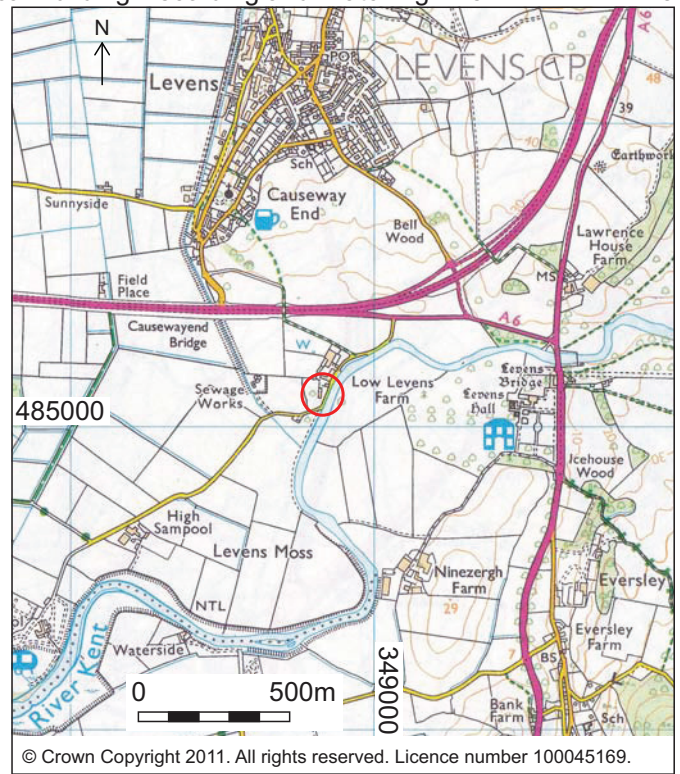
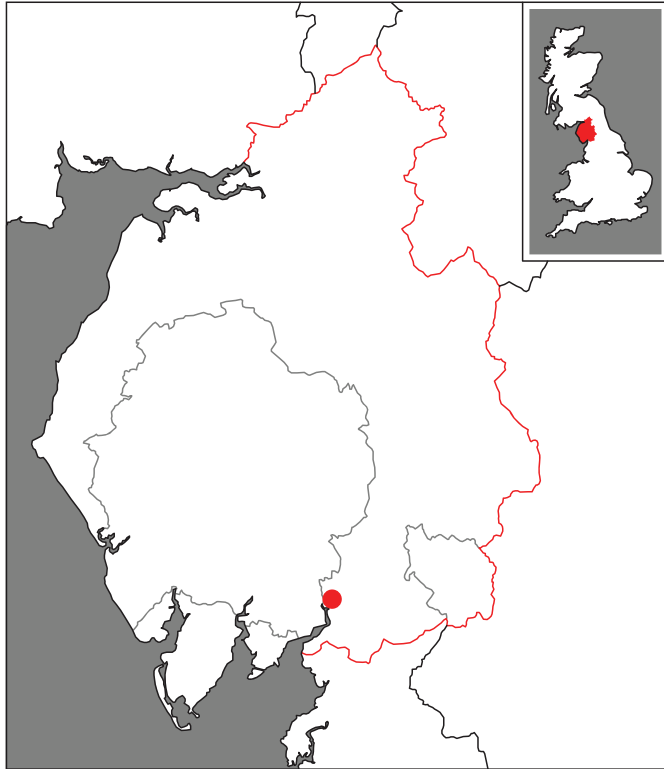
1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 The circumstances of the project are set out in the tables on the inside cover of this report.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Low Levens Farm is c750m south of the village of Levens and c640m west of Levens Hall, approximately 10 kilometres south-south-west of Kendal, in the Lake District (Ordnance Survey 2011). The site is on ground less than 10m above sea level on the north bank of the River Kent, adjacent to the north side of Sampool Lane, which passes the east side of the farm (Figure 1).

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area comprises Dinantian Carboniferous limestone which outcrops in places but is covered by glacial tills (Moseley 1978, plate 1) in the vicinity of the site. The landscape is characterised by gently undulating pasture and conspicuous limestone hills and outcrops (Countryside Commission 1998, 64).



Client: Dallam Tower Estates

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Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 A desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014b). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site and published secondary sources. A number of sources of information were used during the compilation of the desk-based assessment:

- **Record Office/Archive Centre:** the majority of original and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the relevant Record Office(s) or Archive Centre(s), as specified in the cover sheet of this report. 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 order to set the site in its historical, archaeological, and regional context. In addition, any details of the site's owners and occupiers were acquired where available;
- **Online Resources:** where available, mapping such as Ordnance Survey maps and tithe maps were consulted online;
- **Greenlane Archaeology:** Greenlane Archaeology's office library includes maps, local histories, and unpublished primary and secondary sources. These were consulted where relevant, in order to provide information about the history and archaeology of the site and the general area.

2.2 Building Recording

2.2.1 The building recording was carried out to Historic England Level 2/3 type standards (Historic England 2016), which provides a relatively detailed record of the building. The recording comprised the following elements:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs:** photographs in colour digital format (as both 12meg jpegs and RAW files) were taken of the main features of the building, its general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remaining photographs are in the project archive;
- **Drawings:** 'as existing' architect's drawings were provided by the client. These were plotted at a scale of 1:100 and annotated by hand with additional detail. In addition, a cross-section through the wall was produced by hand at a scale of 1:20.

2.3 Archaeological Watching Brief

2.3.1 The watching brief monitored groundworks associated with the project set out in the tables on the inside cover of this report.

2.3.2 All aspects of the archaeological recording were carried out according to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a) and Greenlane Archaeology's own excavation manual (2007). The deposits encountered were recorded in the following manner:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all deposits were made using Greenlane Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs:** photographs in colour digital format (both 12 meg JPEG and RAW file format) were taken of the site as well as general working shots. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report. A written record of all of the photographs was also made using Greenlane Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Drawings:** drawings were produced on site as follows:
 - i. detail was annotated onto the 'as existing' drawings provided by the client at a scale of 1:100.

2.4 Environmental Samples

2.4.1 No environmental samples were taken as no appropriate deposits were encountered.

2.5 Finds

2.5.1 **Processing:** all of the artefacts recovered from the watching brief were washed, with the exception of metal objects, which were dry-brushed. They were then naturally air-dried and packaged appropriately in self-seal bags with white write-on panels.

2.5.2 **Assessment and recording:** the finds were assessed and identified in the first instance by Jo Dawson. The finds were recorded directly into the catalogue produced as part of this report (*Appendix 4*).

2.6 Archive

2.6.1 The archive of the project will be deposited with the relevant Record Office or Archive Centre, as detailed on the cover sheet of this report, together with a copy of the report. The archive has been compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA guidelines (ClfA 2014c). In addition, details will be submitted to the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public. A copy of the report will be provided to the client and a digital copy of the report will be provided for the relevant Historic Environment Record, as detailed on the cover sheet of this report.

3. Site History

3.1 Map Regression

3.1.1 **Introduction:** although there are early, typically county-wide, maps that include the area, they generally lack detail. The first useful maps of the area, which help illustrate the way in which the site has developed over time, do not appear until the mid-19th century. As a result, it is primarily maps from that date onwards that are discussed below.

3.1.2 **Ordnance Survey, 1862:** the first edition 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in 1858, shows the farm to the west side of the river and the wall along the side of Sampool Lane (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1862

3.1.3 **Ordnance Survey, 1898:** the 1898 edition of the Ordnance Survey map was revised in 1897. This edition, at a scale of 1:2,500, shows slightly more detail than the 1862 edition, including the return of the wall to the west at the south end of the area (Plate 2; cf. Plate 1). The farm at this time was called 'Nether Levens'.

3.1.4 **Ordnance Survey, 1914:** this edition, revised in 1912, shows similar detail to the 1898 edition and the inside (west internal elevation) of the wall (or possibly the wall-walk) is also shown (Plate 3; cf. Plate 2).



Plate 2: Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1898

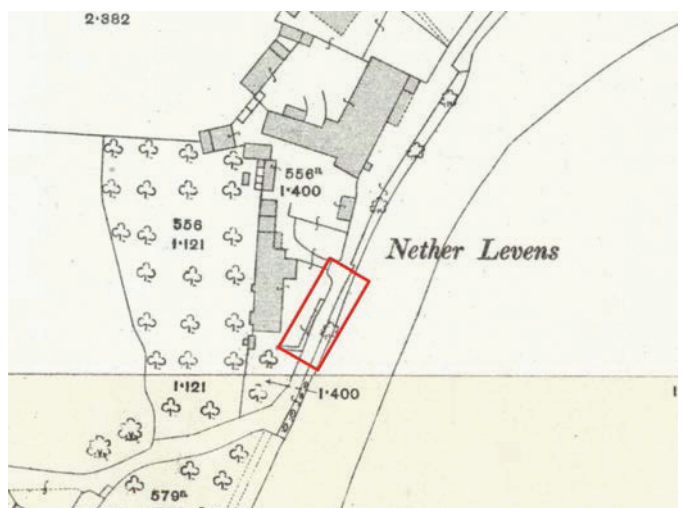


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1914

3.2 Background History

3.2.1 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 3.1*) where relevant, and primarily extracted from information gathered as part of an earlier report on the site (NP Archaeology 2012). The background to the site is intended to place the results of the project in its local context, specifically that of Low Levens Farm itself, but a brief discussion of the earlier history of its wider environs is also necessary in order to put the results into their wider context.

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

3.3.1 While there is some limited evidence for activity in the county in the period immediately following the last Ice Age, this is typically found in the southernmost part, on the north side of Morecambe Bay. Excavations of a small number of cave sites have 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). Again, the county was also clearly 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, but these are typically concentrated in the west coast area and on the uplands around the Eden Valley (Cherry and Cherry 2002). A large number of microliths belonging to this period were however, found during excavations in Levens Park (Cherry and Cherry 2000); and the position of this site, alongside the River Leven, is one where such artefacts are often found (Middleton *et al* 1995, 202; Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 151-152). In addition, one of the cave sites on Morecambe Bay has recently had human remains recovered from it dated to the beginning of this period, placing them as early as any known from the rest of the country (Smith *et al* 2013).

3.3.2 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 to the north-west of Kendal (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 45). During the Bronze Age (c2,500 – 600 BC) monuments, particularly those thought to be ceremonial in nature, become more common still, and it is likely that settlement sites thought to be Iron Age or Romano-British in date have their origins in this period. Sites of this date are represented in the area around Levens by a collection of sites on Sizergh Fell. These comprise three mounded sites and a possible late prehistoric settlement site is also located at Sizergh Fell. Sites that can be specifically dated to the Iron Age (c600 BC – 1st century AD) are very rare although it is likely that some or all of the settlement sites probably originating in the Bronze Age continued to be occupied (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 34). One of the most well-known types of site for the period is the hillfort, and while there are several examples around Morecambe Bay and extending towards Kendal, few have seen any excavation or are properly dated (Elsworth 2014). Levens is unique in Cumbria in having excavated Iron Age burials, discovered in the village in 2002 (OA North 2002; 2004), although the cemetery appears to be very small. There is also likely to have been a considerable overlap between the end of the Iron Age and the beginning of the Romano-British period; 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), something that is apparent at the settlement on Sizergh, which had some finds thought to date to the 2nd or 3rd century AD (Hughes 1912a; a brooch of similar style from Langbank crannog in Scotland was dated to the 1st century AD; Alexander 2000, 157 and 159).

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

3.4.1 The area immediately around Levens has relatively minimal evidence for activity from the Roman period, the nearest known Roman forts being at Watercrock on the south side of Kendal to the north and Lancaster to the south, although Roman finds, particularly coins, are relatively well-known from the local area (Shotter 2004). In the Levens area it is apparent that the 'native' style settlement on Sizergh Fell continued to be occupied into the Roman period, and it seems likely that the impact of Roman rule was less substantial in rural areas. The fort at Watercrock, was identified at an early date (Potter 1979, 143)

but was not excavated until the middle of the 20th century and later, which revealed evidence for activity from the late 1st century and into the 4th century (*op cit*, 176-180).

3.4.2 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, however, four skeletons found c300m north-east of Levens in 1911 while laying pipes for a water supply *may* belong to the early medieval period on account of their approximately east/west orientation (Hughes 1912b, 404). Contemporary newspaper accounts speculated that the field in which the burials were found had been the site of a battle and reported a coin amongst the finds (Anon 1911). Both were dismissed in the published account, the coin was apparently a 'York token' found some distance away and the graves were considered too orderly to have resulted from 'the hurried burial of people plague-stricken or slain in battle' (Hughes 1912b, 404). Investigation of some of the remains by Professor Macalister at the Museum of Human Anatomy in Cambridge concluded that they were 'of the same type as the mixed Scandinavian race still found in that district' (*op cit*, 404-405). At least one other cist burial (again, possibly early medieval) was also reputedly discovered nearby, although its location is not recorded other than being between Hynning and Levens (Hughes 1912b, 404; this may be the same site as a group of nine skeletons in cists found at an unknown location near Levens in 1867, although from the description these seem more likely to have been prehistoric; Anon 1867).

3.4.3 Place-name evidence from the area around Levens indicates a strong Anglian and Norse influence. The name 'Levens' itself may have a British origin but it is also suggested that it derives from the Old English name 'Lēofa' and Norse 'ness' meaning headland or peninsula (Smith 1967, 90).

3.5 Medieval Period (11th century AD – 16th century AD)

3.5.1 As already mentioned, much of the settlement in the local area was well established by the beginning of the medieval period. Levens is recorded in the Domesday survey of the area in 1086 (Smith 1967, 90), perhaps a reference to a settlement focussed on the present site of Levens Hall, which, along with Sizergh Castle to the north, is the predominant structure of medieval date the area. The Levens Hall estate is recorded as having been granted to a Normannus de Hieland (Yealand, later de Redman) in c1170 by the Baron of Kendal (Greenwood 1903, 272-273), and the Redman family probably built the peel tower at Levens Hall in the early 14th century, which formed the core of the later structure (*op cit*, 286). They had a park, enclosed by licence in 1360 (Curwen 1898, 39), and the family held the site until 1489 when it was sold to Alan Bellingham (*op cit*, 4), who then extended it in the 16th century (Beckett 1985, 132). It is alterations and additions made by the Bellingham family that are most well known today (Hyde and Pevsner 2010, 492).

3.5.2 The origins of Low Levens Farm, originally known as Nether Levens Hall, are less certain. It has been discussed by a number of writers during the 20th century, with elements thought to date as early as the 14th or 15th centuries and the most recent interpretations suggesting that this included a pele tower, although there is some debate about where this was located (Plate 4 to Plate 7). Several sources mention the presence of a curtain wall with a 'wall walk', with some of the earliest suggesting it was part of the earliest phase of defensive work at the site, although it has also been suggested that it was a 'pleasure walk' added later to provide views across the River Kent and towards Levens Hall (NP Archaeology 2012, 18-20). It forms part of the curtilage of the main farmhouse, which is Grade II* Listed (see *Appendix 2*).

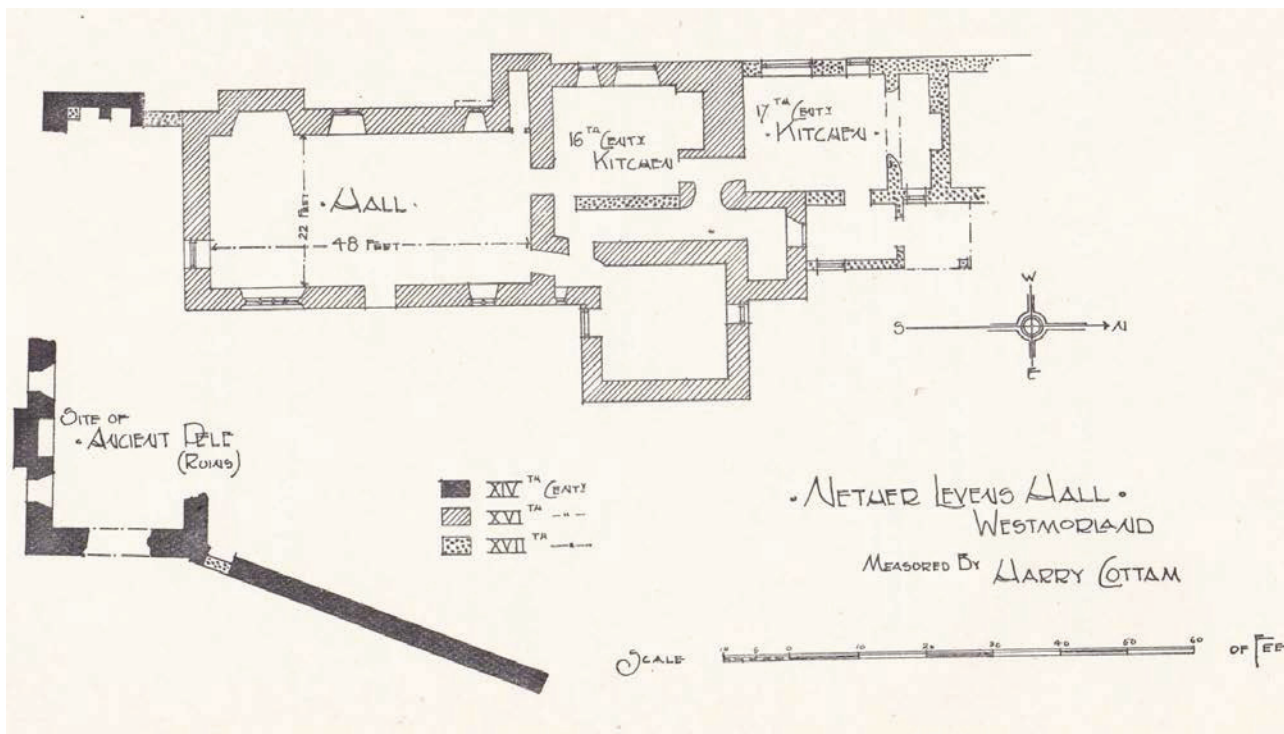


Plate 4: Plan showing the development of Nether Levens Hall (after Curwen 1904)

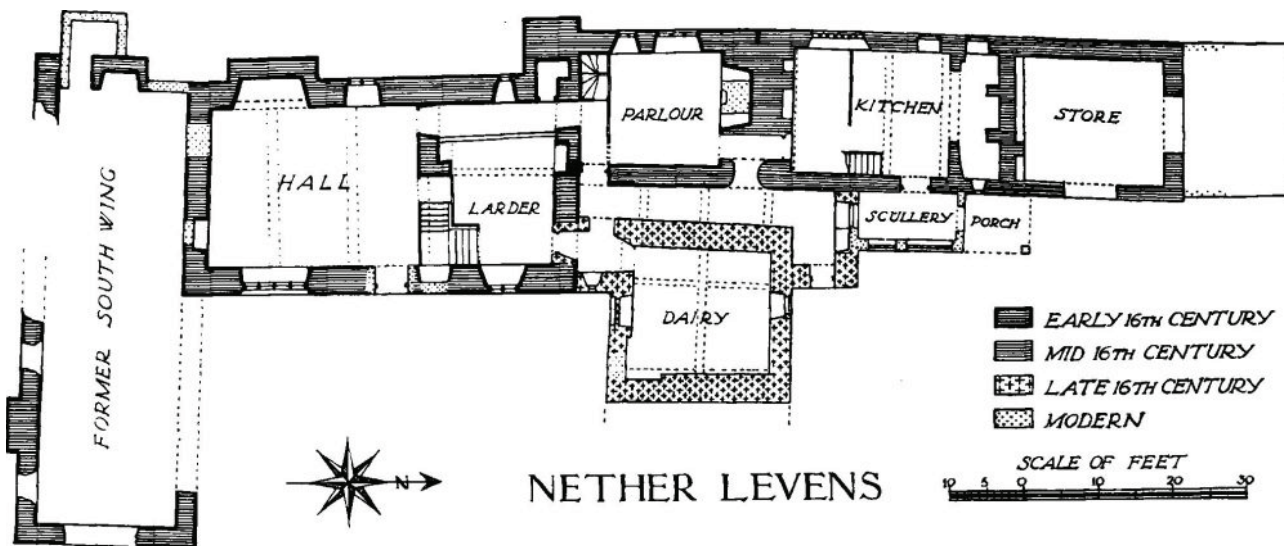


Plate 5: Plan showing the development of Nether Levens Hall (after RCHME 1936)

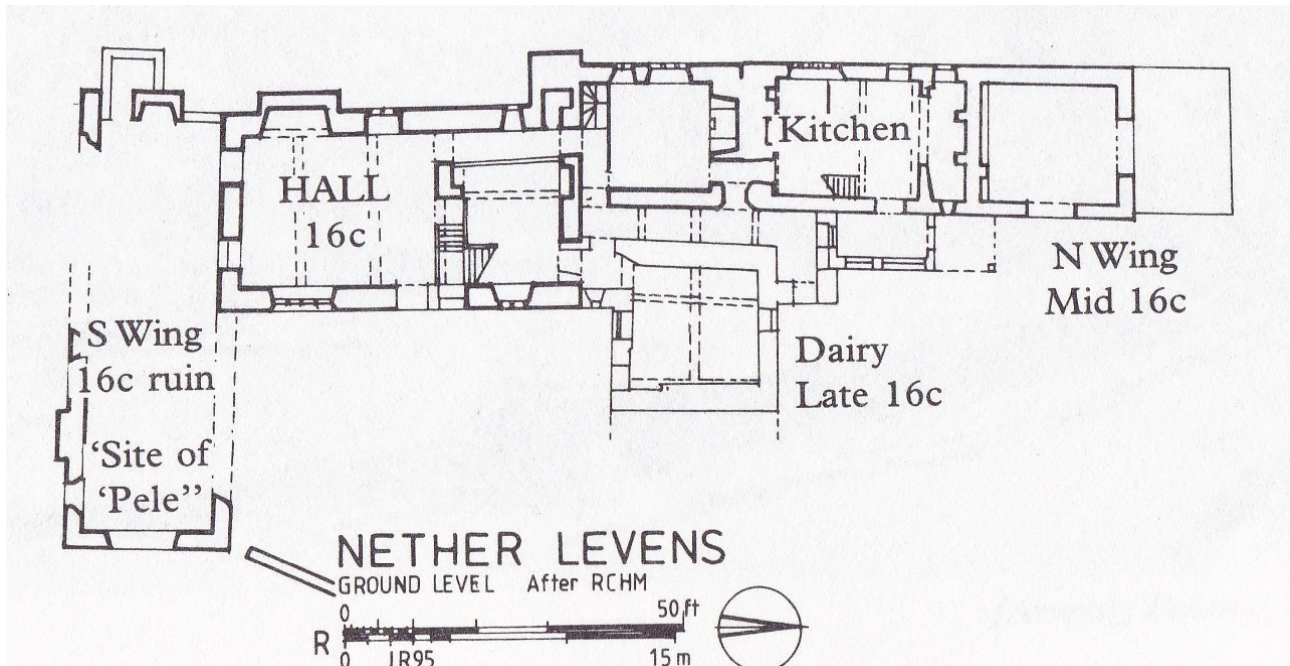


Plate 6: Plan showing the development of Nether Levens Hall (after Perriam and Robinson 1998, 359)

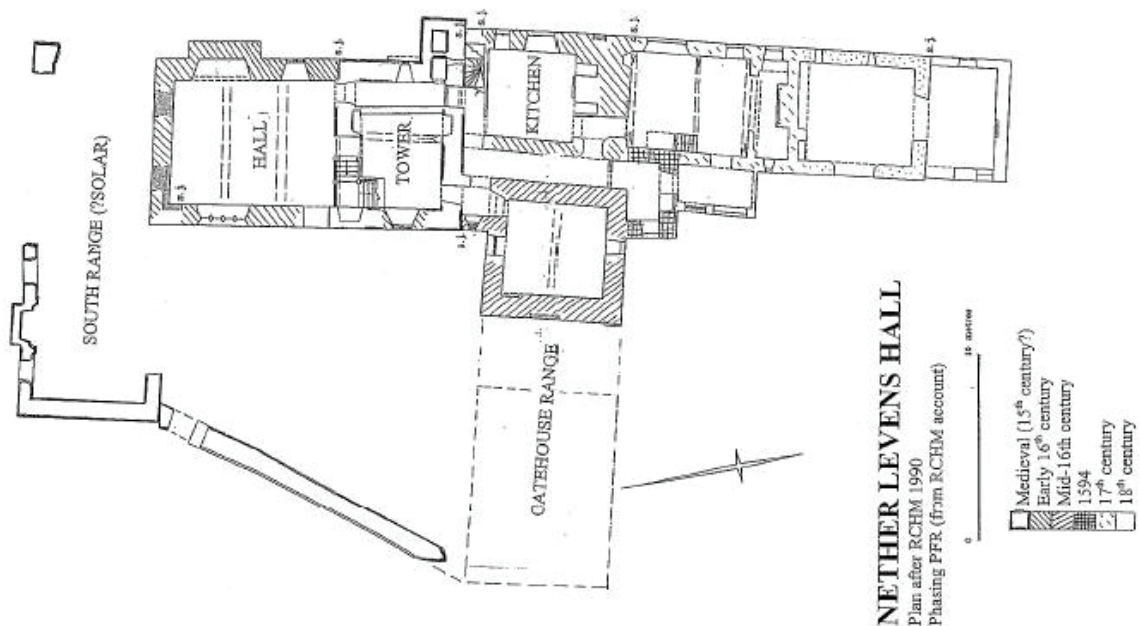


Plate 7: Plan showing the development of Nether Levens Hall (after Ryder 2002)

3.5.3 The earliest description is by Thomas Machell, writing in 1692: ‘*Nether Levens Hall... is an old low sort of building, with low ceiled chambers and [a] court wall next to the river, the highway only running between them, with battlements like a castle*’ (Ewbank 1963, 72). He also produced a sketch of the site showing it as comprising a full courtyard enclosed by buildings on the north, west and south sides and with the battlemented wall along the east with a doorway into the courtyard (Plate 8), which was still evident later on and is shown in subsequent plans.

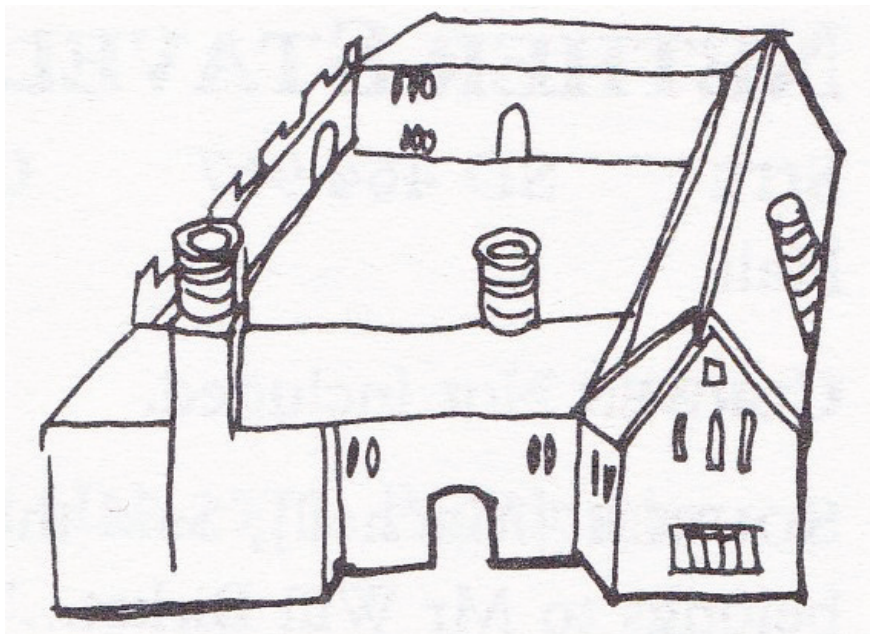


Plate 8: Machell's sketch of Nether Levens Hall (after Perriam and Robinson 1998, 359)

3.6 Post-Medieval Period (16th century AD – present)

3.6.1 Maps show that the general area had reached its present state of development by the 19th century, with all the fields enclosed, and it is likely that relatively little changed in the area immediately following the end of the medieval period. Levens village comprised only a handful of dwellings until the later 20th century. The largest change to the landscape in the post-medieval period was the drainage and improvement carried out to much of the local wetlands, especially in the Lyth Valley (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 53). Both Levens Hall and Sizergh Castle remained the predominant local estates throughout this period and their respective seats continued to be enlarged (Perriam and Robinson 1998); other major developments of the period such as the development of the railway did not impact directly on the Levens area.

3.6.1 As already seen, Low Levens Farm continued to develop into the early part of the post-medieval period, but essentially remained a medieval structure. By at least the early part of the 19th century it had become a farm house and is listed as a farm in the local trade directories (NP Archaeology 2012, 18). The plans produced in the early 20th century demonstrate that large sections of it had become ruinous by this time, in particular the north and south wings, although the battlemented wall along the east side remained largely intact.

4. Building Recording

4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 **Arrangement:** the area of wall recorded comprises an essentially straight section running approximately north/south, with Sampool Lane immediately adjoining to the east and Low Levens Farm to the west. The section that was to be demolished was cleared of ivy prior to work commencing, which allowed it to be examined in more detail. The southern end of the wall meets a ruinous structure originally forming part of the complex at Low Levens Farm, while the northern end is continued by a lower boundary wall, although it was not clear during the building recording whether this was part of the same structure or not.

4.1.2 **Fabric:** the main part of the wall (**1001**) is constructed from locally-derived limestone, typically quite small angular pieces set in a thick lime mortar, comprising perhaps as much as 30% of the wall's structure. It is 1.5m thick and up to 3m tall, with a level wall-walk on the west side, 1m deep behind, an undulating parapet wall along the front (east) face. Both the wall-walk and parapet were topped with a gravelly concrete (**1000**). The ground level is approximately 0.8m higher on the west side, meaning that the wall is partly revetted against the slope. The lower section to the north is of drystone build (**1002**), although with some concrete mortar, and up to 1.5m tall. The top is essentially at ground level on the west side meaning that the whole wall is revetted against the slope. At its north end it turns on a generous curve to form one side of a gate into the garden/yard of Low Levens Farm with limestone gateposts.

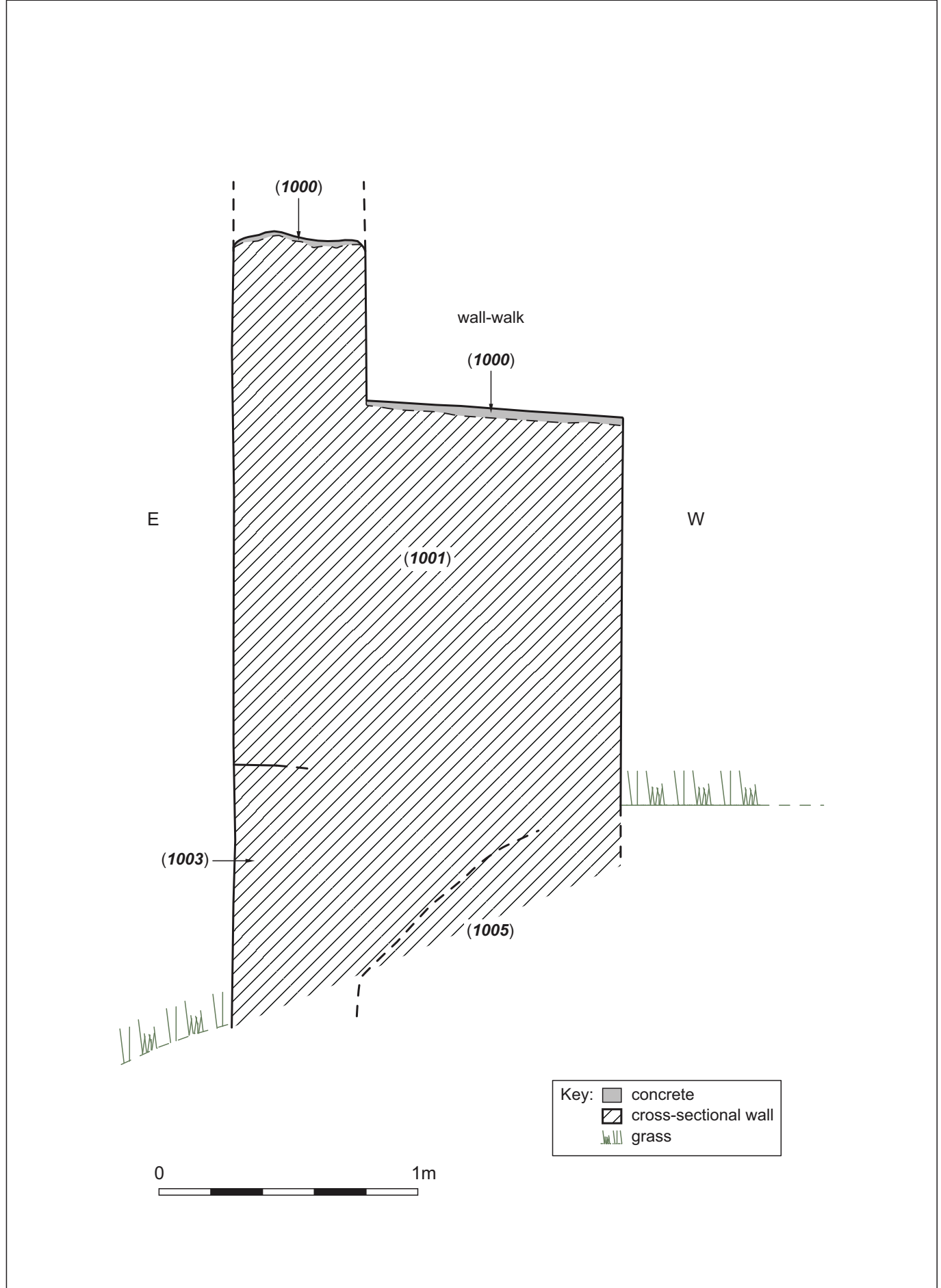
4.2 External Detail

4.2.1 **East external elevation:** this begins at the south end as part of the ruinous adjoining building, the western return of which has a large projecting chimney stack with apertures to either side, probably both windows but the east perhaps a doorway (Plate 9). The return to the wall proper is essentially straight (Plate 10) but with a slight turn to the north-east after the ruinous building ends and a large area of collapse. At the junction with the wall there is a blocked doorway with the remains of a voussoir arch (Plate 11). The rest of the wall is relatively straight, except where the wall turns to form one side of a gate at the lower north end (Plate 12). The undulating top of the parapet was only evident once the ivy had been removed (Plate 13 and Plate 14) and a straight end, although not quoined, also became visible at the change in height at the north end (Plate 15 and Plate 16), immediately before which the upper part of the wall was leaning to the east.



Plate 9 (left): The return into the ruinous building at the south end, viewed from the south

Plate 10 (right): The main part of the wall prior to the ivy being removed, viewed from the south-east



Client: Dallam Tower Estates

© Greenlane Archaeology Ltd, August 2021

Figure 2: Cross-section



Plate 11 (left): The blocked doorway at the southern end of the wall, obscured by ivy, viewed from the east

Plate 12 (right): The north end of the wall, obscured by ivy, viewed from the north-east



Plate 13 (left): The undulating parapet along the main part of the wall following the removal of the ivy, viewed from the north-east

Plate 14 (right): The undulating parapet along the mail part of the wall following the removal of the ivy, viewed from the east



Plate 15 (left): The junction between the main wall and north end, viewed from the north-east

Plate 16 (right): The junction between the main wall and the north end, viewed from the east

4.2.2 **West external elevation:** the north end of the wall is not visible from the west as it is at ground level and the difference in height is finished with a timber fence. The wall is otherwise fairly unremarkable from this side although the wall-walk was visible (Plate 17 and Plate 18) and at the south end there was a shallow recess 0.3m deep and 0.8m tall with splayed jambs (Plate 19). To the south of this the wall-walk ended before the blocked doorway and the return for the ruinous building to the south was more obvious (Plate 20).



Plate 17 (left): The west elevation of the wall, prior to the removal of ivy, viewed from the north-west

Plate 18 (right): The undulating parapet following the removal of the ivy, viewed from the west



Plate 19 (left): The recess at the south end of the west elevation, viewed from the west

Plate 20 (right): The junction of the west elevation with the ruinous building at the south end and the blocked doorway, viewed from the west

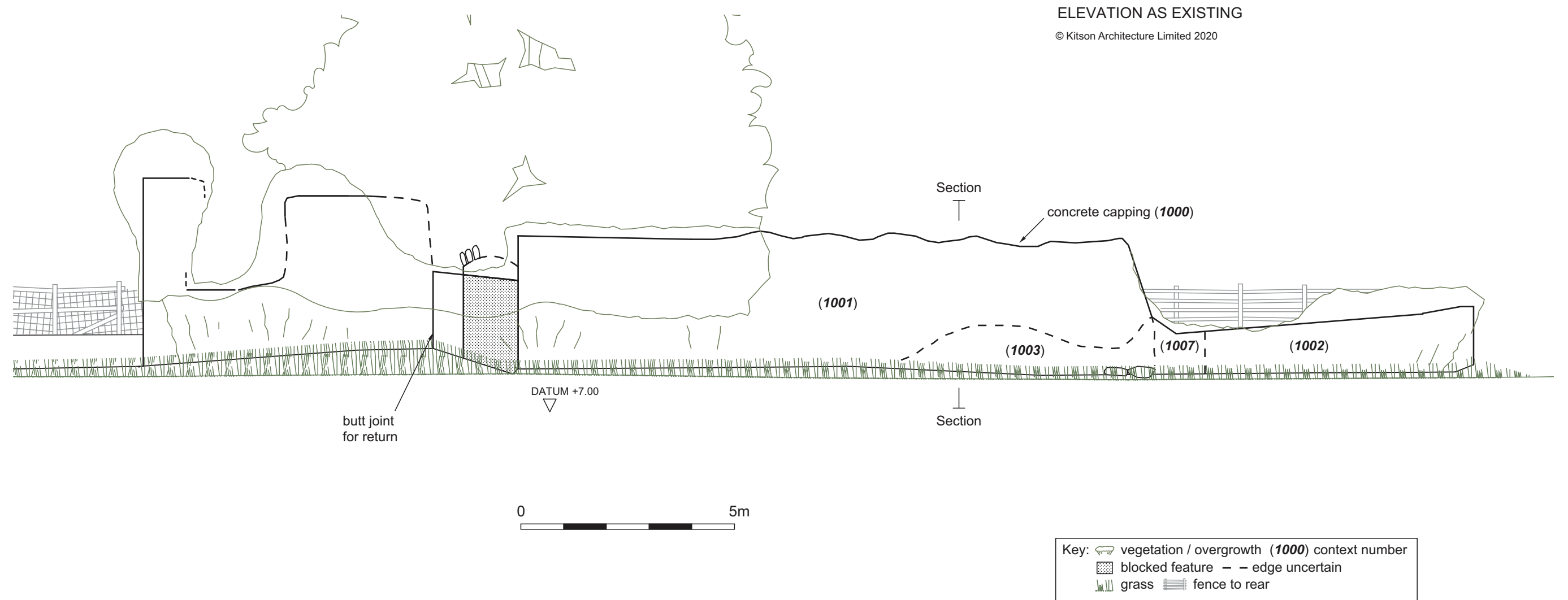


Figure 3: East elevation

5. Watching Brief

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The watching brief was carried out during the demolition of part of the wall; a section approximately 9m long. The demolition was carried out entirely by hand using crow bars and hammers and comprised the removal of the eastern face of the wall and almost total demolition of the lower northern section.

5.2 Results

5.2.1 the removal of the ivy initially revealed the form of the parapet and that it and the wall-walk were capped with concrete (**1000**). Demolition revealed that majority of the main part of the wall (**1001**) was of a single build with small angular pieces of limestone set in large quantities of coarse lime-mortar, while the lower section at the north end (**1002**) had some concrete bonding and also incorporated pieces of roofing slate, concrete and dressed red sandstone (Plate 21). As demolition progressed it became apparent that a large section at the bottom of wall **1001**, up to five courses high and over 2.2m long north/south, had been rebuilt as it contained no lime mortar, but some concrete had been used and pieces of concrete slab, roof slate, brick, and dressed red sandstone were incorporated into it (**1003**) (Plate 22). It also projected slightly from the line of the wall above. It was not clear how far this section continued through the wall's thickness, but to the west there was another very loose section within the wall core made up of loose stone in a soft dark brown matrix (**1005**) forming an approximately semi-circular section through the wall, apparently filling a deliberate cut [**1006**] approximately 0.8m wide north/south (Plate 23). Between the main part of the wall (**1001**) and the lower north end (**1002**) there was a smaller patch of lime-rich fabric, approximately 1m wide, that seemed to belong to neither wall (**1007**) (Plate 24). At the base of the whole wall the foundations, which typically comprised larger boulders, especially at the lower north end, were sat on a mid-orangey brown firm sandy clay with 10% angular pebbles, which evidently represents the natural geology (**1004**) (Plate 25).



Plate 21 (left): The junction of the main wall (**1001**) and lower northern section (**1002**) showing the different fabrics

Plate 22 (right): The rebuilt section at the base of the wall (**1003**) revealed during demolition, viewed from the east



Plate 23 (left): The semi-circular section cut through the lower part of the main wall [1006] filled with (1005), viewed from the east

Plate 24 (right): The lime-rich section (1007) between 1001 and 1002, viewed from the east



Plate 25: The natural (1004) exposed beneath 1001, viewed from the north-east

5.3 Finds

5.3.1 **Introduction:** a total of 17 finds were recovered during the watching brief. These are discussed by type below and a complete list of all the finds is provided in *Appendix 4*.

5.3.2 **Stone:** a fragment of green roofing slate with a peg hold and a fragment of dressed red sandstone, probably part of a mullion window, were recovered from the fabric of the northern section of the wall (1002). These had evidently been reused as building material within the fabric of the wall but, in the case of the piece of sandstone, are potentially medieval in date. It is likely they originated from elsewhere at Low Levens Farm site. A further fragment of grey roofing slate was also recovered from context 1005, which was probably deposited as part of a general backfill.

5.3.3 **Pottery:** two fragments of pottery were recovered incorporated into the fabric of wall 1002: a white earthenware cup handle of probable 19th to early 20th century date and part of the base of a tin-

glazed earthenware vessel of late 17th or early 18th century date. Again, these were probably incorporated accidentally into the wall during building. Another fragment of pottery, part of a brown-glazed red earthenware bung hole rim of broadly post-medieval date, was also recovered from **1005**, and was presumably included as part of this backfill deposit.

5.3.4 **CBM**: a single fragment of a horseshoe-shaped drainage tile was recovered from the area of rebuilding (**1003**). These represent the earliest phase in which ceramic tiles were used for drainage, typically in the improvement of agricultural land, during the first half of the 19th century, specifically from about the 1820s to the 1850s (Davis and Davis 2013). This was also evidently incorporated as part of other building material.

5.3.5 **Glass**: two fragments of flat window glass and the mouth from a bottle were recovered from the structure of the northern extension to the wall (**1002**), all of which are likely to be 19th to early 20th century and probably also represent accidental inclusions into the fabric of the wall. The inclusion of glass into walls and below floors was, however, sometimes done deliberately as a means of discouraging rodents. A single fragment from a cylindrical bottle was also recovered from deposit **1005**, also of 19th to early 20th century date and presumably included as part of this backfill deposit.

5.3.6 **Plastic**: two plastic objects, a fragment of clear packaging and a small red tiddlywink, were recovered from the northern section of the wall (**1002**), again presumably incorporated with the building material or possibly dragged in by burrowing animals for bedding in the former case. They do, however, potentially demonstrate that this part of the wall was rebuilt several times including quite recently. Two pieces of the same plastic bag were also recovered from the rebuilt section of the wall (**1003**), undoubtedly brought in by burrowing rodents for bedding, but potentially demonstrating that this section was also rebuilt quite recently.

6. Discussion

6.1 Results

6.1.1 While the building recording and watching brief were not able to provide any direct evidence regarding the origins of the wall, they were able to demonstrate, through the manner in which it had been constructed, how it related to the nearby structures. It was also apparent that several phases of later alteration had been carried out to the wall. It was therefore possible to determine three phases of development.

6.1.2 **Phase 1 – late medieval:** the various studies of the site have typically suggested that the curtain wall to the south is one of the earliest parts of the structure and probably late medieval in date, perhaps as early as the 14th century, and corresponding with the construction of the original pele tower. However, it seems apparent from the watching brief and recording that it actually adjoined the buildings to the north and south, although this does not necessarily mean it was not also broadly contemporary with them. It seems more likely that the site developed from the pele tower to the west and grew to the east by the 15th or even 16th century to finally form an enclosed courtyard. No specific dating evidence was revealed during the watching brief for the wall (**1001**), but the manner in which it related to the other structures and its position, facing directly towards the River Kent, suggests that it was not entirely defensive, and may have been partly for show. It is difficult to see how it could have been defensive so close to the river and with the main entrance to the north. It is likely that deposit **1007** perhaps represents the remains of the end of the gatehouse range, that had been demolished sometime after Machell sketched it in 1692.

6.1.3 **Phase 2 – post-medieval:** Machell's sketch probably shows the building at its peak at the end of the 17th century and it is apparent from the map evidence that it quickly degraded in the following century and a half, during which time it was reduced to a farmhouse. The north and south wings became ruinous, and the north wing was eventually totally demolished. How much of this was deliberate and how much was through gradual decay is not clear, but it appears that the former curtain wall (**1001**) was purposefully undermined from the west side [**1006**], maybe in an attempt to demolish it, although it is conceivable that it resulted from work carried out against the wall such as to create a well. The finds recovered from the fill are not closely dateable (**1005**) but are suggestive of a late post-medieval date, most likely 19th century.

6.1.4 **Phase 3 – modern:** perhaps as a result of the excavation of **1006** a section of wall **1001**, low on the east face, was rebuilt (**1003**). Finds recovered from this and the use of concrete in the fill suggest a relatively modern, 20th century date. The section of the wall to the north (**1002**) was also rebuilt, probably several times, with finds of various dates recovered from it. In addition, the top of the main wall **1001** and wall walk were capped with concrete (**1000**). It is conceivable that all of this activity ultimately contributed to the top part of wall **1001** leaning out to the east.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 The curtain wall at Low Levens Farm remains part of the curtilage of a substantial Grade II* Listed Building making up Low Levens Farm, and so is automatically of regional significance. The wall is, however, perhaps not as old or as defensive as has been previously suggested. The earlier report (NP Archaeology 2012) discussed the idea that the wall, with its wall walk, had been added as a 'pleasure walk' intended to provide views across to Levens Hall and so was quite late in date and not defensive at all. The evidence from the building recording and watching brief certainly indicates that it was relatively late, and its position, facing directly onto the River Kent, would hardly be suitable for defence. It was certainly constructed prior to Machell's visit in 1692, in which case it would be relatively early in terms of something added purely for the appreciation of the picturesque.

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Appendix 1: Project Design

Archaeological Building Recording and Watching Brief Cover Sheet and Project Design

The Site	
Site Name	Low Levens Farm, Levens, Kendal
County	Cumbria
NGR	348841 485103
Listing Status, Level, and number	Grade II*
Brief description of building/buildings to be recorded	Part of boundary wall running north-east/south-west from south-east corner of building and alongside road

Client	
Client Name	Dallam Tower Estates
Client's architect	Wendy Sockett, WS Planning
'As existing' drawings available?	Yes

Planning	
Pre-planning?	No
Planning Application No.	SL/2021/0007 and SL/2021/0013
Plans (e.g. conversion, extension, demolition)	Demolition and rebuilding of existing boundary wall
Local Planning Authority	South Lakeland District Council
Planning Archaeologist	Libby Mee, Conservation Officer, South Lakeland District Council/Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer, Cumbria County Council
Level of Building Recording required	Photographic part of Level 2/3 (as defined by Historic England) and other parts as appropriate
Groundworks subject to watching brief	Rebuilding of wall

Archiving	
Relevant Record Office(s)/Archive Centre(s)	Kendal
Relevant HER	Cumbria
Relevant museum	Kendal



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Cover Sheet

1.1.1 All the details specific to this project are set out on the cover sheet of this project design. The project design itself covers all elements that are involved in an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 Greenlane Archaeology

1.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology is a private limited company based in Ulverston, Cumbria, and was established in 2005 (Company No. 05580819). Its directors, Jo Dawson and Daniel Elsworth, have worked continuously in commercial archaeology since 2000 and 1999 respectively, principally in the north of England and Scotland. Greenlane Archaeology is committed to a high standard of work, and abides by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct. The watching brief will be carried out according to the Standards and Guidance of the CIfA (CIfA 2014a).

1.3 Staff

1.3.1 **Dan Elsworth (MA (Hons), ACIfA)** graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1998 with an honours degree in Archaeology, and began working for the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit, which became Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) in 2001. Daniel ultimately became a project officer, and for over six and a half years worked on excavations and surveys, building investigations, desk-based assessments, and conservation and management plans. These have principally taken place in the North West, and Daniel has a particular interest in the archaeology of the area. He has managed many recent projects in Cumbria and Lancashire including several archaeological building recordings and watching briefs. He is very experienced at building recording, having carried out numerous such projects, mainly in Cumbria and Lancashire.

1.3.2 **Tom Mace (BA (Hons), MA, MIFA)** has extensive experience of working on a variety of archaeological projects, especially watching briefs, but also excavations, evaluations, and building recordings, as well as report writing and illustration production. He joined Greenlane Archaeology in 2008 having worked for several previous companies including Archaeological Solutions and Oxford Archaeology North. He currently works on a broad range of projects and is also responsible for the production of all illustrations for reports and publications as well as some post-excavation assessments. He is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

1.3.3 **Jo Dawson (MA (Hons), ACIfA)** graduated from University of Glasgow in 2000 with a joint honours degree in Archaeology and Mathematics, and since then has worked continuously in commercial archaeology. Her professional career started at Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD), following which she worked for Headland Archaeology, in Edinburgh, and then Oxford Archaeology North, in Lancaster. During this time she has been involved in a range of different archaeological projects. She has extensive experience of both planning and pre-planning projects, and has undertaken assessments of all sizes. Since establishing Greenlane Archaeology in 2005 she has managed numerous projects in south Cumbria, including desk-based assessments and evaluations. She currently mainly carries out quality control of reports and post-excavation assessments. She is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

1.3.4 **Specialists:** Greenlane Archaeology have a range of outside specialists who are regularly engaged for finds and environmental work. Engagement is dependent upon availability, but specialists typically engaged are as follows:

Specialism	Specialist
Animal bone	Naomi Sewpaul
Ceramic building material, medieval and Roman	Phil Mills
Conservation	York Archaeological Trust
Clay tobacco pipe	Peter Davey (or Tom Mace in house for smaller assemblages)
Flots	Headland Archaeology, Edinburgh
Human bone	Malin Holst
Industrial residue	Gerry McDonnell
Medieval pottery	Chris Cumberpatch for assemblages from the North East of England
Miscellaneous find types, for example Roman glass and medieval and earlier metalwork	Chris Howard-Davis
Prehistoric pottery	Blaise Vyner
Radiocarbon dates	Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre
Roman pottery	Ruth Leary
Samian	Gwladys Monteil
X-ray of metal finds	York Archaeological Trust

2. Objectives

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 Where an archaeological desk-based assessment has not already been carried out in a previous phase of work, the objective will be to examine early maps of the site and any other relevant primary and secondary sources in order to better understand its dating and development, and set it in its historic context.

2.2 Watching Brief

2.2.1 To carry out an archaeological watching brief on the relevant areas of groundworks, in order to identify any and record surviving any archaeological remains that are revealed.

2.3 Report

2.3.1 To produce a report detailing the results of the watching brief.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 Produce a full archive of the results of the project.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 Where an archaeological desk-based assessment has not already been carried out in a previous phase of work, an examination of various sources, particularly early maps and plans relating to the site, will be carried out, including other relevant primary and secondary sources. The sources that will be used as part of the desk-based assessment will include:

- **Record Office/Archive Centre:** the majority of original and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the relevant Record Office(s) or Archive Centre(s), as specified in the cover sheet of this project design. Of principal importance are early maps of the site. These will be examined in order to establish the development of the site, date of any structures present within it, and details of land use, in order to set the site in its historical, archaeological, and regional context. In addition, any details of the site's owners and occupiers will be acquired where available;
- **Online Resources:** where available, mapping such as Ordnance Survey maps and tithe maps will be consulted online;
- **Greenlane Archaeology:** Greenlane Archaeology's office library includes maps, local histories, and unpublished primary and secondary sources. These will be consulted where relevant, in order to provide information about the history and archaeology of the site and the general area.

3.2 Watching Brief

3.2.1 The relevant area of groundworks will be monitored, with one archaeologist on site. If there are several areas being excavated concurrently it may be considered necessary to have more than one archaeologist on site.

3.2.2 The watching brief methodology will be as follows:

- All excavation will be carried out under supervision by staff from Greenlane Archaeology;
- All deposits of archaeological significance will be examined by hand if possible in a stratigraphic manner, using shovels, mattocks, or trowels as appropriate for the scale;
- The position of any features, such as ditches, pits, or walls, will be recorded and where necessary these will be investigated in order to establish their full extent, date, and relationship to any other features. If possible, negative features such as ditches or pits will be examined by sample excavation, typically half of a pit or similar feature and approximately 10% of a linear feature;
- All recording of features will include detailed plans and sections at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 where practicable or sketches where it is not and photographs in both colour print and colour digital format. In addition, photographs will also be taken of the site before work begins and after completion;
- All deposits, drawings and photographs will be recorded on Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;

- All finds will be recovered during the watching brief for further assessment as far as is practically and safely possible. Should significant amounts of finds be encountered an appropriate sampling strategy will be devised;
- All faunal remains will also be recovered by hand during the watching brief as far as is practically and safely possible, but where it is considered likely that there is potential for the bones of fish or small mammals to be present appropriate volumes of samples will be taken for sieving;
- Deposits that are considered likely to have, for example, preserved environmental remains, industrial residues, and/or material suitable for scientific dating will be sampled. Bulk samples of between 20 and 60 litres in volume (or 100% of smaller features) where possible, depending on the size and potential of the deposit, will be collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (e.g. gullies, pits and ditches) and occupation deposits such as hearths and floors. An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of samples of suitable deposits by specialist sub-contractors, who will examine the potential for further analysis. All samples will be processed using methods appropriate to the preservation conditions and the remains present;
- Any articulated human remains discovered during the watching brief will be left *in situ*, and, if possible, covered. The client will be immediately informed as will the local coroner. Should it be considered necessary to remove the remains this will require a Home Office licence, under Section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857, which will be applied for should the need arise;
- Any objects defined as 'treasure' by the Treasure Act of 1996 (HMSO 1996) will be immediately reported to the local coroner and securely stored off-site, or covered and protected on site if immediate removal is not possible;
- Should any significant archaeological deposits be encountered during the watching brief these will immediately be brought to the attention of the Planning Archaeologist so that the need for further work can be confirmed. Any additional work will be carried out following discussion with the Planning Archaeologist and subject to a new project design, and the ensuing costs will be agreed with the client.

3.3 Report

3.3.1 The results of the watching brief will be compiled into a report, which will provide a summary and details of any sources consulted. It will include the following sections:

- A front cover including the appropriate national grid reference (NGR);
- A concise non-technical summary of results, including the date the project was undertaken and by whom;
- Acknowledgements;
- Project Background;
- Methodology, including a description of the work undertaken;
- Results of the watching brief, including finds and samples;;
- Discussion of the results including phasing information;
- Bibliography;
- Illustrations at appropriate scales including:
 - a site location plan related to the national grid;
 - a plan showing the location and extent of the area subject to archaeological watching brief;
 - plans and sections of any features discovered during the watching brief;
 - photographs of any features encountered during the watching brief;
 - copies of selected historic maps and plans of the site relevant to the understanding of its development.

3.4 Archive

3.4.1 The archive, comprising the drawn, written, and photographic record of any deposits of archaeological interest and/or working shots identified during the watching brief, formed during the project, will be stored by Greenlane Archaeology until it is completed. Upon completion it will be deposited with the relevant Record Office or Archive Centre, as detailed on the cover sheet of this project design, together with a copy of the report. The archive will be compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA (ClfA 2014b). In addition, details will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public.

3.4.2 A copy of the report will be provided to the client and a copy will be provided for the relevant Historic Environment Record, as detailed on the cover sheet of this project design.

4. Work timetable

4.1 Greenlane Archaeology will be available to commence the project on the date specified on the Order Form, or at another date convenient to the client. It is envisaged that the elements of the project will be carried out in the following order:

- **Task 1:** rapid desk-based assessment (where this has not already been carried out as a previous phase of archaeological work);
- **Task 2:** archaeological watching brief;
- **Task 3:** production of draft report including illustrations;
- **Task 4:** feedback on draft report, editing and production of final report;
- **Task 5:** finalisation and deposition of archive.

5. Other matters

5.1 Access and clearance

5.1.1 Access to the site will be organised through co-ordination with the client and/or their agent(s). It is assumed that the watching brief will be able to be undertaken without obstruction. Greenlane Archaeology reserves the right to increase the price if problems with access result in delays to the work.

5.2 Health and Safety

5.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology carries out risk assessments for all of its projects and abides by its internal health and safety policy and relevant legislation. Health and safety is always the foremost consideration in any decision-making process.

5.3 Insurance

5.3.1 Greenlane Archaeology has professional indemnity insurance to the value of **£1,000,000**. Details of this can be supplied if requested.

5.4 Environmental and Ethical Policy

5.4.1 Greenlane Archaeology has a strong commitment to environmentally and ethically sound working practices. Its office is supplied with 100% renewable energy by Good Energy, and uses ethical telephone and internet services supplied by the Phone Co-op. In addition, the company uses the services of The Co-operative Bank for ethical banking, Naturesave for environmentally-conscious insurance, and utilises public transport wherever possible. Greenlane Archaeology is also committed to using local businesses for services and materials, thus benefiting the local economy, reducing unnecessary transportation, and improving the sustainability of small and rural businesses.

6. Bibliography

ClfA, 2014a *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, Reading

ClfA, 2014b *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*, Reading

Appendix 2: Listed building details for Nether Levens Farmhouse

From: Historic England 2021

Statutory Address: NETHER LEVENS FARMHOUSE AND ATTACHED STORE TO NORTH

County: Cumbria

District: South Lakeland (District Authority)

Parish: Levens

National Grid Reference: SD 48827 85119

Details:

SD 48 NE LEVENS

1/18 Nether Levens Farmhouse and 21.11.52. attached store to North (Formerly listed as Nether or Lower Levens with Dovecote and outbuildings)

G.V. II*

Farmhouse with attached store to North, originally part of a larger complex now ruined. Initials and date T & AP 1594 on panel in gable over entrance. Exact building chronology difficult to establish: South probably early C16, addition of wing and crosswing to North probably mid and late C16 respectively; all with later alterations. Stone rubble walls with red and yellow sandstone dressings; graduated greenslate roof with stone ridges and 5 chimneys, 4 with massive, tall round shafts on square bases. Irregular plan. 2 storeys. Scattered fenestration of various dates from C16 onwards, mostly mullion-and-transom under hoodmoulds. Interior has many original features including exposed beams, staircase with turned balusters, fireplaces, garde-robe and panelled room to upper floor. For details see R.C.H.M. pp 155-156 which also includes a floor plan although the dating shown on it may not be accurate.

Appendix 3: Summary Context List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1000	Structure	Layer of gravelly concrete <0.05m thick	Capping to top of wall and wall walk
1001	Structure	Wall up to 1.5m thick and over 3m tall (although ground level up to 1m taller on west side), with 1m wide wall walk along west side. Constructed from rough angular limestone, mostly quite small blocks, but larger at base, in thick gritty lime mortar, perhaps making up as much as 30% of the fabric	Curtain wall
1002	Structure	Wall to north of 1001 , essentially drystone build with some modern cement and larger and more rounded stones. Slightly over 1m tall and revetted into the slope to the west	Boundary wall
1003	Structure	Rebuilt section of wall 1001 , very loose without mortar but with some concrete and inclusions such as concrete slab, brick, and roofing slate and in a loose dark brown silt matrix. 2.2m long and 0.8m tall	Rebuilt section of wall
1004	Deposit	Mid orangey-brown sandy clay, 10% angular pebbles	Natural geology
1005	Deposit	Loose dark greyish brown silt containing 75% angular cobbles	Backfill of cut through wall [1006]
1006	Cut	Linear in plan and semi-circular in profile, 0.8m wide and at least 0.6m tall, cut through west side of 1001 and into 1004	Attempted demolition of wall 1001 ?
1007	Structure?	Section of masonry containing large amounts of lime mortar, similar to 1001 , approximately 1m wide north/south. Evidently not part of 1001	Remains of building in north range?

Appendix 4: Summary Finds List

Context	Type	Qty	Description	Date range
1002	Stone	2	1 x small green roof slate with peg hole, 1 x dressed red sandstone, two finished dressed sides, the rest damaged, some lime mortar adhering, probably part of mullion window	Late medieval/early post-medieval?
1002	Glass	2	Very light turquoise flat pane fragments	19 th – 20 th century
1002	Glass	1	Light turquoise mouth from glass/cork stoppered bottle	19 th – early 20 th century
1002	Glass	1	Colourless bottle base from multipart mould with semi-legible punt mark 'FXX [triangle]'?	Early 20 th century
1002	Pottery	1	Very light blue tin-glazed earthenware hollowware vessel base with foot rim	Late 17 th - early 18 th century
1002	Pottery	1	White earthenware cup handle	19 th – early 20 th century
1002	Plastic	2	1x Fragmented piece of clear plastic packaging or bag, 1 x small red tiddlywink	Late 20 th century
1003	Plastic	2	Two parts of a Co-Op branded plastic bag labelled 'Cotton Wool with other fibres Soft and highly absorbent for Nursery, Cosmetic, Surgical and General Hous[...][...]ociety Ltd,[...]... New C[...]. Manchester 4.' Chewed in half, presumably by rodent	Late 20 th century
1003	CBM	1	Broken part of a horseshoe-shaped red earthenware drainage tile	Early 19 th century (Davis and Davis 2013)
1005	Stone	1	Broken part of greyish green roof slate with lime mortar adhering to one side	Post-medieval?
1005	Pottery	1	Brown-glazed red earthenware bung hole rim (?)	Late 17 th – early 20 th century
1005	Animal bone	1	Fragmented medium-sized mammal fragment, not enough surviving to identify species without specialist assessment	Not closely dateable
1005	Glass	1	Green cylindrical bottle body fragment	19 th – early 20 th century