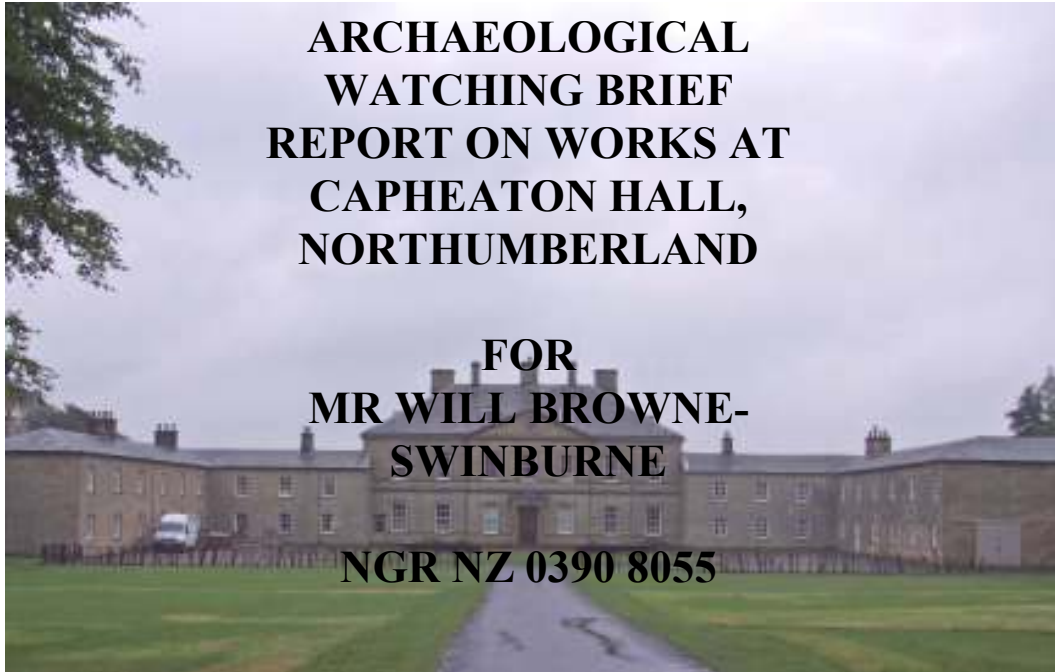

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/701/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Mr Will Browne-Swinburne to undertake an archaeological watching brief on repairs and alterations during the redevelopment of the eastern wing of Capheaton Hall, Northumberland (NGR NZ 0390 8055).

Capheaton Hall is a Grade I Listed Building, built in the Baroque style by Robert Trollope for Sir John Swinburne in 1668. The wings were later additions, dating to the mid 18th century. Due to the high sensitivity of the site, internal works with the potential to reveal the original building fabric, were undertaken under a watching brief condition.

The watching brief predominantly involved the monitoring of the removal of two internal walls and insertion of three holes within the enlarged hall space, and developments relating to the fireplace in the kitchen. These works were undertaken in two phases, on 30th May and 17th June 2008, and all developments occurred on the ground floor.

The archaeological monitoring of the structural alterations during developments within the eastern wing of Capheaton Hall allowed a unique opportunity to test the archaeological and architectural potential of newly exposed areas of the building's structure. No unexpected features were exposed during the recording, although developments relating to the fireplace in the kitchen did indicate alterations since its initial construction, though whether to meet changing fashion, practical need, or when these alterations occurred was not ascertainable.

As the redevelopment of the building requires no further structural re-working, further monitoring is not required during this scheme. This watching brief has provided a rare opportunity to test the architectural and archaeological potential of the building, and although no unexpected features were encountered, there remains the potential for pockets of interest to survive within the structure, and as a result, it is likely that similar works in buildings of this type will require a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to advice from the Northumberland County Council Specialist Conservation Team.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to offer thanks to Smiths Gore for commissioning the project on behalf of the client, Mr Will Browne-Swinburne, and for all assistance throughout the work.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Northumberland County Council Specialist Conservation Team. In addition, further thanks are extended to all staff on-site, for their help during this project.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report was written by and the drawings were produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Martin Railton, Project Manager, of NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Martin Railton.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Listed Building consent has been granted for a planning application, submitted to Castle Morpeth Borough Council for repairs and alterations within the eastern wing of Capheaton Hall, Northumberland (NGR NZ 0390 8055) (Figure 1). A condition of the consent was for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken on developments, in accordance with a Castle Morpeth Borough Council Brief.
- 1.1.2 Capheaton Hall is a Grade I Listed Building, built in the Baroque style by Robert Trollope for Sir John Swinburne in 1668. The wings were later additions, dating to the mid 18th century. Due to the high sensitivity of the site, internal works with the potential to reveal the original building fabric, were undertaken under a watching brief condition.
- 1.1.3 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were commissioned by the client to undertake these works, consistent with the specification provided by a Castle Morpeth Borough Council and with the NPAL project design, and to IFA guidelines (2002) and generally accepted best practice. This report outlines the monitoring works undertaken on-site, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 A project design was submitted by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd outlining the works due to be undertaken, and the methodology to be used (Railton 2008). This was approved by Castle Morpeth Borough Council. This was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2002), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 THE WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.2.1 The archaeological monitoring and supervision of groundworks associated with the development commenced on Friday 30th May 2008. The works involved a structured watching brief to observe, record and excavate any archaeological and architectural features revealed by the works. The results of the monitoring are included within this report. A full written, drawn and photographic record of all features of interest was taken, and has been compiled within an archive.

2.3 THE ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage Guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository, with copies of the report available at the County Historic Environment Record at Morpeth, Northumberland, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, CHN-A, CP 701/08.
- 2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION

- 3.1.1 Capheaton Hall is located to the east of the hamlet of Capheaton, west of the A696 between Newcastle and Jedburgh, to the north-west of Belsay in Northumberland (NZ 0390 8055; Figure 1).

3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 3.2.1 This historical background is only a summary of the known context of the site. It is not within the remit of this project to provide a detailed analysis of the historical context of the site.
- 3.2.2 The site of Capheaton Hall lies close to the site of an earlier castle, first mentioned in 1415, and still standing in 1538. The castle's defences included a moat and a drawbridge.
- 3.2.3 Capheaton Hall was constructed in 1668 in Baroque style, by Robert Trollope for Sir John Swinburne. This was a style that was new to this region in the 17th century and reflected new architectural ideas which had been common in southern England two decades earlier. Pevsner (2001) has described it as 'one of the most interesting houses of its date and character in England'.



Plate 1: South-facing elevation of Capheaton Hall, from south-east (17th century part)

- 3.2.4 Much of the original 17th century detail survives (Plate 1), although the north side of the building has since been altered, and the two wings are mid 18th century additions. The watching brief monitored works undertaken within the eastern wing (Plate 2).



Plate 2: North-facing elevation of Capheaton Hall (eastern wing shown on left)

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The watching brief monitoring was undertaken in two key phases. The first was on Friday 30th May 2008. This was primarily to monitor the demolition of two internal walls within the eastern wing to provide a large hall (Figure 2). It also involved the archaeological recording of some exposed features, revealed during unmonitored work within the building, and this included the Northern Hall wall, a fireplace and windows exposed in the present drawing room, soon to be kitchen, and a small hole which was inserted in the western wall of 'gun room' under archaeological monitoring (Figure 2).
- 4.1.2 The second phase was undertaken on 17th June 2008. The aim of Phase II was to monitor and record the insertion of two holes in the Hall, and to monitor the removal of the wall above the fireplace in the kitchen, to ascertain whether any architectural features survived in the areas revealed by this work (Figure 3). This formed the final stage of archaeological monitoring of the scheme, as no further works within Capheaton Hall are planned to remove any structures or uncover any more of the structure

4.2 PHASE I

- 4.2.1 Several features, revealed during unmonitored initial developments within the eastern wing of Capheaton Hall, were recorded. This included a fireplace, which was exposed prior to later relocation, revealing some of the brickwork and fabric of the western wall within the present drawing room (Plate 3). Not much of the brickwork either side of the fireplace was exposed, but the height of the lintel, as well as the appearance of modern stretcher bricking between it and the present fireplace space, suggests a previously larger fireplace than was revealed at present.



Plate 3: Fireplace in western wall of present drawing room, facing west

- 4.2.2 A blocked north-facing window within the northern wall of the drawing room had also been revealed, prior to reinstatement (Plate 4). This highlighted the difference between the blocking material of the window, which was lumps of sandstone with a pale cream mortar, and the fabric of the wall, revealed by a small exposed part of the wall to the west, which was brickwork.



Plate 4: Blocked window in north wall of present drawing room, facing north

- 4.2.3 Also noted during the archaeological monitoring was a large part of the northern wall of the present sitting room, prior to the relocation of the fireplace once the internal walls have been removed (Plate 5). The fireplace, similar to that revealed in the drawing room, must once have been larger, indicated by the height of the lintel and the modern bricking below it. The bricks, revealed once the plasterboard had been removed, were of a pale pinkish hue with cream coloured mortar. They were set in English Garden Wall bond one and five. At the western edge of the elevation, sandstone blocks, seen on the outer elevations of the building, were revealed, indicating that this internal wall was part of the original plan of the building.



Plate 5: Northern wall of present sitting room, facing north

- 4.2.4 Developments within the eastern wing, monitored during Phase I of the watching brief condition, included the insertion of a hole, 0.2m by 0.2m, 2m above the floor level, in the west wall of the small room to the north of the lobby, due to be the doorway between a gentlemen's toilet and a gun room (Figure 2). This was for a new lintel to be put in for the new doorway relating to the new breezeblock wall being created to form these two rooms. The creation of this hole required the exposure of a section of the wall fabric, 0.55m wide by 0.38m high (Plate 6). It revealed a small section of haphazard brickwork and some small fragments.



Plate 6: Hole inserted in west wall of small room north of the lobby

- 4.2.5 The main component of the monitoring involved the observation of the demolition of two internal walls, dividing the present sitting room from the present hall, to create a large hall space. The walls themselves are thought to have been constructed in 1965 by the father of the present owner, but their demolition had the potential to reveal architectural features, particularly where the walls meet the adjoining earlier walls (Plate 7).



Plate 7: Wall 1 (foreground) and Wall 2 (adjoining, centre) prior to demolition

- 4.2.6 Walls 1 and 2 formed an L-Shaped dividing wall, creating a sitting room within the original larger hall room, due to be reinstated. The walls were removed by hand, using hand drills and mallets. They consisted of modern stretcher bricking, 0.22m in length, 0.075m in height and 0.11m in depth, each with a frog, inscribed 'Wylam'. No features were revealed within the walls themselves, although a 0.11m width of the west elevation of the main wall was revealed where it once met Wall 1 (Plate 8). A timber beam was observed at the top of this narrow area.



Plate 8: Section of western hall wall revealed after demolition of Wall 1

- 4.2.7 Similarly, after the removal of Wall 2, a strip of wall was revealed to the height of the room, and a width of 0.11m. This revealed a wall-structure made of brick (Plate 9). No discernable architectural features were observed.



Plate 9: Section of northern hall wall revealed after demolition of Wall 2

4.3 PHASE II

- 4.3.1 Phase II of the watching brief involved the monitoring of the insertion of two holes within the walls of the newly created hall space, previously the hall and sitting room, and the observation and recording of the creation of an alcove in the former fireplace in the kitchen. One hole was created in the western wall, where the former internal wall 1 met the external wall (Figure 3). The hole was 2.25m above floor level, of a width of 0.5m and a height of 0.33m. It revealed some of the brick structure of the wall (Plate 10).



Plate 10: Hole inserted in western hall wall

- 4.3.2 A second hole was inserted on the opposite hall wall, to create a space for a supporting steel girder to run the width of the enlarged hall space and to support the ceiling above. This second hole, was again created 2.25m above floor level, directly

opposite the first (Figure 3). It measured 0.5m in width, and in height and exposed the sandstone rubble structure of the wall (Plate 11).



Plate 11: Hole inserted in eastern hall wall

4.3.3 The last archaeological monitoring that was undertaken during the works at Capheaton Hall was the removal of bricks above the existing fireplace in the kitchen (Figure 3). This constituted the removal of the facing bricks to a depth of 0.48m to create an alcove as a setting for a modern aga to be part of the new kitchen. The existing bricks of the fireplace below are to be retained, and the space created, to be filled up with more bricks, to create a brick-faced alcove for aesthetic purposes. The removal of the bricks exposed sandstone rubble behind the bricks, forming the structure of the wall. Some courses of brick were revealed behind the facing bricks, above the concrete lintel of the existing fireplace, further indicating, as seen during the Phase I recording that alterations had been made to this fireplace area since the initial construction of the wall (Plate 12).



Plate 12: Mixture of brick and rubble revealed above fireplace in kitchen

4.3.4 Further removal works revealed a slate-lined angled flue leading from the fireplace (Plates 13 and 14).



Plate 13: Slate-lined flue



Plate 14: Finished fireplace

- 4.3.5 The works formally ended on 17th June 2008. The only further work due to be completed on the fireplace is the removal of the concrete lintel, after which the newly created alcove will be brick-faced.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The archaeological monitoring of the structural alterations involved during developments within the eastern wing of Capheaton Hall allowed a unique opportunity to test the archaeological and architectural potential of newly exposed areas of the building's structure. No unexpected features were exposed during the recording, although developments relating to the fireplace in the kitchen did indicate alterations since its initial construction, though whether to meet changing fashion, practical need, or when these alterations occurred was not ascertainable.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.2.1 As the redevelopment of the building requires no further structural re-working, further monitoring is not required during this scheme. There remains the potential for pockets of interest to survive within the structure, and as a result, it is likely that similar works in buildings of this type will require a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to advice from the Northumberland County Council Specialist Conservation Team.

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APPENDIX 1: FIGURES
