
NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Client Report No. CP 762/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by HM Architecture/Gosforth Hall Hotel to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation on land at Gosforth Hall Hotel, Gosforth, prior to the construction of a detached accommodation block (NGR NY 0718 0366). The proposed development area is situated north of St Mary's Church (Grade I Listed Building), which has a 10th century cross in the churchyard (Scheduled Monument No.23781) and two hogback tombstones which were found when the church was extended. Excavations in the grounds of the Hall in 2005 demonstrated that archaeological features survive in the locality. The proposed development area is therefore considered to have a high archaeological potential for below ground remains associated with early medieval settlement and land use.

The desk-based assessment revealed that there is evidence in the vicinity of the village of Gosforth of human activity since the prehistoric period. The presence of Anglo-Saxon sculpture in the churchyard and the possible evidence for dwellings dating from the same period located within the grounds of Gosforth Hall, suggests that there may have been a church and settlement at Gosforth from the 9th century. There is also the possibility that an earlier house may have stood on the site of, or in the immediate vicinity of, the present Gosforth Hall Hotel.

The field evaluation, which consisted of two linear trial trenches, located one feature of archaeological significance. In Trench 1 a linear feature was observed orientated north-west to south east, and is probably the remains of a post- medieval boundary ditch. Ceramic field drains were noted in both trenches, with three being found in the eastern end of Trench 1. No finds were recovered from the evaluation trenches, although an environmental sample was taken from the linear feature in Trench 2, further analysis of which is possible if required.

No significant archaeological features were encountered during the excavation, suggesting that archaeological remains of a 9th century date may be better preserved in the areas to the west of the Hall. No further work is required in this area, although the potential for archaeological deposits within the locale remains high and should be considered during any future works.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank HM Architecture and Gosforth Hall Hotel for commissioning the project, and for their assistance throughout the project. North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to staff at Cumbria Record Offices in Carlisle and Whitehaven; Eleanor Kingston, Archaeology and Heritage Advisor, Lake District National Park Authority; and Stephen White, Local Studies Librarian, Carlisle Library.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Fiona Wooler. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Rachel Horn under the supervision of Helen Noakes. The report was written by Fiona Wooler and Helen Noakes. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager, NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Martin Railton, Project Manager, NPA Ltd.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In August 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by HM Architecture/Gosforth Hall Hotel to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation at Gosforth Hall Hotel, Gosforth, Cumbria (NY 0718 0366) (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The work followed a planning application submitted to the Lake District National Park Authority for the construction of a detached accommodation block on land adjacent to the hotel (Planning Application Ref: 7/2008/4039). Due to the proximity of the site to St Mary's Church and evidence from previous archaeological work in the grounds of the hotel in 2005, it was believed that archaeological remains may exist on the site although it was not known to what extent, or state of preservation, these remains would survive.
- 1.1.3 As a result of this potential, and in accordance with guidance given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Archaeology and Planning) and Policy E38 of the Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan, a programme of archaeological work was required in order to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains and their nature, extent and state of preservation (Kingston 2008). This was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to and approved by LDNPA (Town 2008). The initial stage of work consisted of a desk-based assessment and site visit, which informed the excavation of two linear trial trenches.
- 1.1.4 The desk-based assessment was undertaken in order provide relevant background information for the project. This involved consultation of a number of existing sources, in order to achieve an understanding regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site. The work was undertaken according to IFA guidelines (2002a) and generally accepted best practice.
- 1.1.5 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook the archaeological evaluation on the 9th September 2008. The work was undertaken according to IFA guidelines (2002b) and generally accepted best practice. This report outlines the results of the archaeological works.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 North Pennines Archaeology Limited produced a project design which set out the methodology for the desk-based assessment and field evaluation (Town 2008). The project design was approved by the Lake District National Park Authority prior to the commencement of the work.

2.2 THE DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 2.2.1 A desk-based assessment was undertaken in order provide relevant background information for the project. This involved consultation of a number of existing sources, in order to achieve an understanding regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site.
- 2.2.2 **Whitehaven Record Office and Local Studies Library (WRO):** the County Record Office in Whitehaven was consulted regarding documents specific to the site. Historic maps of the study area, including surveys, Tithe and Enclosure Maps, and early Ordnance Survey maps, were examined. Several secondary sources, in particular the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, were also consulted.
- 2.2.3 **Carlisle Record Office (CRO):** Carlisle Record Office also has some historic Ordnance Survey maps in their collection relating to the Gosforth area, as well as earlier maps such as Enclosure Maps and Awards.
- 2.2.4 **Lake District National Park Historic Environment Record (HER):** the Historic Environment Record database was consulted for information regarding known archaeological sites, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and previous archaeological investigations within a 1km radius of the proposed development area.
- 2.2.5 **North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL):** various publications and unpublished reports on excavations and other work in the region are held within the North Pennines Archaeology library and any available archives of the sites themselves were examined. This was in order to enhance and augment the data obtained from a search of the appropriate repositories.
- 2.2.6 **Carlisle Library Local Studies (CL):** within the local studies collection at Carlisle Library are historical photographs and engravings relating to villages and towns in the whole of Cumbria. The collection relating to Gosforth and the surrounding area was consulted.
- 2.2.7 The desk-based assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (IFA 2002a).

2.3 SITE VISIT

- 2.3.1 A site visit noting surface features of potential archaeological interest and areas of potential significant disturbance was undertaken. The principal aim of the survey was to identify previously unrecorded sites and gather information on the location, extent, character and condition of such sites. The visit also noted any hazards and constraints to undertaking archaeological work on the site, for example the siting of live services, public footpath, and Tree Preservation Orders.

2.4 FIELD EVALUATION

- 2.4.1 The field evaluation consisted of the excavation of two linear trial trenches, one measuring 7.5m in length by 1.6m in width and one measuring 5m in length by 1.6m in width, in order to provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals. The trenches were excavated by machine to either the top of archaeological deposits, or the natural substrate, whichever was observed first. The trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and all features were investigated and recorded according to the North Pennines Archaeology Ltd standard procedure as set out in the Excavation manual (Giecco 2003).

- 2.4.2 In summary, the main objectives of the evaluation were:
- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they are observed.
 - to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces.
 - to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
 - to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes;
 - to maintain a photographic record of all contexts in colour print and black and white print, and including a graduated metric scale.

- 2.4.3 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data, the process being adopted as set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

2.5 PROJECT ARCHIVE

- 2.5.1 A site archive has been prepared to the standard specification in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991) and *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2007). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository, and a copy of the report deposited with the Lake District National Park Authority at Kendal, Cumbria, where viewing will be available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, GHH-A, CP762/08.

- 2.5.2 North Pennines Archaeology and the Lake District national Park Authority 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. SITE LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

3.1 LOCATION

- 3.1.1 The village of Gosforth is located on the west coast of Cumbria, approximately five kilometres inland, and to the east of the main A595 trunk road. Gosforth is situated at an approximate height of 58m above mean sea level, although the ground level immediately to the north rises fairly steeply towards Ponsonby Fell. The nearest river to the settlement is the Bleng located to the east and which flows from the north heading south then turning east to join the River Irt. The village lies at the junction of several roads from surrounding settlements such as Santon Bridge, Nether Wasdale and Seascale (Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 Gosforth Hall Hotel is located on eastern fringe of the village, on the north side of the minor road which leads to Nether Wasdale, and to the north of St Mary's Church. The hotel is surrounded on its western and northern sides by modern housing at Denton Park and Denton Park Court, whilst the land to the east remains undeveloped.
- 3.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land located immediately to the east of Gosforth Hall Hotel (Figure 2). The total area of the current proposal affects some 0.04 hectares, which has more latterly been used as garden/waste ground.

3.2 GEOLOGY

- 3.2.1 The underlying geology of the site is Glacial Till (BGS, Sheet 37, Drift Edition, 1999) and St Bees Sandstone (BGS, Sheet 37, Solid Edition, 1999).

4. DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.2.1 The following historical background is mainly obtained from secondary sources and is intended only as an outline of the known history of the area. It is not within the remit of this project to provide a detailed analysis of the historical context of the site.

4.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 4.2.1 **Place-Name Evidence:** Gosforth is recorded as *Goseford*, *Gosforrd*, *Gosseford*, *Gouseford*, *Gowesford* as well as *Gosforth in Coupeland* from the 12th century onwards. Gosforth Gate is so named in 1660 and Gosforth Hall is so named in 1778. The word Gosforth is believed to derive from the Old English *gōsa-ford*, meaning ‘geese’s ford’. The final *-th* in the modern name is due to Scandinavian influence. In view of the strongly Scandinavian character of the district, shown in the decoration of the famous Gosforth Cross, the change from *ford* to *forth* probably occurred in local speech many generations before it is first recorded in documents (Armstrong *et al* 1971, 394). Old English was the language spoken by the Anglo-Saxons from the 6th to the 12th centuries (Lee 1998).
- 4.2.2 **Prehistoric (pre-AD43):** from the published and unpublished material consulted during the desk-based assessment, there was no reference for prehistoric activity within the village of Gosforth itself, however there is certainly evidence for occupation in and around Gosforth parish. Polished stone ‘axes’ dating to this period have been discovered at Hall Senna, to the south of Gosforth, Bolton Head Farm, and Bogholes near Sellafield. Whilst metal examples have been found at Bolton Wood in Gosforth where ‘a copper battleaxe’ was found around 1820 in the moss, and a bronze axe or palstave was discovered at Town End, Santon Bridge in 1855 (Parker 1926, 79). Settlement sites and burial cairns are known on higher ground at Stockdale Moor and Town Bank, both to the north of Gosforth, as well as on lower ground at the former Ethenside Tarn (also known as Gibb Tarn), which was drained by the tenant farmer at Middle Ehenside in 1869 to reveal several stone axes, wooden implements such as paddles, handles and clubs, and pottery fragments (*Ibid*, 96). In 1984, a field walking exercise on ploughed fields at Gibb Tarn revealed several flints typical of coastal Bronze Age industries, post-dating the nearby Neolithic settlement by hundreds of years (Cherry and Cherry 1987, 252).
- 4.2.3 Extensive fieldwork on prehistoric habitation sites in West Cumbria undertaken by J and P J Cherry has revealed evidence for prehistoric activity close to Gosforth at, amongst many other sites along the coast, Seascale, Sellafield and Braystones. Near Gosforth finds of polished stone axes are noted from Julian Holme, to the east of the village; at Infell, to the north, a group of small cairns were examined to reveal flints, a whetstone and two iron blade-like objects, and near Thornbank to the south of the village, a polished stone axe, flint flakes and a chisel-shaped implement are recorded (Cherry and Cherry 1984).

- 4.2.4 Pevsner refers to ‘Gretigate Stone Circle’, located $\frac{3}{4}$ mile west of Gosforth as a site where there were three stone circles and nine small cairns. The largest circle had a diameter of 104ft (Pevsner 2002, 130). These stone circles appear to have been located on the north side of the road between Gosforth and Fleming Hall, and are reported in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society in 1961. The three circles were examined and excavated by Stout, this work revealed that of the three circles, two contained central cairns, possibly dating to the Bronze Age (Stout 1961). Further to the west of the Gretigate sites, is Seascale Howe Farm Stone Circle (HER 1288), marked on modern OS mapping as ‘restored’ (Figure 1). This is the stone circle also referred to as ‘Greycroft’.
- 4.2.5 **Roman (c.AD43 – AD410):** as with the prehistoric period, there were no references in the sources consulted of settlement within Gosforth village itself during the Roman period. To the south of Gosforth, however, at Ravenglass, is a Roman fort (with the standing remains of the associated bath house) which may mark the southern end of a system of coastal defences, and at Muncaster there is a Roman industrial site (Shotter 1997, 35). As yet there does not appear to be any evidence for a Roman road between Ravenglass and the forts to the north, for example at Moresby. Parker does however refer to Egremont being ‘*situated where three Roman roads met, and was probably a station [fort]*’ (Parker 1902, 88).
- 4.2.6 **Early Medieval (c.AD410 – AD1066):** it has already been noted that the place-name Gosforth may have derived from the Old English, but there are several other place-names around Gosforth which derive from a later period. *Boonwood* means ‘wood given on request’ from the Old Norse *bon* meaning ‘plea’, and *Sowermyrr* located to the east of Gosforth may also derive from the Old Norse (a language spoken by the Norwegians, who colonised the north-west of England from the 9th to the 12th centuries) *saurr* meaning muddy or poor soil. *Bleng*, on the other hand, is of Celtic origin, i.e. the language spoke by the indigenous Britons of Cumbria, and has several meanings such as ‘end, edge, source of river, stream, highland’ (Lee 1998).
- 4.2.7 Standing in St Mary’s Churchyard is the 10th century Gosforth Cross, which is believed to be the largest piece of pre-Conquest sculpture in Britain (Plates 1 and 2). Edwards suggests that the Gosforth Cross is in its original position and on its original base, and it still displays its intricate carving despite over a thousand years of West Cumbrian weather (Edwards 1998, 71). The Gosforth Cross has been well-documented and imagery interpreted by Calverley (1883), Collingwood (1899) and Parker (1926). As well as the Gosforth Cross, there are references to there having been four crosses and at least two hogbacked tombs in the churchyard, one of the crosses was located ‘*at about 7 feet distant*’ from the Gosforth Cross. In 1789, this cross was deliberately cut down into a sundial, the head was preserved and a fragment of the shaft was found in 1894 (Parker 1926, 66). Parson and White, writing in 1829, refer to an ancient stone pillar surmounted by a cross located in the churchyard ‘*till it incurred the displeasure of a poor idiot who knocked it down with a stone*’. They do not mention if this refers to the Gosforth Cross, or another piece of sculpture (Parson and White 1829, 210). Bailey and Cramp include the following pieces of Anglo-Saxon sculpture at Gosforth in their Corpus (1988): ‘*Set into the wall at the east end of the north aisle is the lower part of a cross-head which was*

discovered in 1843 built in the north chancel doorway. A further cross-head is set in the wall at the east end of the north aisle, which was found in two separate fragments and first recorded in 1856. A possible piece of cross-shaft is built into the corner of the north aisle and clergy vestry. As well as the crosses, two hogbacks are located within St Mary's Church, known as the 'Warrior's Tomb' (Plates 3 and 4), which was discovered in 1896 embedded in the foundations of the north-west corner of the north wall of the nave, and the 'Saint's Tomb', found in the foundations of the east end of the north wall of the nave in 1897. Set within the wall of the north aisle is part of a slab or frieze, known as the 'Fishing Stone' (Plate 5). This piece of sculpture is claimed to have been in the churchyard since (at least) 1789, although Parker's sketch has the annotation 'found in Gosforth Churchyard 1882'. All of the pieces of Anglo-Saxon sculpture at Gosforth, which are recorded in the Corpus, are dated by Bailey and Cramp to the first half of the 10th century.

- 4.2.8 **Later Medieval (c.AD1066-AD1485):** St Mary's Church, although essentially of 1896-9 by Ferguson, contains elements of its original Norman fabric such as a reused Norman doorway with continuous roll moulding and re-set columns with figured capitals in the chancel arch, which is itself 14th century in date (Pevsner 2002, 128). The church was remodelled in 1789 when '*nearly all of the external marks of antiquity were destroyed*' (Whellan 1860, 391). A transept was added in 1856, but the nave, chancel, north aisle and vestries date to the late 19th century rebuilding (Salter 1998, 51). A guide to the church dating to 1965 suggest that there was some form of church building on the site at Gosforth by 700AD, constructed of clay and strengthened with wood and wattle work. The Norman church is said to have consisted of a nave and presbytery with north and south doorways to the nave. '*The north doorway was opened at baptisms to allow the evil spirits to depart and was often called "The Devils Doorway". In 1571 during the reign of Elizabeth I, the year that the 39 Articles of the Church of England were ratified, the parish registers were started. In 1654 during the Commonwealth the church was repaired and re-roofed in thatch*' (Ridgeway 1965, 3). The church guide continues: '*In 1789 there was a disastrous reconstruction of the church. The Church of Gosforth dedicated in honour of St Mary underwent a very extensive repair, by which nearly all its marks of antiquity were effaced. The materials used were inferior to the old, the chancel was shortened, windows enlarged, the ceiling raised and a west porch was added. One of the crosses was deliberately cut off four feet from the base to make a sundial*'. The first recorded vicar at Gosforth was Jurdan 'persona de Goseford' in c.1170 (*Ibid*, 4-5).
- 4.2.9 Calder Abbey, located to the north-west of Gosforth, was founded in 1134 and was initially occupied by 12 Savignian monks from Furness Abbey. By 1148 the monks had become Cistercian, and by 1180 a stone church was finished, although little remains of this early structure. The standing remains essentially date to the 13th century (Parker 1926, 107). Around 1536 the abbot of Calder Abbey '*yielded the abbey into the hands of the commissioners of Henry VIII*' and in 1538 Henry VIII gave the abbey to Thomas Leigh who promptly pulled off the roof, sold the lead and reduced the church to a ruin (*Ibid*, 116).
- 4.2.10 Early shielings, i.e. small huts originally used in summer by those living where their stock grazed but later applied to isolated cottages, are recorded at 'Seascales', (*skali*

being an Old Norse word for huts) which were already in permanent occupation by 1165. In the fells to the east of Gosforth, shielings were permanently occupied by 1365 (Ramm *et al* 1970, 3). On the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1860, the area on the east bank of the River Bleng, to the north-east of Gosforth is annotated 'Scale Field' and 'Scales', whilst modern mapping shows the 'Scale Beck' flowing into the Bleng. The ruins of three huts lie within fields immediately to the north-east of Between Guards Farm, along with the remains of an earlier field system associated with the ruined farm of 'Scale' (*Ibid*, 36).

- 4.2.11 The earliest known owners of the manor of Gosforth were a family who adopted the name '*de Gosford*', a family which became extinct early in the 14th century. According to Jefferson, Gosforth Hall formerly belonged to the *Gosforths* or *Gosfords* (Jefferson 1840, 297). Given that the family became extinct in the 14th century this may imply an earlier property on the site than the present structure, however it is possible that Jefferson was referring to descendants of that family.
- 4.2.12 In 1901 excavations took place on the site of the Holy Well at Gosforth, located to the north of Gosforth Hall. At this date the owner of the hall and land on which the well was located was Mr J S Ainsworth, whilst the tenant was Mr J Hartley. The fieldwork revealed a rectangular building measuring approximately 33ft in length by 19ft in width, with walls measuring c.2.5ft thick (although these were the foundation courses which were all that remained of the building). In the south side there was a doorway revealed, while excavation within the interior unearthed fragments of stone roofing tiles with holes for nails. The floor surface retained some flagstones, although a majority of the floor was of clay, within which the Holy Well was located (Plate 6). In 1884, a Miss Senhouse of Gosforth was told that '*John Shepherd, a former tenant of Gosforth Hall, used to say that at certain feast times wine would be poured into the stream, which the villagers would look out for and drink*'. Analysis of the water from the spring revealed that the water did not contain enough salt or sulphate of lime to constitute mineral water; therefore it is possible that the spring was chosen for its freshness and purity, and this may have distinguished it from the many springs in the neighbourhood, by the name of 'Holy Well' (Collingwood 1902).
- 4.2.13 ***Post-Medieval (c.AD1485–1900):*** there are believed to have been at least four mills in Gosforth, three of which lay along the Bleng. The High Mill (now Mill House), the Walk Mill (used for cloth) and the Row Mill all used a single mill-race nearly a mile long. The fourth mill was in the wood above Parknook. In 1289, Annabel Senhouse gave a licence for a mill connected with an agreement over land at Bridge Petton, and in a survey of 1578, two mills are noted at Gosforth, a corn mill and fulling mill. The Row Mill, which has been suggested as the earliest in Gosforth, was the last to cease working in 1893 (WEA 1989, 21). This publication also refers to a mill attached to the barn at Gosforth Hall Hotel, although this is more likely to have been a threshing mill (*Ibid*).
- 4.2.14 Writing in 1794-97, Hutchinson describes the main agricultural produce in Gosforth Parish as being '*chiefly oats, and a little barley, but the proprietors, in general, seem negligent as the soil is certainly capable of being employed to greater advantage by proper culture. Many of the farmers let their ground run wild, and lay it down in that state. I observed several fields where the furze (called whins in the*

provincial dialect) with which the fences are, in general, bearded or planted, had been suffered to spread their seed, and run all over the inclosure. Quarries – Abundance of freestone, but no limestone or coal. Sheep – Upon the high commons to the east of the parish, about 2000 sheep are kept. Roads – there is only one road of any note, which leads from Egremont to Ravenglass’ (Hutchinson 1794-97, 585).

- 4.2.15 In the early 19th century, Parson and White described Gosforth Parish: *‘The parish lies between Ponsonby and Drigg, and is two miles in breadth, and extends 4 ½ miles eastward from the ocean. The soil consists chiefly of a light red sand, which affords a remarkable contrast to the appearance of the more southern parishes. Abundance of freestone is found here, and the land, though rather high, is not mountainous, and is watered by several small brooks which flow eastward and fall with the Bleng into the Irt. Gosforth is a large irregularly built village, situated on the southern declivity of an eminence, near the Whitehaven and Ulverston road. Fairs for cattle and horses are held on the 25th of April and 18th of October, on Boonwood Common, where six acres of land are appropriated for that purpose’* (Parson and White 1829, 209). The directory also indicates that Gosforth was a busy, thriving village in the first half of the 19th century, with blacksmiths, farriers, cooper, shoemakers, tailors and several pubs listed. Several farmers are also listed at Sally Hill, Cross Lanes, Blennerhazel, Bridge Petton to name but a few. Gosforth Hall is not listed as such but a John Shepherd is listed as a farmer at ‘Hall’ (*Ibid*, 210-211).
- 4.2.16 Sir John Ainsworth of Harecroft Hall bought Gosforth Hall Farm in the 1860s, after which date he laid a pipe from the Holy Well to Harecroft. In 1989 the water supply was still running to Gosforth Hall, Hillcrest, Harecroft and Thornbank. Immediately below the Holy Well is a filter bed leading into a reservoir which feeds the pipe (WEA 1989, 27).
- 4.2.17 In 1872 a piece of land was purchased which formed part of the Beckside property owned by a Jacob Singleton, blacksmith, for the construction of Gosforth Methodist Chapel (Tonkin 1974, 8).
- 4.2.18 The present rectory at Gosforth is at least the third. The original building stood in the present churchyard, which was demolished in 1879 presumably to extend the graveyard. The new rectory was constructed on the south side of the Glebe Field in the following year. The tool shed in the churchyard was constructed from material taken from the old church, which was rebuilt in 1898. Several medieval tombstones were used and the walls consist of stones carved with swords and shears, consequently the tool shed is a Listed Building in its own right (WEA 1989, 13).
- 4.2.19 **Modern (AD1900-Present):** published in 1991, *The Cumbria Village Book* noted that Gosforth was historically situated where the roads from Eskdale and Wasdale met, and that the village has long been the place where people from the surrounding valleys came to shop for goods and services. It was also the location for changing horses on the road south from Whitehaven, which supposedly accounted for the large number of pubs in the Sqaure. Traditionally many of the inhabitants relied on agriculture for their living, however by the middle of the 20th century British Nuclear Fuels became the main employer (CFWI 1991, 108).

- 4.2.20 Writing in the 1950s, Williams noted in his book *The Sociology of an English Village* that historically Gosforth was physically isolated. The turnpike roads did not run through Copeland until after the Napoleonic Wars, the Maryport and Barrow Railway was not completed until the middle of the 19th century, and a regular bus service in West Cumberland was not established until the 1920s. The lack of immigration into the area and the absence of rapid means of communication meant that a high proportion of the inhabitants of the parish and their ancestors were born locally and married local families (Williams 1969, 69).
- 4.2.21 **Gosforth Hall:** in March 1653, Robert Copley, chief bailiff of Copeland Forest under the Earl of Northumberland, and his wife Isabella appeared before Joseph Pennington and there were admitted to the tenements of Beck Place, Walk Mill and a parcel of ground called Syke. By 1658, Copley had commenced to build ‘*a large handsome house, with orchards and gardens suitable*’, which has ever since borne the name of Gosforth Hall. Robert Copley died in 1675 and his wife Isabella died ten years later. Their son William succeeded to Gosforth Hall, however by 1692 he left Gosforth Hall and in 1708 mortgaged his lands in Gosforth to Jane Hudson. By 1723, Gosforth Hall was sold to Anthony Benn of Hensingham, in 1732 it was sold to James Steel of Wray, Hensingham before passing to Isaac Powle of Blackhow, Gosforth who was a yeoman. Isaac’s brother Thomas succeeded to the hall. Thomas Poole’s heirs sold Gosforth Hall to John Sharpe, of Sellafield, yeoman, who in 1804 sold it to Samuel Rogers. The hall then passed to Rear-Admiral Francis Scott of Harecroft, whose widow sold it to John Tyson of Hazel Bank, Gosforth. The owner in 1902 was J S Ainsworth Esq (Curwen 1903).
- 4.2.22 Gosforth Hall is not included in Taylor’s *Old Manorial Halls of Cumberland and Westmorland* (1892).
- 4.2.23 Curwen includes in his article a ground plan of Gosforth Hall as it was in 1902 (Plate 7). At this date there was a plaster overmantel over a fireplace with the initials RIC, standing for Robert and Isabella Copley, with the date 1673. A reused lintel in the barn bears the initials RC and the date 1658 (*Ibid*).
- 4.2.24 An interesting description of the hall provides an insight into the function of the various rooms in 1776. In the Will of Isaac Pool (or Powle) it reads: ‘*In the name of God Amen. I Isaac Poole of Gosforth Hall..give unto my said wife, Sarah Pool the little orchard on the west side of the Brewhouse, the dining room now divided into two rooms, the loft above the kitchen, the loft above the parlour, half of the Brewhouse, the two farthest garrets, one half of the hall, a Mewstead in the Barn and the Peat House at the East End of the said Barn during my wifes widowhood and in lieu of her widow right. And also upon condition that she, my said wife, shall not set to farm or allow any to live in the above mentioned rooms excepting my brother Thomas Pool..all the rest and the residue I bequeath unto my said brother Thomas Pool*’ (McIntire 1939).
- 4.2.25 Analysis of the 1881 Census reveals that at this date Gosforth Hall consisted of 200 acres and was farmed by the Steel family. At this date there were 10 people living in the property, which presumably included farm labourers. John Steel is known to have been living in the property in 1883; however by 1901 John Hartley was tenant (Cooper *et al* c.1987).

- 4.2.26 In December 1891, Gosforth Hall Estate along with Windhall and Scar Green was offered for sale by auction at Scawfell Hotel, Seascale. The sales particulars described as *'The freehold estate called Gosforth Hall situate at Gosforth comprising commodious house, outbuildings, and several closes of excellent land, containing altogether 116 acres, 2 roods and 32 perches, and now in the occupation of Mrs Steel'*. The estate was for sale in several lots, Lot 1 included the dwelling house, farm buildings, yard, garden etc, along with fields known as 'Bull Coppy', 'Ridding Chapel Meadow', 'Little Field and High Leskew', and Low Leskew'. Unfortunately there were no plans included within the sales particulars to indicate where these fields were located. In the Special Conditions of Sale, reference is made to an Indenture of Conveyance dated 16th April 1871 made between The Very Reverend Robert Scott (Dean of Rochester) of the first part, Frances Magdalene Scott of the second part and John Tyson of the third part (WRO Ref: DH 479/1).
- 4.2.27 Gosforth Hall appears to have been up for sale again in 1924, when it was included in a public auction along with the Flosch and Harecroft Estates: *'The whole forming the Cumberland Estate of Sir Thomas Ainsworth'*. Gosforth Hall was described as *'a very compact farm as occupied by Mr John Hartley at a rent of £105 per annum'*. Lot 3 included the house and buildings and nine fields, totalling c.60 acres. The Sales Particulars also provide a description of the house, suggesting that it is 16th century property: *'It may be of interest to note that Gosforth Hall, a fine 16th century residence, became the property of the late Sir John S Ainsworth in 1877 and although considerably changed since its erection there are still to be found relics of great interest. The Renaissance gate piers remain intact. In the kitchen there is a very fine old fireplace and inglenook with many masons marks, also an original doorway leading to the Nowel stair built out as a turret with many windows. The great oak principals of the roof are remarkable for their size and soundness, all having the same natural bend showing that they have been carefully selected'*. The Special Conditions of Sale refer to an Indenture of Conveyance on sale date March 1892 and made between John Tyson of the one part and the said John Stirling Ainsworth on the other part. A threshing machine and a crushing mill were also included in the sale *'without extra charge'*. (WRO Ref: YDX 366/41).
- 4.2.28 In 1929, Isaac Hartley is listed in a trade directory as a farmer at Gosforth Hall, which is described as *'a farm dwelling, originally built in the reign of Charles II by Robert and Isabel Copley; it subsequently passed to the Poole family and was transferred by them to the family of Rogers, from whom it descended to the late Admiral Scott, then to the late Mr John Tyson, and is the property of Mr John Hartley. Of the ancient house, the greater part is still extant, but 15 of the original windows are built up'* (Kelly 1929, 154-155). By 1954, Isaac Hartley is still listed as being resident at Gosforth Hall; therefore it appears that it was still a working farm at this date (Cumberland Directory 1954). It would appear that Gosforth Hall became a hotel in the 1960s (WEA 1989, 8).

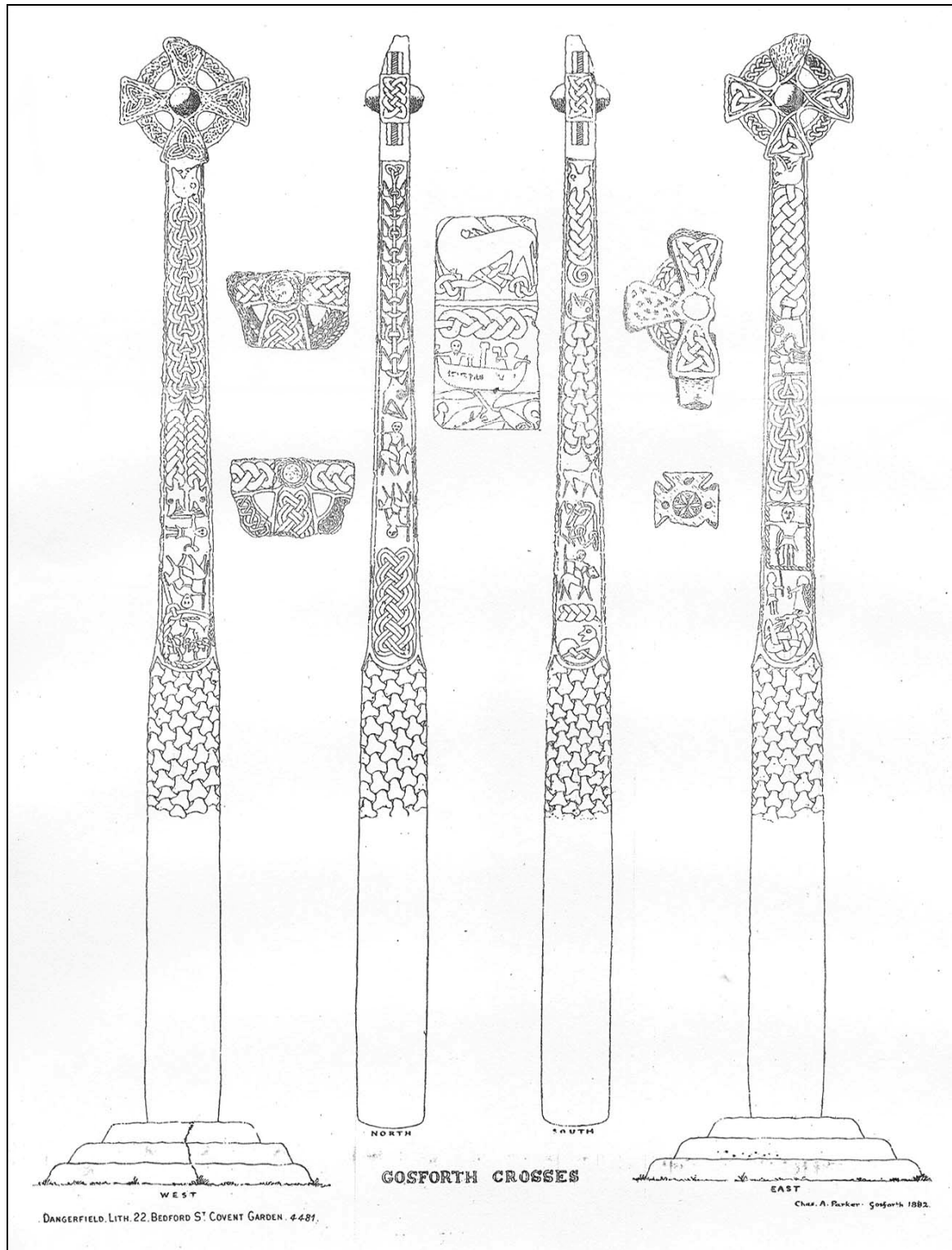


Plate 1 – Gosforth Cross (After Parker 1882)



Plate 2 – Gosforth Cross, undated photograph



Plate 3 – The 'Warrior's Tomb' Hogback, Gosforth, 1899 (Carlisle Library Local Studies)



Plate 4 – The ‘Warrior’s Tomb’ depicting a battle scene, 1899 (Carlisle Library Local Studies)



Plate 5 – Sketch of the ‘Fishing Stone’ by C A Parker

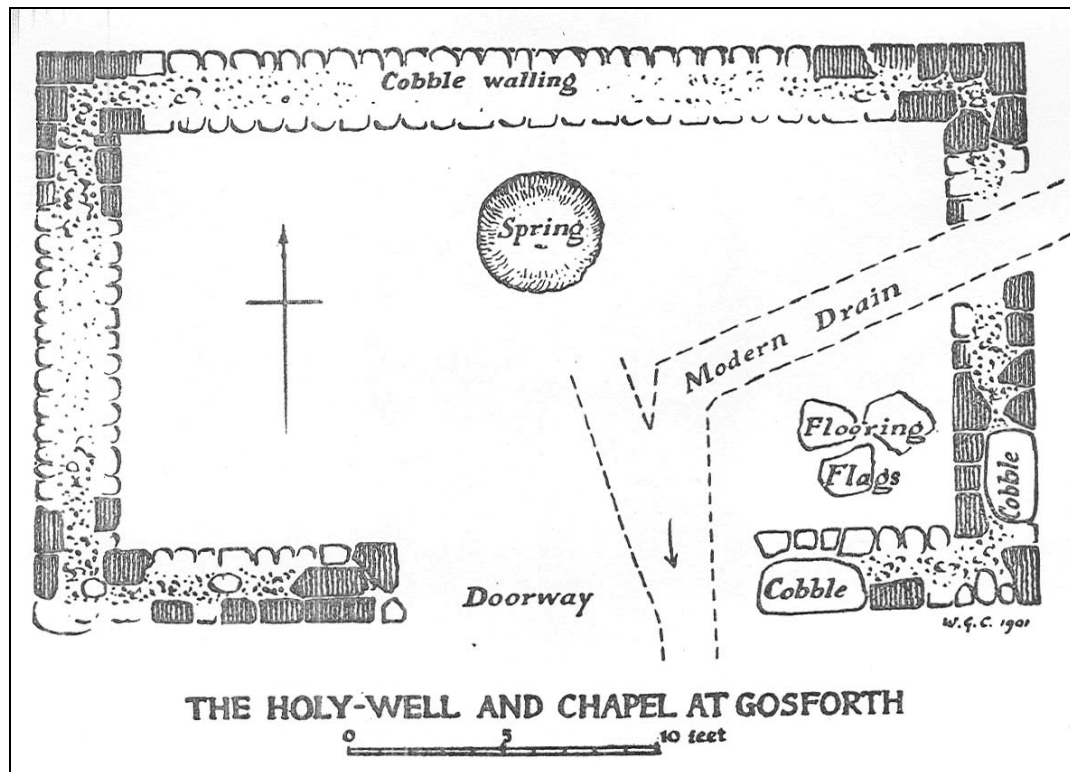


Plate 6 – The Holy Well and Chapel at Gosforth (After Collingwood 1902)

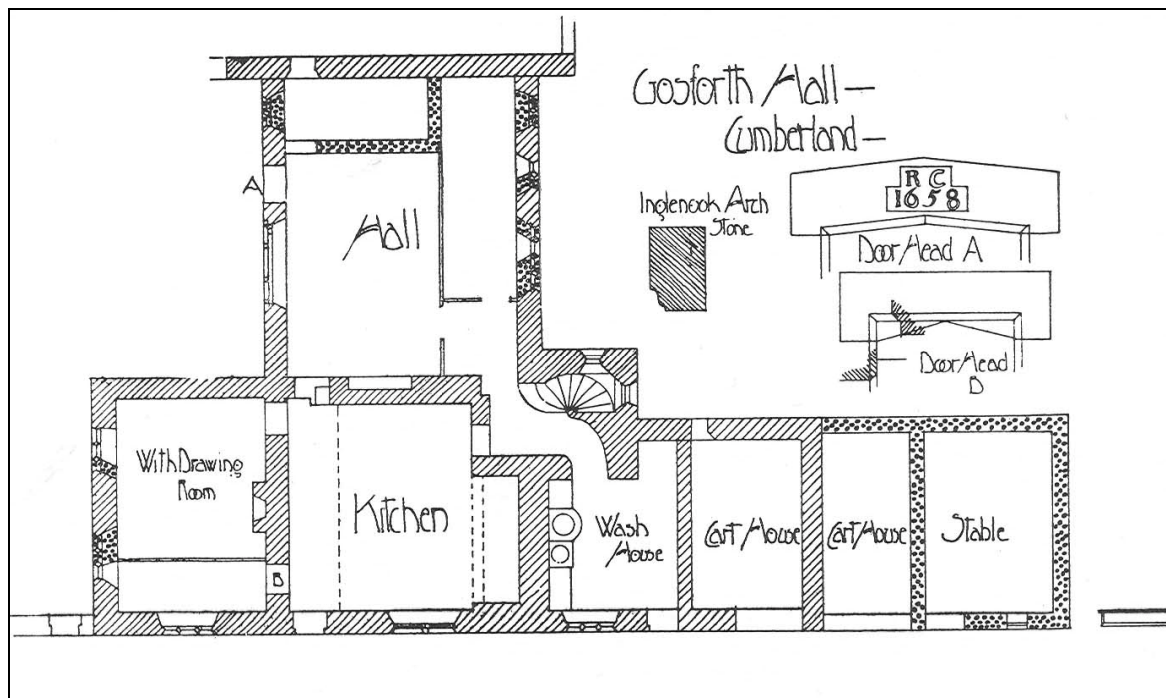


Plate 7 – Ground Plan of Gosforth Hall (After Curwen 1903)

4.3 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES (MAPS)

- 4.3.1 A search of maps relating to the Gosforth area was undertaken at Whitehaven Record Office, Carlisle Record Office and Carlisle Local Studies Library. These are referred to below in chronological order and reproduced in Figures 3 to 7.
- 4.3.2 ***Hodskinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland (Figure 3):*** although of small-scale, this extract from Hodskinson and Donald's map of Cumberland shows the village of Gosforth as being at the centre of several roads from the surrounding settlements. Two watermills are shown on a mill race diverted from the River Bleng to the east of the village, and the church is represented by a small drawing. A property is shown in the general location of Gosforth Hall, although the reliability of this map in relation to individual properties needs to be considered.
- 4.3.3 ***Enclosure Map 1815 (CRO Ref: QRE 1/42):*** enclosure maps were produced from c.1770 as land which had previously been waste or common was taken into cultivation. The Enclosure Maps and accompanying Award is held at Carlisle Record Office, however of the various plans included, there are none which show the village itself.
- 4.3.5 ***Tithe Map c.1840:*** Tithe Maps and Awards were produced following the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. They record details of land ownership, occupation, field names, acreage, tithe payable and state of cultivation. There is no Tithe Map for Gosforth at either Carlisle Record Office or Whitehaven Record Office.
- 4.3.6 ***First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Surveyed 1860, 6"to 1 mile scale (Figure 4):*** this is the first map to show the village of Gosforth in detail. Gosforth Hall is shown to the north of St Mary's Church, with the Rectory annotated in the church enclosure. As well as the dwellings in the village, there is a High School marked at the western end, a Saw Mill at Gosforth Gate, the Globe Hotel, a Post Office, and Chapel Stile Public House located just to the south of the church. To the east of the village at Wellington, the mill race is shown with a corn mill at High Mill, and a corn and sawmill at Walk Mill.
- 4.3.7 ***First Edition Ordnance Survey Map c.1865, 25"to 1 mile scale (Figure 5):*** the larger-scale version of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map provides a clearer picture of the village at this date. The buildings at Gosforth Hall are clearly shown, with the house itself and the barn and outbuildings to the east. A sawpit is marked at Kellbank located to the south of Gosforth Hall.
- 4.3.8 ***Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1899, 25"to 1 mile scale (Figure 6):*** this edition of the Ordnance Survey map shows that by this date buildings have been constructed in the triangular piece of land to the west of the church. The Rectory has been demolished presumably to extend the graveyard, and a new rectory has been constructed to the south of the church. Chapel Stile Public House has also been demolished and replaced by a school. A Wesleyan Methodist Chapel has been constructed at Beck Place, with a smithy shown to the west. A further smithy is annotated at Kellbank. There has been some additions and demolition at Gosforth Hall, with a building attached to the barn now gone, and a structure on the north side of the house has been extended.

- 4.3.9 **Ordnance Survey Map 1968 1:2500 scale (Figure 7):** this map shows the modern housing at Meadowfield, and along the north side of the road to the west of Gosforth Hall, which is by this date marked as a hotel.

4.4 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

- 4.4.1 A 1km radius search was undertaken of the database held by the Lake District National Park Authority at Kendal for information regarding known archaeological sites, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas. The collection of aerial photographs was also consulted of the study area.
- 4.4.2 **HER:** the HER revealed 12 known archaeological sites within a 1km radius of the proposed development area, these included 1 of prehistoric date, 1 of early medieval date, 1 of medieval date, 1 of post-medieval date and 8 of unknown date. These sites are listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.4.3 **Listed Buildings:** there are 7 Listed Buildings located within a 1km radius of the proposed development area. These include Steelfield Hall to the west of village; Hall Croft at Wellington; the library and the part of the village hall with originally constituted Denton Hill; the Church of St Mary and a tool shed located within the churchyard, and Gosforth Hall along with the gate piers, and barn and stables to the south-east of the hall. The Listed Building record for Gosforth Hall briefly reads as:
- 'Large house; c.1658 (date with initials R C on lintel reused in barn) for Robert and Isabel Copley. Altered/extended c.1673 (date over fireplace). Partly demolished with remainder remodelled at later date. Originally U-shaped in plan, west wing since demolished. 2 storeys with attic. East elevation is mostly intact. Total of 6 upper-cruck trusses n roof, single storey block adjoining the rear of east wing not of interest'.*
- 4.4.4 **Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM):** there is one Scheduled Ancient Monument located within a one-kilometre radius of the proposed development area: the high cross in St Mary's Churchyard (SAM 23781).
- 4.4.5 **Conservation Areas:** no Conservation Areas were shown on the information provided by the HER.
- 4.4.6 **Aerial Photography:** there were two aerial photographs shown on the HER GIS mapping of the Gosforth area. Neither were taken directly above Gosforth Hall and as the aerial photographs were taken at a considerable height, it was deemed unlikely that they would provide any useful information about the proposed development area.
- 4.4.7 **Archaeological Events:** the HER records the excavation in 1901 of 'Wellington Chapel Well' located at NY 3072 5040. This is presumably the same excavation referred to in 4.2.12 above.
- 4.4.8 In 2003 Oxford Archaeology North undertook an archaeological desk-based assessment and watching brief at Gosforth Waste Treatment Works. No finds, features or deposits of archaeological importance were uncovered during the course of groundworks (OAN 2003).

- 4.4.9 During 2005, a small excavation measuring 4m x 4m was undertaken on land immediately to the south of Gosforth Hall, used at that time as a beer garden for the hotel. The excavation revealed two separate phases of cobbled surfaces, beneath which was located evidence for early medieval structures, from which a sample of charcoal was taken for radiocarbon dating. The date range provided from the radiocarbon dating was between 894-1022AD, which according to the excavator, *'firmly established a link between the site and the church and Cross'* (Jones 2005).

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 The machine stripping of the trenches down to the natural substrate, which were subsequently cleaned by hand, permitted an examination of the archaeological remains within the site. The trench locations are depicted in Figure 8; plans of the Trenches (Figure 9), are found within Appendix 2.

5.2 TRENCH 1

- 5.2.1 Trench 1, which was aligned east to west, was located in the upper area of the site and measured 7.5m in length and 1.6m in width. No features of archaeological significance were encountered, although three ceramic drains were observed at the eastern end of the trench (see Plate 8).
- 5.2.2 The natural substrate (**103**) was encountered at a depth of 0.32m from current ground level, (62.98m OD). This comprised compacted light orange-red sandy clay, which had some frequent inclusions of sub-angular stones. A test box was excavated at the western end of Trench 1, to a depth of 0.68m below the current ground level (62.79m OD), test the nature of this deposit.
- 5.2.3 Observed cutting into the natural, three ceramic drains, orientated in a north-west to south-east direction, were noted at the eastern end of the trench. These measured approximately 0.15m in width and had an extent of approximately 1.80m.
- 5.2.4 Towards the centre of the trench, and also cutting into the natural, a tree bowl was observed, the roots of which were still visible in section.
- 5.2.5 Overlying the natural the subsoil (**100**) was encountered to a depth of 0.19m and comprised loosely compacted dark black-brown silty clay. Frequent inclusions of branches and tree roots were observed within this deposit.
- 5.2.6 No topsoil was encountered in Trench 1 as this deposit had been removed prior to the evaluation being carried out. The depth of topsoil was observed within a section at the edge of the site, and appeared to have a depth of approximately 0.2m. It comprised loosely compacted, dark black-brown silty clay.
- 5.2.7 No archaeological finds were recovered from this trench.

5.3 TRENCH 2

- 5.3.1 Trench 2 was aligned north to south, and measured 5.0m in length by 1.6m in width. One feature of archaeological interest was observed at the southern end of the trench (see Plate 9).
- 5.3.2 The natural substrate (**103**) was encountered at a depth of 0.25m below the current ground level at 62.35m OD. This comprised compacted light orange- red sandy clay which had some frequent inclusions of sub-angular stones.

- 5.3.3 Observed cutting into the natural, a linear feature **[102]** measuring 0.4m in width and 3.9m in length, was observed to be aligned in a north-west to south east direction. This shallow feature terminated within the trench, and was filled to a depth of 0.2m by loosely compacted, light greyish-brown, silty clay **(101)**. This deposit also contained frequent inclusions of sub-angular stones and root material. An environmental sample was taken of deposit **(101)**, but was not analysed due to the limited potential for providing any useful information.
- 5.3.4 Within the southern end of Trench 2 a ceramic drain was observed orientated in a north-west to south-east direction. This measured approximately 0.15m in width and 1.6m in length.
- 5.3.5 Overlying the natural, the subsoil **(100)** was encountered at a depth of 0.18m and comprised loosely compacted dark black-brown silty clay. Frequent inclusions were observed which included the remains of branches and tree roots.
- 5.3.6 No topsoil was encountered in Trench 2 as this deposit had been removed prior to the evaluation being carried out. The depth of topsoil was observed within a section at the edge of the site, appeared to have a depth of approximately 0.2m and comprised loosely compacted, dark black-brown silty clay.
- 5.3.7 No archaeological finds were recovered from this trench.



Plate 8: Trench 1, west facing, and showing ceramic drains in foreground.



Plate 9: Trench 2, south facing, and showing linear feature [102] in foreground.

5.4 DISCUSSION

- 5.4.1 Archaeological deposits were observed at a depth of between 0.25m and 0.32m, and comprised of one linear feature, [102]. No finds were recovered that could accurately date this feature, but it probably represents some form of field boundary, as shown on the 1860 map. This suggests that this feature dates to the post-medieval period.
- 5.4.2 Four, relatively modern, ceramic drains were encountered during the evaluation suggesting that the area has been truncated somewhat during the last century by the laying of these services.
- 5.4.3 Trees once covered the area which the evaluation was conducted within, but the depth of the topsoil suggests that some form of landscaping of this area was undertaken. The presence of tree roots within Trench 1 suggests that within this small area, features are likely to be truncated.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The desk-based assessment revealed that there is evidence in the vicinity of the village of Gosforth of human activity since the prehistoric period. The presence of Anglo-Saxon sculpture in the churchyard and the possible evidence for dwellings dating from the same period located within the grounds of Gosforth Hall, suggests that there may have been a church and settlement at Gosforth from the 9th century. The possibility that an earlier house may have stood on the site of, or in the immediate vicinity of, the present Gosforth Hall Hotel also needs to be considered.
- 6.1.2 The field evaluation failed to locate any archaeological features that could be related to the 9th century settlement of the area. One linear field boundary was observed running parallel to the field boundary shown on early Ordnance Survey maps, and still surviving at the site today, suggestive of a post-medieval date. No finds that could accurately date this feature were recovered, but based on the form of the feature, it is suggested its function was more than likely as a boundary ditch, and that it dates to the post-medieval period.
- 6.1.3 Although the field evaluation failed to find significant archaeological deposits, the desk-based assessment has shown that significant archaeological activity exists in the area, and this should be taken into account when future works are being considered at the site.

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APPENDIX 1: HER DATA

HER Sites:

HER No.	Site Name	Grid Ref:	Brief Description	General Period
1252	Danish Camp Earthwork	E:307020 N:504080	'Danish Camp' earthwork of unknown date	Uncertain
1254	Wellington Chapel, Well	E:307230 N:307230	Site of chapel of Medieval date with a Holy Well (a well or spring which is reputed to possess miraculous healing properties) at its centre	Medieval
1272	High Cross in St Mary's Churchyard	E:307230 N:503570	Gosforth Cross is 15ft high and second in importance only to the Bewcastle Cross. Characterised by extreme slenderness, shaft starting round and turning square. Figure representations obscure but face is Christ with outstretched arms, 2 men below. S face has plaited beads, quadrupeds. W face has 2 fighting men and a man on horseback upside down	Early Medieval
1308	Kell Bank, Gosforth Axe, Rubbing Stone Finds	E:307530 N:503150	A stone axe and 3 rubbing stones found together in 1937 during excavations at Kell Bank Sewerage Works	Prehistoric
12158	Gosforth Saw Pit	E:306700 N:306700	Site of former saw pit (a place where tree trunks were sawn into planks by hand) of unknown date	Uncertain
12172	High Mill Water Mill	E:307980 N:504260	Site of watermill for grinding corn	Post Medieval
12175	Gillgrass Quarry	E:307750 N:504200	Site of disused quarry of unknown date	Uncertain
30451	Mill, Gosforth	E:306560 N:503600	Site of an edge tool works (a factory or works used for the forging and sharpening of a variety of tools including scythes, spades etc) of unknown date	Uncertain
30452	Mill Row Farm, Gosforth	E:307750 N:503670	Site of mill of unknown date	Uncertain
30453	Corn and Saw Mill, Wellington	E:307790 N:503830	Site of water powered corn mill and saw mill (a factory in which logs are converted into timber by running them through a series of saws)	Uncertain
30454	Mill, Wellington	E:307910	Former site of a mill of unknown	Uncertain

HER No.	Site Name	Grid Ref:	Brief Description	General Period
	Bridge	N:504030	date	
30455	Mill, Wellington Bridge	E:307900 N:504160	Former site of mill of unknown date	Uncertain

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES
