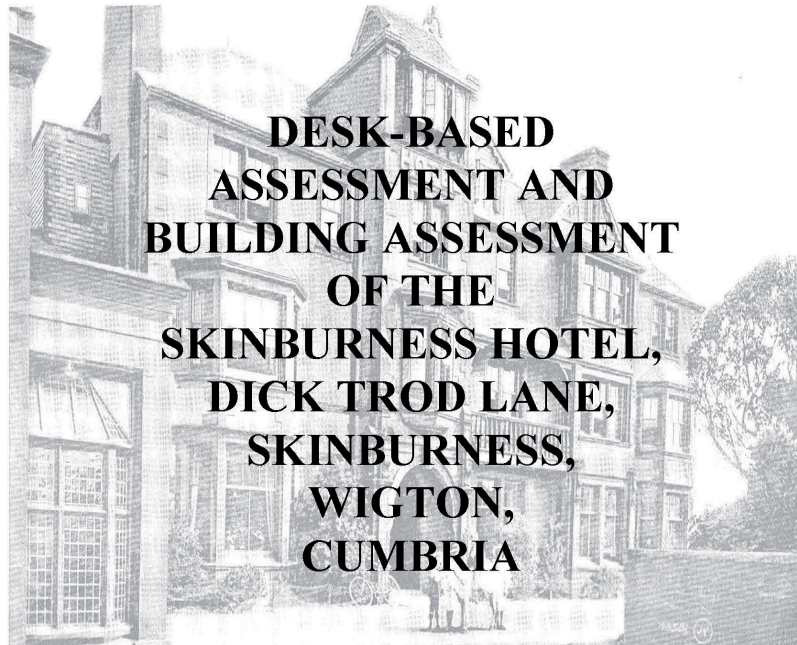


# **NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

**Client Report No. CP/930/09**

**May 2009**



**For  
North Star Projects Ltd**

**NGR NY 1275 5595**

**Oasis Ref: northpen3-59755**

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02 June 2009



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In May 2009, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by North Star Projects Ltd to undertake a desk-based assessment and building assessment of the former Skinburness Hotel, Dick Trod Lane, Skinburness, Wigton, Cumbria (NGR NY 1275 5595), prior to a proposed scheme for the demolition of the standing buildings and the erection of a 64-bed nursing home on the site.

The desk-based assessment involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Cumbria Record Office at Carlisle, as well as the local studies collections at Carlisle Library and the consultation of the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER includes the locations and settings of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens and other, non-designated archaeological remains. In addition, an on-line search was undertaken of records held by the Archaeology Data Service, managed by York University. A number of published sources and several relevant web sites were also consulted to provide background information. The aim of the assessment was to collate and assess existing information about the archaeology of the site and to determine as fully as possible from the available evidence the nature, survival, extent and importance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.

The building assessment involved the examination of the standing buildings associated with the former Skinburness Hotel; the assessment aimed to identify any earlier remains which may have been incorporated into the building which was constructed in the 1880s.

The desk-based assessment revealed the potential for Roman archaeology was high due to the close proximity of Milefortlet No.9 to the proposed development area. The settlement at Skinburness would appear to have been an important port during the early 14<sup>th</sup> century when it was used as a supply base by Edward I during his campaigns into Scotland. The village of Skinburness was supposedly 'washed away' in the first decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and now lies beneath the sea, although it has been suggested that this may have been slightly exaggerated. Despite the supposed loss of the settlement, Skinburness appears to have continued as a supply base into the next decade.

It is possible that at least part of the sea dyke may have originated in the medieval period, although there is as yet no archaeological evidence for this. A chapel (St John's) was located on Grune Point, which had been licensed in 1301, but which appears to have been short-lived although the site appears to have continued to be used for burials. The site of this chapel is shown on historical mapping dating as far back as 1590.

Very little is known about Skinburness following its status as an important supply base in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Reference was made following the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to an 'ox byar and barn' at 'Skinbugh'. The settlement seems to have lost its importance as far as sea traffic was concerned by 1565 when it was recorded that the 'creek of Skinburness be not commonly used nor occupied with any traffic or trade of merchandise'.

By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Skinburness was described as a fishing village and fashionable bathing place. An inn is listed in Jollie's Cumberland Guide and Directory of 1811, although this may have been the Greyhound Inn (now known as the Longhouse) located on the seashore. The Duke's Head Inn is first recorded in 1829, occupied by Foster Penrice, who still resided at the property by 1850 when the building is shown on the Tithe Map of that date. It would appear from cartographic evidence that the Dukes Head Inn and another property were demolished to make way for the Skinburness Hotel at some point between 1865 and 1900. An article in the

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Carlisle Journal refers to the building of a new hotel at Skinburness in 1887 for Mr E H Banks of Wigton, designed by architect Mr Ferguson.

The Skinburness Hotel, also known as the Marine Hotel, was sold in 1898 to George Brown, and then was up for sale again in 1904 following Mr Brown's death. Sales particulars and lists of contents from the sale in 1898 appear to suggest the high quality of the interior decoration and furnishings, as well as providing an interesting insight into late 19<sup>th</sup> century hotel layouts and provisions. In 1918 the hotel was taken over by the Carlisle and District State Management Scheme, along with many similar establishments, in an attempt to control drinking.

No information was revealed during the desk-based assessment as to how the Skinburness Hotel was used during the World Wars, if it was in use as anything other than a hotel. The area around Skinburness has several features relating to these periods in the form of pill boxes and dummy airstrips.

A function room appears to have been constructed to the north-west side of the hotel after 1985, as it is not shown on an Ordnance Survey map of that date. Several buildings associated with the original hotel appear to have been demolished throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example the stables, the laundry, and the engine and dynamo house. These buildings should be taken into consideration when assessing the extent of the original building constructed in 1887. The Skinburness Hotel continued in use until 2006 when it was sold at auction.

The building recording project revealed that the building known as the Skinburness Hotel appears to have been constructed as a single-phase in the 1880s, to a complicated design incorporating varying floor levels, different styles of windows, dormers, well-dressed architectural elements in particular on the main façade, and decorative features such as finials, vertically-hung tiles and decorative lead-work. The building which stands is characteristic of a late Victorian structure, in this case a purpose-built hotel, to serve the tourist industry. Internally very little remains of the original features having either been sold at auction or suffered from vandalism or theft. Details such as coving, ceiling roses, skirting boards, window fittings, and architrave do survive providing information on late Victorian internal features. The apparent survival of the original fittings for the gentlemen's toilets on the ground floor is an interesting feature. The only space within the hotel where any earlier structures may have survived, presumably from the two properties which occupied the site prior to the construction of the hotel in 1887, was two rubble walls in the cellar, both of which were in different locations. Due to a lack of ground plan it was difficult to assess where these rubble walls were located in relation to these earlier buildings. No other features or structural elements were noted which may have suggested that the hotel incorporated earlier fabric, although it must be noted that externally the buildings are covered in either render or tiles, and internally wall coverings remain.

The Skinburness Hotel is a nice example of a purpose-built hotel dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which exhibits characteristics of late Victorian architecture, as well as containing high quality fixtures and fittings which were either still extant or were noted in sales particulars. The building provides an interesting insight into a period when tourism was flourishing in the area, aided greatly by the railway into Silloth and boats from Annan. The Skinburness Hotel should be seen as an interesting building in its own right, as well as its relationship with Chichester Hall which is contemporary.

It is possible that archaeological remains may survive sub-surface in the area to the north of the hotel, which now forms the garden, but which historically has remained undeveloped. Should



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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the proposed development extend to this area of the site it may be deemed necessary to undertake an archaeological evaluation to assess the survival or indeed the absence of any archaeological features or deposits. The majority of the footprint of the present Skinburness Hotel building, apart from beneath the single-storey function room, has been cellared below ground therefore it is unlikely that any archaeological features or deposits will survive in this area.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Danny Sharpe of North Star Projects Ltd for commissioning the project.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Jo Mackintosh and Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service; staff at Carlisle Record Office; Stephen White, local studies, Carlisle Library and Denis Perriam.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Fiona Wooler, and the building assessment was undertaken by Fiona Wooler and David Jackson. The report was written by Fiona Wooler. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In May 2009, North Pennines Archaeology Limited were commissioned by North Star Projects Ltd to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment and building assessment of the former Skinburness Hotel, Dick Trod Lane, Skinburness, Cumbria (NY 1275 5595) in response to a proposed scheme for the demolition of the property and the erection of a 64-bed nursing home on the site.
- 1.1.2 The scheme affects a range of buildings of potential historic interest and lies within an area of archaeological potential. Further information concerning the significance of the existing buildings together with the impact of the proposed development on any potential, and known, archaeological remains on the site was therefore requested by Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer, Cumbria County Council<sup>1</sup>. The proposed development area lies within the visual impact zone of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and close to the archaeological remains of a Roman milefortlet and temporary camp, which are protected as a Scheduled Monument (SM No. 27745). Skinburness Hotel is first shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900. Previous to this, the Duke's Head Inn was located on the site as shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map, and which is referenced in Mannix's Directory for 1847 as an inn catering for visitors coming to bathe. Though un-named, a similarly described inn is referenced at Skinburness in 1811 in Jollie's Directory. The Skinburness Hotel is recorded on the Historic Environment Record Ref No. 41801.
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment involved the consultation of a number of existing datasets in order to achieve an understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, historical and archaeological context of the site. The main sources of information were derived from the collation and assessment of information held in the County Historic Environment Record (HER), and the study of relevant cartographic, published and unpublished material held at Carlisle Record Office. The principal objective of this assessment was to undertake sufficient work in order to identify and characterise the archaeological constraints associated with the proposed development area.
- 1.1.4 The building assessment involved the analysis of the exteriors and all the internal rooms of the buildings proposed for demolition in order to identify any features and fittings of significant archaeological or architectural interest. The assessment also involved the inspection of the standing building to assess if the remains of earlier buildings on the site may have been incorporated into the hotel when it was constructed in the 1880s. The building assessment followed the requirements of a Level 1 building survey as described by English Heritage<sup>2</sup>. A Level 1 survey is essentially a basic visual record, supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type<sup>3</sup>. Cumbria County Council had

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<sup>1</sup> Parsons, J, 2009

<sup>2</sup> English Heritage, 2006

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, Page 14

requested that should any areas of fabric within the standing buildings pre-date the late 19<sup>th</sup> century hotel, the detail of analysis was to be increased to a Level 3 survey<sup>4</sup>.

## 1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 Skinburness is a small village located approximately 2.5km to the north of Silloth, in the north-west corner of Cumbria. The village is situated on the coast of the Solway Firth, with Moricambe Bay and Skinburness marsh located immediately to the east (Figure 1). The coastal stretch from Rockcliffe Marsh close to the Scottish Border and to the north of Maryport is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). The Skinburness Hotel is situated on the corner of the road from Silloth, which turns sharply southwards and heads along the west side of Skinburness Marsh. Dick Trod Lane is located to the west of the hotel, and to the north-west is the property now known as Chichester Hall (Figure 2). The proposed development area is situated at a height of c.8m above mean sea level.
- 1.2.2 The land bordering the Solway is, in the main, low and flat, for three or four miles inland at some points, and consists largely of terraced marine alluvium, upon which are located large peat bogs such as those of Bowness and Wedholme Flow. Fringing the coastline from Beckfoot, Silloth and Skinburness to Grune Point (the spit of land located to the north of Skinburness), and from Anthorn to Bowness in the Cardurnock peninsula, are ridges of raised beach gravels that were formerly 'spits' or 'hooks' in the shallow waters in which the marine alluvium was deposited. Rising through the flats, and forming conspicuous elevations, are ridges or drumlins of boulder clay. They borer some of the pear mosses and alluvial hollows what were formerly the sites of lakes and marshes. Solway Moss lies mostly on boulder clay<sup>5</sup>. The solid geology of the area around Skinburness consists of red, grey and green mudstones and siltstones with intercalations, forming part of the Triassic Mercia mudstone group<sup>6</sup>.
- 1.2.3 The land around Skinburness provides rich pasture held under common rights and let out in 'stints'. In summer it is used for grazing young horses, cattle and milk cows; in the winter sheep from the fells are brought onto the land to graze<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Parsons, J, 2009, Page 4

<sup>5</sup> Dixon *et al.*, 1926, Pages 2, 3 and 93

<sup>6</sup> Cumbria County Council/English Heritage, 2002, Page 2

<sup>7</sup> Dixon *et al.*, 1926, Pages 2, 3 and 93



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## 2 METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake a desk-based assessment and building assessment of the Skinburness Hotel, Skinburness, Wigton, Cumbria. All work undertaken was consistent with the relevant standard and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a and 2008b), and generally accepted best practice.
- 2.1.2 Prior to the commencement of archaeological works on the site, a detailed specification in the form of a Project Design was submitted to Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service for approval. The project design outlined the aims and methodology for the archaeological work, as well as providing information regarding reporting, publication, health and safety, work timetable and archiving<sup>8</sup>.

### 2.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 2.2.1 Several sources of information were consulted, in accordance with accepted best practice. The study area consisted of a broad overall history of Skinburness, with an additional detailed 1km radius centred on the proposed development area, which was studied in more depth. The principal sources of information were the Historic Environment Record (HER), historical maps and secondary sources.
- 2.2.2 *Historic Environment Record (HER)*: the HER for Cumbria (excluding the Lake District National Park), a database of archaeological sites within the county, was consulted. This was in order to obtain information on the location of all designated sites and areas of historic interest and any other, non-designated sites within the study area, which included Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. A brief record including grid reference and description was obtained for the various sites within the study area (Appendix 1). The HER also contains details of previous archaeological work undertaken in the area.
- 2.2.3 *Carlisle Record Office (CRO)*: Carlisle Record Office was consulted for historical mapping, published and unpublished material relating to Silloth and Skinburness, the site itself and any information relating to the Skinburness Hotel, such as sales particulars, and the possibility of the survival of original building control plans.
- 2.2.4 *Carlisle Library Local Studies*: the local studies section of Carlisle Library was consulted for any publications, historical engravings, photographs or sketches relating to Skinburness which may have been pertinent to 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 held within the North Pennines Archaeology library were also consulted.

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<sup>8</sup> Town, M, 2009



## **2.3 BUILDING ASSESSMENT**

- 2.3.1 The building assessment involved the visual inspection of the exterior of the buildings on the site, as well as their setting, and other buildings within close proximity which may have been contemporary. A detailed inspection was also made of all of the individual rooms within the property, where they could be safely accessed. Photographs were taken of the exterior elevations and any features of note within the interior. The presence of earlier fabric within the standing buildings was considered, where possible, during the building assessment.
- 2.3.2 The Level 1 Building Survey was undertaken following English Heritage guidelines (2006), and the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (2008b).

## **2.4 ARCHIVE**

- 2.4.1 An archive for the archaeological work will be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*<sup>9</sup>. The archive will be deposited in an appropriate local institution, in a format agreed with that institution.
- 2.4.2 The archive will contain a CD-Rom of digital photographs taken during the archaeological work; a series of black and white photographs and a series of colour prints. A series of colour prints will also be offered to Carlisle Local Studies Library as a record of the buildings on the site, should they ultimately be demolished.
- 2.4.3 North Pennines Archaeology and Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service support the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of this study will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project under the unique identifier **northpen3-59755**.

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<sup>9</sup> Brown, D, 2007

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### 3 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1 The assessment results are based on primary documents, most notably maps, and on the secondary sources such as publications which will be referred to in section 3.4 below.

#### 3.2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

- 3.2.1 **HER:** there were a total of 14 HER records within the study area that has been defined as a 1km radius centred on the Skinburness Hotel; these are listed in Appendix 1. Of particular interest is the close proximity of Milefortlet No. 9 and earlier camp of Roman date situated to the north-east of the Skinburness Hotel (HER No. 353), the location of a Roman altar found to the east of the hotel (HER No. 372), and the position of Roman Tower No.9A situated to the south-west of the proposed development area (HER No. 4413), all highlighting activity during the Roman period.
- 3.2.2 The Skinburness Hotel itself is recorded as HER No. 41801: *'Duke's Head Inn is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867 and referenced in Mannex's Directory for 1847 as an inn catering for visitors coming to bathe. Though un-named, a similarly described inn is reference at Skinburness in 1811 in Jollie's Directory. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900 shows a larger building named Skinburness Hotel on the site and so it seems likely it could contain elements of an inn of at least 18<sup>th</sup> century date, possibly the earliest bespoke facility for tourists in the Silloth area'*.
- 3.2.3 **Listed Buildings:** there is only one listed building located within a 1km radius of the proposed development area, Marsh House, which is located to the south-east of the Skinburness Hotel. This is a Grade II listed property dating to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (HER Ref: 71997).
- 3.2.4 **Conservation Areas:** there are no Conservation Areas located at Skinburness, however the north-eastern side of the settlement (which includes the Skinburness Hotel) is situated within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 3.2.5 **Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM):** there is one Scheduled Ancient Monument located within close proximity to the proposed development area. To the north of Skinburness Hotel is the site of Milefortlet 9, part of the Roman frontier defences along the Cumbrian coast (SAM No. 27745). The monument includes the buried remains of Skinburness Roman milefortlet together with the buried remains of an earlier Roman camp which partly underlies the milefortlet. Within the sequence of milefortlets along the Cumbria coast, this one has been identified as Number 9. It was originally turf and timber construction and is located on the crest of the gravel ridge which runs along the centre of the narrow spit known as Grune Point. The monument was discovered during the late 1940s when aerial photographs clearly revealed the crop marks of the milefortlet's rampart and ditch and, to the south west of the milefortlet, the crop mark of much of the defensive ditch flanking the south west and north west

sides of a Roman camp. In 1954 several fragments of Roman pottery were recovered from the site of the monument.

- 3.2.6 ***Previous Archaeological Work:*** an archaeological field survey was undertaken by Bellhouse in October 1954 of the milefortlet at Skinburness. Bellhouse had intended to excavate the site but as the fields were then under cultivation he was unable to. He had used aerial photographs taken by St Joseph to identify the location of the milefortlet<sup>10</sup>.
- 3.2.7 Lancaster University Archaeological Unit investigated the Holme Cultram sea dyke in the mid-1990s in the form of a desk-based assessment, field survey, targeted excavation and watching brief carried out during reconstruction work. The archaeological work could not reach any firm conclusions about the original date of construction for the sea dyke, stating that it had been largely reconstructed as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century with a possible medieval phase close to Skinburness<sup>11</sup>.
- 3.2.8 In 2005 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) in the grounds of Chichester Hall, located to the north-west of the Skinburness Hotel. No significant archaeological deposits were observed in the evaluation trenches. It was noted that it was unlikely the proposed development on the site would have had any impact on archaeological remains due to the amount of consolidation associated with the construction of the present building in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>12</sup>.

### 3.3 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- 3.3.1 The earliest cartographic source consulted which provided any information on the area around Skinburness was actually noted within a publication *'Annals of the Solway until AD1307'*<sup>13</sup>. The map reproduced here as Figure 3, is from Aglionby's 'Platt' of 1590; it shows the site of a chapel in the general location of Grune Point labelled '*Chappel of ye Grune*', with a further building of note annotated at '*Skinburness*'. Perriam and Robinson suggest that the symbol at Skinburness may mark the site of a tower or stonehouse<sup>14</sup>, although no further information is known regarding this building.
- 3.3.2 Speed's Map of Cumberland 1610 also shows the location of '*Chappel of the grune*', with a notable property again shown at '*Skinburness*'. Interestingly '*Silluth*' is shown to be in a different place to the modern town (Figure 4).
- 3.3.3 Hodskinson and Donald's map of Cumberland dating to 1774 (surveyed in 1770) was the earliest cartographic source consulted which shows a settlement at Skinburness, although the reliability regarding individual properties needs to be considered. The chapel site is now annotated 'Remains of a chapel' close to Grune Point, and the Sea Dyke is clearly shown as a linear feature running from Skinburness to the west side of 'Holm Marsh'. A fish house is labelled on the sea shore, and a building is shown in the general location of the proposed development area (if the road now known as Dick Trod Lane is in the same location), possibly the Duke's Head Inn shown on later

<sup>10</sup> Cumbria County Council/English Heritage, 2002, Page 3

<sup>11</sup> Fletcher, M and Miller, I, 1997

<sup>12</sup> NPAL 2005

<sup>13</sup> Neilson, G, 1899 (republished 1974)

<sup>14</sup> Perriam, D.R and Robinson, J, 1998, Page 23



mapping, with what may be a pond drawn to its east side. At this date, Silloth is shown as little more than a small settlement (Figure 5).

- 3.3.4 Enclosure Maps and Awards were produced from c.1770 as land which had previously been waste or common was taken into cultivation. The Enclosure Map for Holme Cultram parish, in which Skinburness was historically located, dates to 1814. This map provides some indication of the number of properties in Skinburness at this date. It does not appear, however, to show all the buildings in the settlement; the linear arrangement shown appears to represent Whiteways (the L-shaped building with a square enclose to its south-east side), Pond Cottage on the opposite side of the road, possibly the three dwellings known as Briar Cottage, Rose Cottage and St Columbas, and the possibly courtyard arrangement of Marsh Farm (Figure 6). The Duke's Head Inn, which is known to have existed prior the construction of the Skinburness Hotel, and the Long House are not shown although this does not necessarily mean they did not exist at this date.
- 3.3.5 Included within the 'Evidence and Proceedings' relating to the 'Carlisle and Silloth Bay and Railway Bill' 1854 is a plan dated '1837 corrected 1841'. Although this map relates to the proposed railway and dock at Silloth, it does annotate a 'Hotel' in the approximate location of Skinburness (Figure 7).
- 3.3.6 Tithe Maps and Awards were produced following the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. These are a useful source as they generally provide information on land ownership, occupiers, state of cultivation, acreage etc. Skinburness Tithe Map and Award dates to 1850 and it provides interesting information on the use of the buildings in the village in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The site of the proposed development area appears to be occupied by two separate sets of buildings, one orientated roughly east-west and the other located to the south side with an outbuilding to its south-east side. To the east of these buildings is a large pond. The plot numbers shown on the Tithe Map correspond with the Award; the following plot numbers include the buildings on the site of the proposed development and some within close proximity:

Plot No.	Landowner	Occupier	Description	State of Cultivation
2828	Foster Penrice	Himself	Dwelling house, garden etc	
2827	Thomas Bell	Himself and others	Cottage and gardens	
2843	John Willis	Foster Penrice	Garden	
3630	Public road to Seaville			
2829	Adam Scott	Foster Penrice		Arable
2830	Adam Scott	Foster Penrice		Arable
2820	Little & Waite	Robert Smith and others	Cottages and gardens	
2826	William Brough	James Bewley and others	Cottage etc	

Plot No.	Landowner	Occupier	Description	State of Cultivation
2836	William Brough	Himself	Cottage and garden	
2844	Henry Huddart	John Law	Dwelling house and garden	
2845	Henry Huddart	William Skelton	[nothing listed]	
2833	Samuel Rigg	Himself	Dwelling house etc	
2834	Samuel Rigg	Himself	Garden	
2838	Jeremiah Holliday	Solomon Holliday and others	Cottages etc	
2821	William Hodgson	George Hope	Farm buildings, gardens etc	
2823	John Messenger	Himself	Dwelling house and garden	
2822	Adam Scott	Himself and others	Cottages and gardens	
2846	John Tordiff	William Stoddart	Buildings, garden etc	

Plot No.2828 appears to be the building which is annotated on later mapping as the Duke's Head Inn (see Figure 10). In 1850, this is listed as being in the ownership and occupancy of Foster Penrice, and is described simply as a '*dwelling house, garden etc*'. The other building on the site of the Skinburness Hotel is Plot No. 2827 which is listed as being in the ownership of Thomas Bell and occupied by '*himself and others*'. Foster Penrice also appears to have use of the two fields to the north of his house, which were under arable production at the date of the compilation of the Tithe Map, as well as a garden on the opposite side of the road (Plot No. 2843). One distinctive feature shown on the Tithe Map is the regular nature of the fields to the north of Skinburness, being rectangular and roughly equal in size, suggesting planned enclosure of former waste land (Figure 8).

- 3.3.7 The earliest cartographic source to provide accurate information regarding the buildings on the site of the Skinburness Hotel are the First Edition Ordnance Survey maps, published in the 1860s. The 6" version of this map is reproduced here as Figure 9 and it shows the village located on the edge of Skinburness Marsh and its proximity to the sea of 'Grune Cast'. The Sea Dyke is clearly annotated to the south of the village, and the site of a chapel is shown to the north-east. Within the village there are several buildings shown, although only two are labelled: the Duke's Head Inn and Skinburnessbank (Figure 9).
- 3.3.8 The 25" version of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map provides a clearer indication of buildings and features in close proximity to the proposed development area, with the structures that make up the Duke's Head Inn and the un-named property shown. By this date a building has been constructed in what was the garden used by



Foster Penrice in 1850 (Plot No.2843 on Figure 9). To the north-east of the proposed development area is a watery feature labelled 'Marr' (Figure 10).

- 3.3.9 By the publication of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map in 1900 the buildings which made up the Duke's Head Inn and the un-named property have been seemingly demolished to be replaced by the extensive site of the 'Skinburness Hotel', with outbuildings and 'Gasometers' shown to the east. Gardens with pathways are shown to the north of the hotel. The two fields located to the north of the Duke's Head Inn, formerly farmed by Foster Penrice, have been used to construct Chichester House (Figure 12).
- 3.3.10 The Third Edition Ordnance Survey map, published in 1926, shows very little change in the form of the buildings which made up the Skinburness Hotel. By this date Chichester House has been renamed 'Skinburness Tower'. The construction of detached properties along the sea front to the south-west of Skinburness is a distinctive feature of this map, showing the beginnings of the connection of the village with Silloth (Figure 12).
- 3.3.11 The Ordnance Survey map dating to 1971 shows that very little has changed in the form of the buildings which made up the Skinburness Hotel, apart from the demolition of some outbuildings to the east and the construction of five possible garages against the boundary wall. Land on the opposite side of Dick Trod Lane has been developed, with dwellings such as 'Avalon', 'Chollerford' and 'Rosamar' having been constructed (Figure 13).

### 3.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.4.1 The place name 'Skinburness' is believed to have derived from a Scandinavianised form of the Old English<sup>15</sup> *scinnan burg* meaning 'demon or spectre haunted stronghold'. Early spellings include *Skyneburg* (1175), *Schineburgh* (1185), *Skyburneys (e)* (1298) and *Skimburgh-neese* (1538). According to 'The Place Names of Cumberland' (1943-44) Grune House and point 'is the name of the shore here and the name must have reference to some defensive sea wall'. Early references to the place include *Sainet Johnes Chappel de Groyne* (1582), *St Johns Chappel of the Groyne* (1649) and the *Chappel of Grune* (1664)<sup>16</sup>. The place name 'Silloth' is believed to have derived from the Old Norse<sup>17</sup> *saer* and *hlaða* meaning 'barn by the sea'<sup>18</sup>. Neilson noted that the word 'Grune' was an ancient geographical term denoting a 'snout'<sup>19</sup>.
- 3.4.2 There is evidence of Mesolithic<sup>20</sup> and Neolithic<sup>21</sup> activity along the Cumbria coast, particularly from finds along the section between St Bees and Ravenglass, where extensive fieldwork has been undertaken. The majority of the record for Neolithic occupation comprises surface lithic scatters and signals in pollen diagrams. The

<sup>15</sup> Old English – The language spoken by the Anglo-Saxons from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries (Source: Lee 1998)

<sup>16</sup> Armstrong, A.M *et al*, 1943-44, Pages 293-294

<sup>17</sup> Old Norse – The language spoken by Norwegians who colonised Iceland, Ireland, the Isle of man, the Hebrides and north west England from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries (Source: Lee 1998)

<sup>18</sup> Lee, J, 1998, Page 76

<sup>19</sup> Neilson, G, 1899, Page 30

<sup>20</sup> Mesolithic – c.10,000- 4000BC

<sup>21</sup> Neolithic – c.4000-2500/2200BC

location and intensity of fieldwork have varied according to topography, agricultural regimes and individuals. Parts of Cumbria have seen extensive survey and publication, such as already noted around St Bees and Ravenglass<sup>22</sup>, but the distribution of work is not even<sup>23</sup>. Analysis of aerial photographs and research of the Solway Plain by Robert Bewley was intended *‘to examine the nature of the prehistoric landscape with a view to redressing the imbalance of the Roman dominated archaeology prevalent since archaeological study in the area began’*<sup>24</sup>. This work highlighted the large number of potential prehistoric sites identified from aerial photographs and although no sites were identified by Bewley’s work close to the proposed development area, archaeological evidence for Neolithic occupation has been revealed through excavation at Plasketlands near Mawbray, where an extensive palisade of posts has been radiocarbon dated to 3970-2535 cal BC and 4032-3720 cal BC<sup>25</sup>. At present, there is no definitive evidence of prehistoric activity within the vicinity of the proposed development area, although this does not mean the area was not exploited during this period.

- 3.4.3 The archaeological evidence for the Roman period in Britain (c.43-410AD) is largely in the form of military installations, with forts believed to have existed at Kirkbride, where Ferguson noted was located beneath the church<sup>26</sup> and at Beckfoot to the south of Silloth. A Roman milefortlet (No. 9) situated on the Grune was discovered by Dr St Joseph from the air; it was located on the highest part of a low sandy hill overlying the raised beach. This milefortlet appears to form part of a line of similar structures, with another example known at Cardurnock (No. 5) on the opposite side of Moricambe Bay, and at Silloth Golf Course, Cuning Hill (Tower 13a) and Wolsty (Tower 13b), all to the south of Silloth itself. Bellhouse suggests that the milefortlets at Cardurnock and Skinburness are significant as they not only watched the entrance to Moricambe, but the one at Cardurnock was the terminus of a complete sector of units and that at Skinburness was the start of a new sector. The milefortlet at Skinburness was noted by Bellhouse to have been well sited both for defence and outlook *‘as if its founders intentionally chose the best ground and made it the starting point for a new sector of towers and milefortlets, the Beckfoot sequence’*<sup>27</sup>. Ferguson suggested that a Roman road may have led to Skinburness, and that the settlement may have been the site of an important port during the Roman period, as it was in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>28</sup>. A hoard of Roman coins was discovered at Cotebank, ½ a mile south-west of Skinburness in 1894, and an altar with the inscription *MATRIBVS PARCIS* (‘to the mother fates’) was found among boulders on the coast near Skinburness prior to 1866<sup>29</sup>.
- 3.4.4 The archaeological evidence for early medieval (c.410-1066AD) settlement in the area around Silloth and Skinburness largely comes from place names as already noted in 3.4.1 above. No early medieval sites were identified in any published or unpublished material consulted. An archaeological evaluation at Solway Lido, to the south of

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<sup>22</sup> For example work by Cherry and Cherry

<sup>23</sup> Brennand, M (Ed), 2006, Page 31

<sup>24</sup> Bewley, R.H., 1994, Page 83

<sup>25</sup> Brennand, M (Ed), 2006, Page 32

<sup>26</sup> Ferguson, R.S., 1890, Page 45

<sup>27</sup> Bellhouse, R.L., 1962, Pages 62, 67 and 68

<sup>28</sup> Ferguson, R.S., 1890, Pages 45 and 73

<sup>29</sup> Grainger, F and Collingwood, W.G., 1929, Page 112



Skinburness, and to the north-east of Silloth, revealed ditches which contained charred grain that was dated by radio-carbon dating to the 10<sup>th</sup> century<sup>30</sup>.

- 3.4.5 It has already noted in 3.4.1 above that the place name *Skyneburg* was first documented in 1175, suggesting a settlement already existed by this date. The abbey of Holm Cultram had been founded in 1150 and within 25 years granges (farms) had been established by the monks at sites such as Mawbray, *Rabi* (Raby), *Skinburgh* (Skinburness) and the *grange de Ternis* (of the Tarns)<sup>31</sup>.
- 3.4.6 In 1301 King Edward I granted a charter making Skinburness a port and a borough. In the same year Bishop John de Halton authorised the abbey to build a chapel or church to serve the vill or burgh near the port of Skinburness, with a cemetery as for a parish church<sup>32</sup>. Shortly after this date it would appear that the settlement of Skinburness, as it was in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, had been washed away as a further charter issued in 1305 stated that the abbot *'has given us to understand that a greater part of the said burgh and the way leading unto the same by divers invasions and storms is made such a deep haven that their men cannot come or inhabit there as they were wont before'*<sup>33</sup>. In 1303 Bishop Halton is noted to have granted a licence to the abbot to build a church or chapel within the territory of Arlosh: *'which in consequence of the removal of the town thither, acquired the name of Newton-Arlosh, and in 1304 the abbot petitioned parliament that he might have at this place the market and fair which had been granted him at Skinburness; this petition was granted. The church [Newton Arlosh Church], then built, in consequence of the frequent hostile invasions of the Scots, which are spoken of in the bishop's charter, was constructed so as to answer the purpose of a fortress'*<sup>34</sup>.
- 3.4.7 The chapel of St Johns at Skinburness, which was licensed by Bishop Halton in 1301, had a short life except that the site was used for burials. Grainger and Collingwood noted that it was located *'in the fourth field from the Grune Point, now long since ploughed over, though chippings of sandstone have been observed, indicating the remains of masonry. Some exploration was begun, but the late Chancellor Ferguson said that digging had to be given up, owing to the great number of internments found'*<sup>35</sup>.
- 3.4.8 During the early 14<sup>th</sup> century Skinburness was an important strategic site during the Scottish wars. Prior to the possibly exaggerated 'washing away of Skinburness' the village was in its heyday as a port and military storage depot during the reign of Edward I. Neilson noted that *'many ships were there laden with provisions of every kind. It possessed unrivalled advantages as an emporium for provisions and warlike stores; it was the northmost and most convenient harbour of western England'*<sup>36</sup>. Documentary evidence for Skinburness as an important port and supply base is referred to in 1300 when John Doxford, keeper of the wardrobe (part of the royal household), is recorded as having visited Skinburness to arrange for victuals (food provisions) and in

<sup>30</sup> Jones, C.J, 2004 and CWAAS 2005, Page 295

<sup>31</sup> Grainger, F and Collingwood, W.G, 1929, Page 116

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, Page 136

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, Page 137

<sup>34</sup> Lysons Rev. D and Lysons, S, 1816, Page 114

<sup>35</sup> Grainger, F and Collingwood, W.G, 1929, Page 163

<sup>36</sup> Neilson, G, 1899, Pages 59-60

the same year ships ferried supplies from Skinburness, the port for Carlisle, into Galloway<sup>37</sup>. At one point in 1300 a large number of ships, 27 from the Cinque Ports on the south coast of England, and others from Ireland, Whitehaven and Allonby, assembled at Skinburness, providing some indication of the former importance of the village. As far as the form of a 'harbour' (if one existed) is concerned, there has been as yet no archaeological evidence for such a feature; it has been suggested that it is more likely that boats were moored along the shingle beach as was the practice in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>38</sup>.

- 3.4.9 The following is information compiled by G Price regarding some of the provisions at Skinburness between the years 1301 and 1306<sup>39</sup>, suggesting that the port remained even after the supposed washing away of the settlement (CPR stands for Calender of Patent Rolls followed by the page number and date):

Items from the Calendar of Patent Rolls of Edward 1st concerning the port of Skinburness

CPR 2.1301, Mandate to John Wogan, Justiciar of Ireland:

*To purvey and despatch the following provision for the use of the king and his son, Edward, Prince of Wales and his other subjects on the Scottish Expedition:*

*2000 Qts of Wheat, 2000 Qts of Oats, 2000 Qts of Malt, 4000 great fish, 20,000 herring and they are to send thereof to Skynburnesh for the munition of the castle of Dunfres and Loghmabon...and the residue to the castle of Newcastle on Ayre... as soon as possible and by the Purification at the latest.*

CPR 4, 1301, Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, Mandate to John Wogan etc:

*200 tuns of wine, 20 tuns of honey to Skinburnesh.*

CPR 159, 1303, Sept 23, Mandate to John Wogan, etc:

*500 Qtrs of What, 500 Qtrs of Oats, 500 Qtrs f Malt, 100 tuns of wine to Skinburnesh.*

CPR 208, 1304, Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, Mandate to John Wogan etc:

*600 Qtrs of Wheat, 600 Qtrs of Oats, 600 Qtrs of Malt, 600 Qtrs of beans and peas, 100 tuns of wine to Skunburnesh for the castle of Dunfires and Loughmabon and other of the Kings castle in these parts.*

CPR 356, 1305, April 15<sup>th</sup>:

*Commission of Oyer and Terminer to Robert de Tillol and James Dalilegh on complaint by the collectors and receivers of victuals in the ports of Carlisle that whereas a ship laden in Ireland with wine, corn and other goods, in coming to Scotland for the maintenance of the Kings subjects in the war there, and for the munition of the castle in those parts, was wrecked at Skunburnesh and 30 tuns of wine and one of wheat were caste on the sea coast between the Abbey of Holmcoltran and land of Richard de Kirkebrid in the County of Cumberland, certain malefactors of*

<sup>37</sup> Prestwich, M, 1997, Pages 141 and 486

<sup>38</sup> Holme St Cuthbert History Group, 2007, Page 149

<sup>39</sup> Price, G, 1994



*those parts broke the tun of corn and carried it and the said tuns of wine away and consumed them.*

CPR 417, 1306, Feb 20<sup>th</sup>:

*Mandate to Master Richard de havering, Constable of Bordeaux, to purvey out of the issues of the Duchy, 200 tuns of wine to the King's use in the fresh rebellion of the Scots, and to cause them to be taken to Skyburnesse by Ascension at the latest to James de Dalilegh appointed to receive victuals in those parts.*

Ditto, March 1<sup>st</sup>:

*The like to John Wogan, justiciary of Ireland, and the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer, Dublin, to purvey against the new Scotch rebellion as well as from the money arising from the tenth from the clergy in Ireland as from the issues of that land, 3000 Qtrs of wheat, half thereof boulded and put in tuns, 3000 Qtrs of oats, 1000 Qtrs of oat malt, 200 tuns of wine, 200 carcasses of beef, 300 bacons, 10,000 hard fish and to have a moiety of the whole carried to Skynburness and a moiety to Newcastle-on-Are, by Ascension at the latest. The follow instructions to 10 bailiffs or sheriffs of 14 counties in England likewise to despatch in all: 8000 Qtrs of wheat, 10,500 Qtrs of oats, 3000 Qtrs of malt, 2500 Qtrs of barle and barley malt, 2400 bacons, 10,000 hard fish, 140 tuns of wine. The whole of which will be also shared between Skymburness and Newcastle-on-Are.*

CPR 423, 1306, April 5<sup>th</sup>:

*Mandate to the Sherriff of Worcester to purvey 300 Qtrs of wheat, ditto of oats, 200 Qtrs of malt, 100 bacons, out of the issues of his bailiwick... and to have them carried to Skynbress by Ascension at the latest to be delivered to James de Dalilegh receiver of the stores there.*

CPR 428, 1306, April 25<sup>th</sup>:

*Mandate to John Wogan, Justiciary of Ireland, and the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer, Dublin, to hasten the purveyance of the victuals lately ordered to be made for the expedition of Edward, Prince of Wales, to be joined afterwards by the King, against Robert de Brus, sometime Earl of Carrick, and his accomplices in Scotland and in addition to purvey 200 tuns of wine and send them with the rest to Skynburness and to see that they are not taken to Galloway or the confines of Scotland.*

CPR 431, 1306, May 6<sup>th</sup>:

*Grant to the barons, bailiffs and goodmen of the Cinque Ports, at their request, that the service of 57 ships in the whole which is due from them for the Scotch expedition and which they were commanded to have at Skinburness a fortnight after Midsummer, shall be at present made by 27 ships, on condition that they be furnished with as many sailors and fencible men as the 57 would have been furnished with, and they contain the same equipment in the number of persons.*

CPR 490, 1307, Feb 1<sup>st</sup> at Lanercost:

*Appointment of William de Mulcastre, sheriff of Cumberland and James de Dalileye, to get ready empty ships and barges at Skymburness, Whitehaven and Workington and*



*elsewhere by the shore in that county, and find them in men and necessities to go to the parts of Are (Ayr) to repress the malice of Robert de Bruce and his accomplices. Writ de intendendo in pursuance to the men of that county. Appointment of John du Ludas Captain and Governor of the fleets from Skinburness, Whitehaven and Workington.*

CPR 491, 1307, Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> at Lanercost:

*Mandate to Richard de Bereford, treasurer of Ireland, to purvey 500 tuns of wine in addition to the wine and victuals which the King heretofore commanded him to make in Ireland and to send the same to Skymberness to the keeper of the store there. The king has sent the bearer Laurence de la Ryvere to review his diligence herein.*

3.4.10 Summerson in his two volumes of Medieval Carlisle, also refers to supplies being brought into Skinburness from Cumberland or elsewhere. He refers to bread made by bakers in Carlisle being taken to the port and then transported north. Irish merchants and ship owners were often used to transport victuals to Skinburness and Carlisle, for example Richard Dover, merchant of Dundalk to whom the Crown owed £100 in 1303 *'for wines taken from him in Carlisle for supplies of castle in Scotland'*<sup>40</sup>. Skinburness was still acting as a supply base in 1315 when reference is made to provision intended for shipment there had to be diverted to meet the needs of Irish castles and troops<sup>41</sup>. As well as victuals, supplies such as siege engines and horses were also noted to have been carried from Skinburness by boat and barge to Caerlaverlock Castle, south-west Scotland, including what McIntire refers to as *'the monster Robinet, a fearsome engine of destruction'*<sup>42</sup>.

3.4.11 Following the Dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the following information was recorded regarding Skinburness on the lands within the Holm, in the hands of the abbey:

*'Skinburhg, or Silloth grange, with the ox byar and barn worth 1s. yearly and 24 flatts or closes totalling 198 ½ acres. In 1572 these were reckoned as 200½ acres and were held by Mr Dalston for 21 years; in 1604 by Mr Dudley'*<sup>43</sup>. Writing at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century William Camden noted that *'the ocean driving and dashing upon the shire, affordeth plenty of excellent good fish, and upbraideth, as it were, in inhabitants thereabouts with their negligence for that they practice fishing no more than they doe'*. Nor was there much trading along the coasts of Cumberland. In 1565 it was recorded that there were *'six several creeks'* in the county, at Ravenglass, Whitehaven, Workington, Maryport, Boustead Hill and Skinburness *'whereof the creek of Skinburness be not commonly used nor occupied with any traffic or trade of merchandise, and the residue is occupied with trade inward and outward of these landing-points. So Lord Scrope reported in 1572, Maryport, Whitehaven, Ravenglass and Workington could receive ships of 60 to 90 tons, at least at the spring tides, while Skinburness could receive one of 130 tons, fair sized craft, when English coastal*

<sup>40</sup> Summerson, H, 1993, Pages 199-200

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, Page 223

<sup>42</sup> McIntire, W.T, 1931

<sup>43</sup> Grainger, F and Collingwood, W.G, 1929, Page 163

*vessels were usually of about 30 tons. But in fact no vessels of such tonnage were in use*<sup>44</sup>.

- 3.4.12 The Sea Dyke which runs southwards from Skinburness, on the western edge of Skinburness Marsh, may have had medieval origins, although recent archaeological work on the structure did not reveal any evidence from this period<sup>45</sup>. The earliest documentary reference to existing 'Seadykes' at Skinburness was in 1570, when a jury of 24 '*antient and sage tenants*' were chosen on whose verdict '*the custom of the manor was established and a bargain entered into with the tenants that on condition of their undertaking the charge of repairing the seadyke the timber growing in Wedholme Wood should be handed over by the crown for the purposes of repairing this defence*'. Grainger suggested that the sea dyke may have been constructed after the 'destruction' of the port of Skinburness<sup>46</sup>. Buildings at Skinburness are alluded to in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when reference was made to Robert Taylor's house at Skinburness, in relation to the sea dyke<sup>47</sup>. The organisational body 'The Sixteen men' exercised local control over a wide range of functions, including the repair and maintenance of the seadyke. This body existed between 1630 and 1884; in 1888 the duties of the 'Sixteen Men' were taken over by the Trustees of the Holm Cultram Sea Dyke Charity, who in 1995 relinquished their responsibilities to the National Rivers Authority<sup>48</sup>.
- 3.4.13 Writing at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Hutchinson described the land in the parish of Holm Cultram as '*chiefly of fine level green marshy land, affording the finest pasturage for horses and cattle of any common in Cumberland*'. He noted that there were valuable fisheries in the parish, particularly around Skinburness, where many of the inhabitants earned a living from fishing. He also noted that the older buildings in the area were poor clay huts, although modern dwellings were constructed of stone or brick<sup>49</sup>.
- 3.4.14 In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jollie's Cumberland Guide and Directory of 1811 refers to Skinburness as a fishing village and bathing place '*where a good inn is kept by Mrs Carrick*<sup>50</sup>'. This may actually be the former Greyhound Inn, rather than the Duke's Head Inn. Writing in 1829, Parson and White described Skinburness: '*a pleasant village, and fashionable sea-bathing place, situated near Grune Point in Low Holme township. Here is a good inn, which affords every accommodation to its numerous visitors. A passage boat plies daily to Annan*'. In the trade directory two inns are listed as being at Skinburness, the Duke's Head (occupied by Foster Penrice) and the Greyhound Inn, described as a bathing house and run by George Graves<sup>51</sup>. The Greyhound Inn (now known as the Long House) is believed to be one of the earliest properties in Skinburness; it was certainly the Greyhound Inn by the late 1700s when its landlady was Miss Lucy Carrick. The building belonged to Richard Harker of Allonby and in 1803 he advertised for a new tenant in the Cumberland Paquet. The advert gave a description of the property which included hot baths, stables, a coach

<sup>44</sup> Summerson, H, 1993, Page 575

<sup>45</sup> Fletcher, M and Miller, I, 1997

<sup>46</sup> Grainger, F, 1903, Page 173

<sup>47</sup> Denton, T, 1687-1688, Page 199

<sup>48</sup> Fletcher, M and Miller, I, 1997, Page 206

<sup>49</sup> Hutchinson, W, 1794-1797, Page 345

<sup>50</sup> Jollie's Cumberland Guide and Directory, 1811, Page 9

<sup>51</sup> Parson and White, 1829, Pages 342 and 344



house and garden: the inn was ‘most eligibly situate for salt water bathing...and has been much resorted to by great numbers of ladies and gentlemen of high distinction during the bathing season’<sup>52</sup>. What is interesting about this advertisement is that sea bathing and the ‘bathing season’ was a feature of the area from as early as the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Towns such as Allonby was noted as a ‘place of great resort for bathing’ also by the early 1800s, and by 1835 it became home to the area’s first purpose-built tourist attraction, Allonby Baths, which provided amenities where the moneyed classes could enjoy the fad for bathing in sea water which had been popularised by the Prince Regent at Brighton<sup>53</sup>. Silloth Baths was one of the first buildings to be constructed in the new town, following the arrival of the railway in 1856<sup>54</sup>. In the publication ‘Old Silloth and Allonby’, Grahamslaw refers to an 1833 edition of the Carlisle Journal in which the ‘Skinburness Inn’ thanked: ‘*The English and Scottish Nobility, Gentry and Public for the many favours conveyed upon the hotel*’. The building was described as ‘*delightful and convenient..adapted for invalids and those who seek only recreation..hot baths and private sitting rooms, the sands are not as bad as frequently reported*’. Grahamslaw suggests that this inn was the Duke’s Head as he noted that the inn was rebuilt in the 1880s by Edwin Hodge Banks<sup>55</sup>.

- 3.4.15 Several ship wrecks are recorded just off the shore at Skinburness; the sailing ship ‘Grampus’ was lost in 1821, and the whole crew perished. In 1878 the crew of the ‘Flower of Banff’ had a luckier escape when the ship went down. Smuggling was supposedly common along the coast, with the Long House (or Greyhound Inn) believed to have been connected with such activities<sup>56</sup>.
- 3.4.16 Salt making has been an important industry in the area around Silloth. The long wide sandy beaches of the Solway offered perfect conditions for the formation of natural salt beds. These are formed where ‘clayey’ sand allows salt retention after being covered by the tide. The salt particles were revealed after the heat of the sun, and collected for the next process, evaporation, in shallow metal ‘saltpans’ over a peat fire. Traces of this industry can still be found in place names such as Salta, Saltcoats and Saltpans, and from depressions along the shore between Silloth and Allonby. The traditional industry is believed to have died out by 1780<sup>57</sup>. The possibility of the presence of salt pans close to Skinburness and the proposed development area needs to be considered, although the concentration appears to be located between Silloth and Allonby. A salt pan is, however, annotated on a map produced by Lancaster University Archaeological Unit following work on the sea dyke in the 1990s, located on the opposite side of the road to Sea Dyke End Farm, to the south of Skinburness<sup>58</sup>.
- 3.4.17 Writing in 1847, Mannix and Whellan noted that ‘*several neat houses have been erected [at Skinburness] within the last few years, amongst which is one belonging to Mr Samuel Rigg of Wigton, which he occupies during the bathing season*’. This is interesting as it provides evidence of 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘holiday homes’. Foster Penrice is

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<sup>52</sup> Holme St Cuthbert History Group, 2007, Page 150

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, Page 31

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, Page 33

<sup>55</sup> Grahamslaw, T, 2007, Page 6

<sup>56</sup> Heath, L, 1968, Page 15

<sup>57</sup> Scott-Parker, M, 1999, Page 8

<sup>58</sup> Fletcher, M and Miller, I, 1997, Page 209



listed as occupying the Dukes Head Inn at this date<sup>59</sup>; given that Foster Penrice is listed on the Tithe Award of 1850 as being resident at the property formerly located on the site of the Skinburness Hotel, then it is possible to suggest that the Dukes Head Inn recorded in 1847 is the same as that shown on the Tithe Map of 1850. Other trades and occupations listed as being resident at Skinburness in 1847 includes a shoemaker, several 'preventive' offices, a gentleman, a nail maker, a shopkeeper and three farmers<sup>60</sup>. The Greyhound Inn is not listed in this directory which suggests it may have ceased to be an inn by 1847, although not all businesses necessarily included themselves in these trade directories. In 1876, Foster Penrice was still occupying the Duke's Head at Skinburness<sup>61</sup>.

3.4.18 By 1890, Allonby was described as formerly a seaside watering-place of great renown, however by this date Ferguson refers to it having lost its former glory. Skinburness, also described as of great renown, was only saved from the same fate by the '*erection of a small but good hotel*'<sup>62</sup>. The Skinburness Hotel was built by Edwin Hodge Banks of Wigton, whose family owned a small cotton mill in the town and lived in the mansion at Highmoor. It does not appear to have been the earliest purpose-built hotel in the Silloth area; building work on the Queens and the Solway (Golf) Hotels in Silloth had apparently started in the 1850's prior to the railway reaching the town. The Silloth Hydro was opened in 1908 by Charles H Hawkins. The Hydro's terms were always highly competitive. In its early days, full board was six shillings and sixpence per day or two guineas per week. This included breakfast, dinner, tea and supper plus 'a short Russian or Turkish bath before 8am for Gentlemen'. A reduction was made when two people occupied one bed. Intoxicating liquors and gambling were prohibited but a Smoke Room was provided on the first floor'. During the Second World War, The Hydro was used to accommodate airmen from the RAF station<sup>63</sup>. Cartographic evidence shows that the Skinburness Hotel was constructed on the site of the Duke's Head Inn and another property (compare Figures 11 and 12). The Carlisle Journal of the 26<sup>th</sup> August 1887 reported that a new hotel was under construction at Skinburness for E H Banks, Architect Mr Ferguson, and being erected on the site of the old Duke's Head Inn, '*been in the course of erection several months*'. This article is useful as it provides a year of construction for the Skinburness Hotel as 1887. As part of this desk-based assessment, an attempt was made to locate any surviving original building control plans and elevations for the new hotel, which would have provided valuable information on the original intended use of the rooms. Despite the best efforts of staff at Carlisle Record Office, however, it would appear that these plans no longer survive.

3.4.19 E H Banks also constructed Chichester House (later known as The Towers and now known as Chichester Hall) immediately to the north of the Skinburness Hotel, as a seaside villa. Here he kept his 30-foot steam yacht, the 'Neptune' which he used to impress his friends and to give guests at the hotel trips on the Solway. The Skinburness Hotel cost over £20, 000 to build, but by 1898 Banks was forced to sell it to an hotelier from Carlisle for only £7000<sup>64</sup>. Plates 1 to 6 are reproductions of

<sup>59</sup> Mannix and Whellan, 1847, Pages 468 and 471

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, Page 471

<sup>61</sup> Slater's Directory of Cumberland, 1876, Page 100

<sup>62</sup> Ferguson, R.S, 1890, Page 285

<sup>63</sup> Holme St Cuthbert History Group, 2007, Page 35

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, Page 37

photographs taken in 1892 and in the early 1900s. Plates 3 to 6 were included within Wood's Souvenir Album of Silloth produced in 1892, at which date the Skinburness Hotel appears to be known as the Marine Hotel.

- 3.4.20 Sales particulars dating to c.1898 provide an interesting insight in the use of the rooms within the hotel, as well as providing photographs of the exterior of the building at that date (Plates 7 to 9). The hotel was advertised in the Sales Particulars as the 'Marine Hotel and Golf Hydro, Skinburness', the auctioneer and valuer being Walter P Gibbings, and Saul and Lightfoot the solicitors. Plates 10 and 11 are the descriptions given in the Sales Particulars<sup>65</sup>. It would appear the hotel was purchased by G F Brown, Esq. from E H Banks of Highmoor House. A ledger relating to this sale contains lists of all the contents of the rooms in the hotel in 1898 and is now housed at Carlisle Record Office (Ref: DX 1834/5). This is an interesting source as it provides information on how the rooms were furnished. For example, Attic Room No.1 contained an iron bedstead, spring mattress, toilet ware, luggage stand, stair carpet, can chair and a Kidderminster carpet; Bedroom No.5 contained two cornice poles, one picture, water bottle, linoleum mat, two brass French bedsteads, two wire mattresses, 30yds carpet, one luggage stand, one sponge tray, one chair and two glass shades. One bedroom in particular was obviously large and well furnished as its contents included a French bedstead, down mattress, two wire mattresses, 4ft 6" brass bedstead, 3ft 6" brass bedstead, 5ft brass bedstead, two linoleum mats, two glass shades, nine toilet sets, four slop jars, four bottles, walnut bedroom suite (3ft), walnut bedroom suite (4ft), two walnut toilet tables, one walnut dressing chest and one walnut wash stand. In total eight attic rooms are listed, 22 bedrooms, one drawing room, one dining room, one smoking room, four bathrooms, six sitting rooms, one coffee room, a tap room, cupboards and linen closets, entrance hall, cellar, scullery, kitchen, housemaids pantry and outside pantry, old bar, old kitchen, office bar, larder, several lavatories, one billiard room (which contained a clock, two odd chairs, two folding chairs, four upholstered cushions, a piano, billiard table and accessories, one spittoon and a pair of dogs) as well as outside buildings housing a laundry and wash house, engine room, stable, yard and garden. As this is a list of contents, it is possible that not all of the rooms were included if they were empty. It is interesting to note the preponderance of a 'pair of dogs' which may refer to 'fire dogs', which were used to support the grate.
- 3.4.21 Bulmer's Directory of 1901 records George F Brown as the proprietor of the Skinburness Hotel, therefore it was presumably him that bought the property from Edwin H Banks, who is listed in the same directory as residing at Chichester House. Bulmer's Directory described the Skinburness Hotel as a large and commodious building which had recently been erected on the site of an old hotel of much less pretensions<sup>66</sup>. The 1901 Census records George Brown (aged 33, born in Carlisle) as the hotel proprietor, living in the hotel along with his three young daughters aged 8, 7 and 3 (with no mention of a wife), and three servants.
- 3.4.22 A letter housed in a file of papers relating to the Marine or Skinburness Hotel dates to July 1904, and refers to the late Mr G F Brown of the Skinburness Hotel, noting that he suffered from alcoholic paralysis and liver disease. On the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1904 the Skinburness Marine Hotel, as well as Corby Bridge Hotel, were up for auction in the

<sup>65</sup> Carlisle Record Office Ref: D Mounsey 153/204

<sup>66</sup> Bulmer, T, & Co, 1901, Page 217



City Hall Estate Room, Botchergate, Carlisle. The Skinburness Marine Hotel was described as:

*'All that magnificent and comparatively newly-erected fully-licensed hotel, situate at Skinburness, Silloth, on the shore of the Solway, in the county of Cumberland, and known as the Marine Hotel. The hotel is architecturally imposing, with beautiful outlook over the Firth and Scotch and Cumberland hills. It is in every respect well built and finished in high-class style. The rooms are all lofty, well lighted and well-appointed in every respect and comprise two charming drawing rooms, two splendid dining rooms, seven sitting rooms and offices, 40 good bedrooms, attractive and semi-detached billiard room with lavatory, bathrooms (supplied with sea and fresh water), lavatories on separate floors, commodious and suitably-situated kitchens, superior cellars; also three public bars, good ranges of stable and coach-house accommodation; formed lawn tennis ground with kitchen garden and pleasure ground, with electric light, engines, dynamos etc. The hotel is well adapted from every point of view for a seaside hotel or Hydropathic establishment. The salubrity, attractiveness, and popularity of the Solway has been long established, and the district if constantly growing in popularity with all classes. The metrological tables indicate an evenness of temperature, which, together with the splendid admixture of mountain and sea breezes, the charming views, good bathing, and quietude so necessary to the restoration of health, make the locality the most desirable as a health resort on the north-west coast during all the seasons of the year. Immediate possession can be obtained, and the elaborate furnishings may, at the option of the purchaser, be taken at a valuation'<sup>67</sup>.*

3.4.23 Correspondence between solicitors in 1904 suggests that the hotel may have been purchased by a Mr Saint of Carlisle, who also had connections with the Hotel Metropole in Blackpool<sup>68</sup>. The papers housed at Carlisle Record Office do not appear to confirm this; however it is known that he put in an offer for the property of £3700 in May 1904. This seemingly low price appears to be due to the poor condition of the hotel. A letter to R Dalton, Carlisle from a Mr Atkinson of Workington reads: *'I thank you for yours of 4<sup>th</sup> inst. Mrs Atkinson and myself are prepared to undertake the management of the Skinburness Hotel and ? conduct it in the best possible manner under our person as superintendents. We know the condition of the place but feel confident that with careful attention the house could soon be made to command a good business. No doubt there are parts that could be closed for a time thereby curtailing staff expenses as much as possible until the business improved.*

3.4.24 At the start of the First World War, the empire's largest ammunition factory was constructed at Eastriggs near Gretna. It was mainly staffed by immigrant Irish labour, who had no where to spend their high wages except in the pubs. Drunkenness, especially in Carlisle, became a serious problem. In 1916, the government issued compulsory purchase orders for all four Carlisle breweries and one in Maryport. All their licensed premises were also taken over and many were closed down. The licensed premises that remained open were strictly controlled and made as uninventing as possible; these included virtually every pub and hotel along the coast<sup>69</sup>. The Skinburness Hotel was the subject of compulsory purchase in 1918, when it was

<sup>67</sup> Carlisle Record Office Ref: DX 1813/5

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>69</sup> Holme St Cuthbert History Group, 2007, Page 36



described as *'The fully licensed hotel and premises known as the Skinburness Hotel otherwise the Marine Hotel, with outbuildings, garage, stables, engine and dynamo house, laundry, gardens, tennis lawn, greenhouse and land adjoining in the occupation of Mrs Alice Wells'*. The name of Thomas Hilton, Chertsey Hill, Harraby, Carlisle is also given on the schedule, as owner, with Mrs Alice Wells as occupier<sup>70</sup>. The Marine Hotel was one of several hotels acquired by the Carlisle State Management Scheme. These included The Crown at Wetheral, the Victoria in Carlisle, the Red Lion, Carlisle, The Solway at Silloth and The Waverley in Silloth. No change was made in the status of these buildings however they were altered by redecoration, furnishing and equipment<sup>71</sup>, presumably in an attempt to make them less inviting to drinkers. In 1929, Mrs Ethel Robinson is listed as manageress of The Marine Hotel, Skinburness<sup>72</sup>, and she appears to still have been there in 1934 when the hotel is listed as the Skinburness Hotel<sup>73</sup>. The 1954 Cumberland Directory refers to a 'Skinburness Towers Hotel' (proprietor Miss M Robinson); it is not known if this is the Skinburness Hotel or Chichester Hall, which has been known as The Towers.

- 3.4.25 During the Second World War, Silloth was a natural target for the Germans to bomb because of the docks and the aerodrome where airmen were stationed and trained. The aerodrome had been created on the site of Baird's Farm, from whom the Ministry of Defence bought the land with a compulsory purchase order<sup>74</sup>. In an attempt to deflect the German bombers away from Silloth aerodrome, several dummy runways were constructed in the area on unused land, one between Lowsay and Wolsty, one between Aikshaw and Mealrigg and another between Edderside and New Cowper moss<sup>75</sup>. German bombers also flew over the area on their way to bomb targets at Belfast or Glasgow. Three bombs were dropped in the locality; *'one landed on the south side of the tarn in sandy ground and failed to explode. Two other bombs were dropped in wet land near Mealrigg'*. During the Second World War the road from Calvo, to the south-east of Skinburness, and Kingside near Abbeytown was used as an extra landing strip, with aircraft hangers erected near each end<sup>76</sup>. Another feature relating to the Second World War in the Solway Plain are pill boxes, of which there are several around Skinburness. Perhaps one of the most interesting is that located at the end of Grune Point; this pillbox was known as a 'Cumberland Machine-Gun and Anti-Tank Rifle Emplacement', and was constructed to a design which was seemingly unique to Cumberland. It is constructed of concrete 'sand bags' creating a circular structure<sup>77</sup>. Three further pillboxes are shown on a map created by Lancaster University Archaeological Unit between Skinburness and Sea Dyke End Farm to the south-east<sup>78</sup>. No information was gathered during the desk-based assessment regarding the use of the Skinburness Hotel during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in particular if it was utilised for the war effort.

<sup>70</sup> Carlisle Record Office Ref: DBW/13/44/1

<sup>71</sup> Seabury, O, 2007, Page 76

<sup>72</sup> Kelly's Directory of Cumberland, 1929, Page 247

<sup>73</sup> Kelly's Directory of Cumberland, 1934, Page 250

<sup>74</sup> Scott-Parker, M, 1999, Page 61

<sup>75</sup> Holme St Cuthbert History Group, 2004, Page 135

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, Page 136

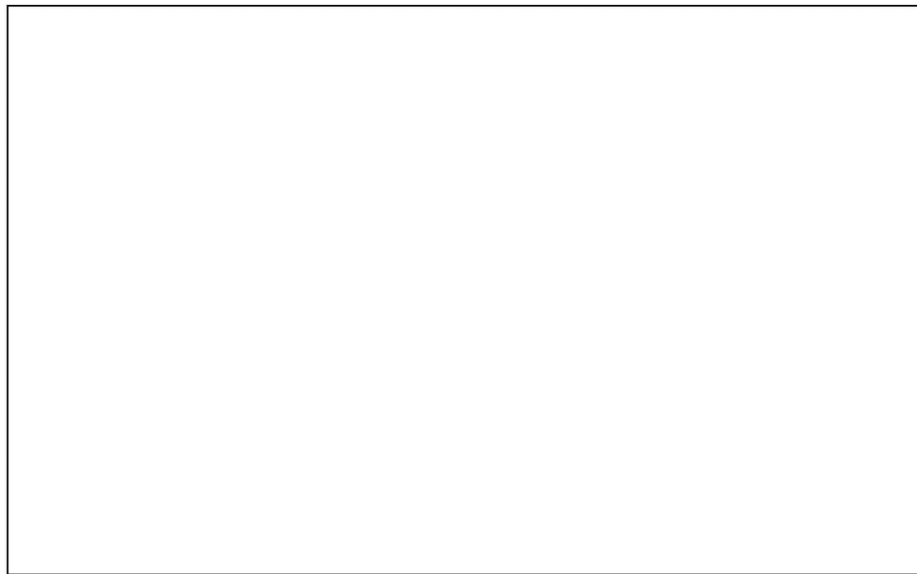
<sup>77</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> Century Defence Architecture in Cumbria (<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~rwbarne/>) – Accessed 22/05/2009

<sup>78</sup> Fletcher, M and Miller, I, 1997, Page 208

- 3.4.26 The Skinburness Hotel closed in 2006 when its owners went bankrupt, and the building was repossessed. The property was bought at auction in 2007 for £450,000<sup>79</sup>.



**Plate 1** – 1909 photograph of the Skinburness Hotel



**Plate 2** – Undated photograph of the Skinburness Hotel

<sup>79</sup> <http://beta.Cumberland-news.co.uk/news/1.135182> – Accessed 12/05/2009



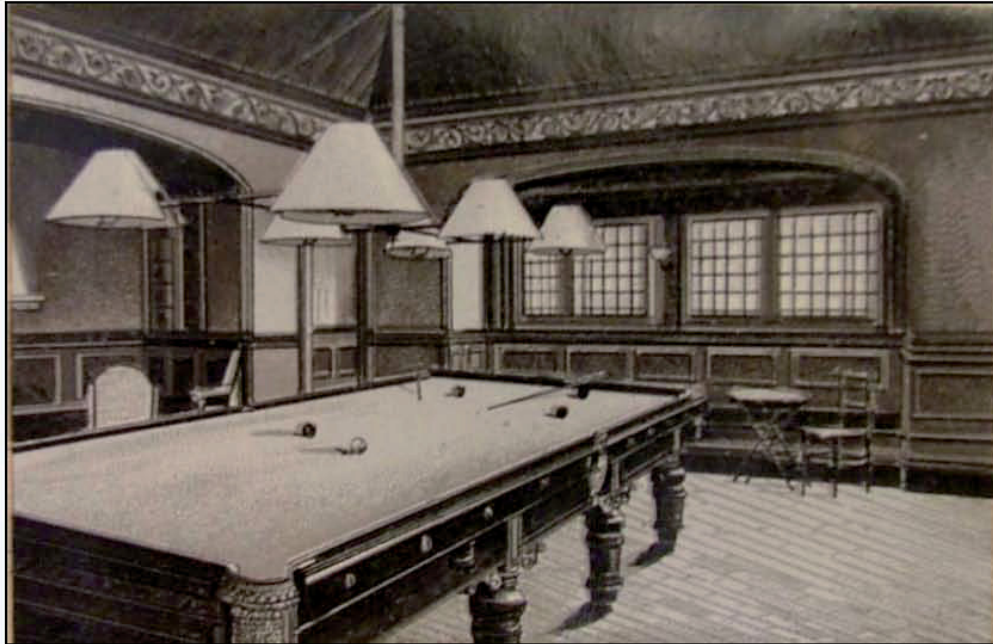


**Plate 3** – View of the ‘Marine’ Hotel 1892, as illustrated in Wood’s Souvenir Album (CL)



**Plate 4** - View of the ‘Marine’ Hotel 1892, as illustrated in Wood’s Souvenir Album (CL)





**Plate 5** – The Billiard Room, Marine Hotel, 1892 (Wood's Souvenir Album)



**Plate 6** – Corridor, Marine Hotel, 1892 (Wood's Souvenir Album)



**Plate 7** – The main elevation of the Skinburness Hotel as seen in c.1898



**Plate 8** – The north-west elevation of the Skinburness Hotel c.1898



**Plate 9** – The south-west elevation of the Skinburness Hotel c.1898



## Marine Hotel & Golf Hydro, Skinburness.

This magnificent Hotel is situated at Skinburness, on the shores of the Solway Firth, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the favourite Seaside Resort of Silloth.

It is completely and handsomely furnished, and thoroughly equipped for carrying on as a first-class Hotel or Hydropathic Establishment.

The accommodation is as follows :—

### On the Ground Floor—

Vestibule and Hall, Dining Room (30 ft. by 15 ft.), Coffee Room (18 ft. by 15 ft.), Billiard Room with Alcove, and Lavatory and W.C. adjoining, 4 Sitting Rooms, Covered Verandah with small lounge, Office, Service Room, Butler's Pantry, Tap Room, Smoking Room, Bar, Men's Lavatories, Kitchen, Scullery, Store Room, Larder, etc.

### On the First Floor—

Drawing Room (40 ft. by 15 ft.), Ladies' Drawing Room (20 ft. by 15 ft.), 4 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms, Ladies' Lavatories, Housemaid's Pantry, Small Sewing Room, Linen Closet.

### On the Second Floor—

14 Bed and Dressing Rooms, Linen Room (heated).

### On the Third Floor—

9 Bedrooms, 2 W.C.'s.

**The Out-offices comprise :—**Large Stable yard, 4 Stall Stable with Loft over, Stall Stable, Motor House, Cart Shed, Harness Room, Wash-house fitted with Washing and Wringing Machines, Laundry with Bradford's Mangle and Drying Horses, Engine and Dynamo House with Hornsby's Oil Engine, Pump House and Oil Store, Coal and Stick Houses, and sundry other useful out-buildings.

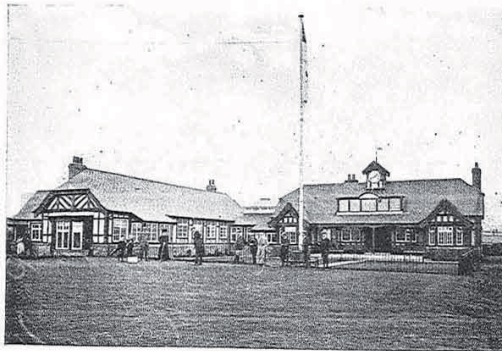
There is a good Tennis Lawn, and a large and productive Kitchen Garden, attached to the Hotel, with small Greenhouse and Potting Shed.

The Water Supply is by gravitation from the Cumberland hills, and sea water is used on for the baths.

**Plate 10 – Sales Particulars c.1898, Page 1**

The Hotel is lighted throughout (except Servants' Bedrooms) by Electricity, which is also used for driving the Laundry Plant.

The Links of the Carlisle and Silloth Golf Club are situated at Silloth,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles



from the Hotel. It is an 18 hole course, and is recognized as one of the best and most sporting courses in the North of England. The club premises are very complete, upwards of £3,000 having been recently spent on their erection. The Annual Subscription to the Club is £2 2s. for gentlemen, and 10/6 for ladies, and the Visitors' Tariff is as follows:—Per day 2/-, per week 7/6, per month 15/-.

Supplies of all kinds can be obtained at Silloth, where there are also Doctors, Churches, Post Office, Telephone, etc.

The Climate of Skinburness is unsurpassed for its delightful and invigorating sea breezes, its moderate rainfall, and its equable temperature, which is very similar to that of Torquay, while the amount of ozone is stated to be greater than at any other resort in the Kingdom.

There is undoubtedly a splendid opening in this district for a first-class Hydro-pathic Establishment run on modern and up-to-date lines.

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*For further particulars and Orders to View, apply to Messrs. SAUL & LIGHTFOOT, Solicitors, Castle Street, Carlisle; or to WALTER P. GIBBINGS, Auctioneer and Estate Agent, Lowther Street, Carlisle.*

**Plate 11** - Sales Particulars c.1898, Page 2



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## 4 BUILDING ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The site was visited on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009 by Fiona Wooler and David Jackson. At the time of survey the windows of the ground floor of all the buildings relating to the Skinburness Hotel were boarded over. It was evident that the building had suffered from some vandalism and theft of lead flashing which has allow water penetration into the fabric of the structure. The buildings shown on the historical mapping to the east of the hotel (see Figure 12 for example) have been demolished. The land immediately to the north-west of the hotel remains as a square area of grass, formerly gardens. To the east boundary of the site is a row of garages, which appear to be visible on the 1971 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 13). Figure 14 shows the directions from which the photographs were taken externally. Figure 15 is a simplistic ground plan showing the location of some of the principal rooms.
- 4.1.2 Internally, the hotel has had several elements of possible original features removed following either the auction in 2007 or by vandalism. Phases of modernisation have also undoubtedly removed any fixtures and fittings, or are now hidden by partition walls or inserted ceilings, in particular in the bedrooms when they were converted to en-suites. Where sections of original cornicing or architrave survive in several rooms, one example will be included within this report for illustrative purposes.

### 4.2 SKINBURNESS HOTEL - EXTERIOR

- 4.2.1 The main elevation of the Skinburness Hotel faces south-west towards Silloth, although its location on the bend in the road means that its full façade cannot be greatly appreciated upon approach (Plates 12 and 13). The hotel is clearly an extremely detailed building architecturally, and quite complex in its construction with varying floor levels, window heights, bay windows and dormers. It was not possible to note externally what the building was constructed from due to the presence of render and red tiles hung vertically on the faces of some of the walls. The dressings for the windows, doorways, and quoins, however, are all of well-dressed red sandstone. The roofs are laid in a mixture of blue slate and red tiles, with decorative ceramic ridge tiles over the main section of the hotel, which contains the entrance door and reception area.
- 4.2.2 To the north-west side of the hotel a single-storey function room has been constructed, possibly on site of the former billiard room and other buildings (compare Plates 17 and 18). The billiard room was described as being semi-detached in 1904 (see 3.4.22 above).
- 4.2.3 Plates 30 to 39 have been included here to show some of the architectural detail within the external elevations, which includes a nicely carved red sandstone door surround to the main entrance, and bargeboards and timber framing to some of the dormers and gables. As would be expected, the majority of the architectural detailing including the alternating long and short quoins in on the elevations which face the roads. It is interesting to note that the tower against the rear elevation (Plate 25) is hidden from view from the road, although it can be seen from Chichester Hall which has a similar tower (Plate 40).



- 4.2.4 There was no evidence observed externally for any earlier structures pre-dating the 1887 hotel, although it has already been noted that all of the external elevations are either covered in render or tiles.



**Plate 12** – South-west elevation of the Skinburness Hotel



**Plate 13** – View looking north-west from outside Whiteways showing the main elevation of the Skinburness Hotel



**Plate 14** – View looking north-west with single-storey extension which houses the sun lounge



**Plate 15** – View looking north-east





**Plate 16** – Octagonal tower, western corner



**Plate 17** – View looking south-east from the garden area





**Plate 18** – Photograph of c.1898 showing the same elevation as Plate 17. Note the single-storey buildings to the left of photograph have now gone to be replaced by the present structure which houses the function room



**Plate 19** – View looking north-east showing part of the single-storey addition to the north-west elevation (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 20** – View looking south-east showing the single-storey additions to the north-west elevation



**Plate 21** – View looking north-east showing the single-storey function room to the north-west side of the main hotel building





**Plate 22** – View looking south-east showing the single-storey function room to the north-west side of the main hotel building (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 23** – View looking south-west showing the single-storey function room to the north-west side of the main hotel building (Scale = 2m)





**Plate 24** – View looking north-west showing the single-storey function room



**Plate 25** – Sign over entrance to function room or conference suite, rear of the Skinburness Hotel



**Plate 26** – View looking south-east of the rear of the Skinburness Hotel, note the tower, a feature which was also incorporated into Chichester Hall. A clock tower was constructed at E H Banks' home at Highmoor, Wigton (1885)



**Plate 27** – View looking south-west of the rear of the Skinburness Hotel





**Plate 28** – View looking south showing part of the rear of the Skinburness Hotel including the tower (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 29** – View looking south-west showing part of the rear of the hotel





**Plate 30** – View looking north showing the south-east elevation of the Skinburness Hotel



**Plate 31** – Detail of the door surround to the main entrance



**Plate 32** – Detail of ground floor window, main elevation of hotel (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 33** – Detail of the window surround, main elevation



**Plate 34** – Part of the main entrance doorway architectural detail



**Plate 35** – Detail of main door surround with the licence sign which reads 'Frederick Adrian Moore'





**Plate 36** – Detail of decorative finial over the octagonal tower, south-west elevation



**Plate 37** – Detail of decorative lead flashing, south-west elevation



**Plate 38** – Detail of decorative tiles, south-west elevation



**Plate 39** – Detail of decorative cast iron ventilation grille, north-east elevation





**Plate 40** – Detail of bargeboards and timber framing around an attic window, south-east elevation. Note the window below appears to be a modern insertion as the scarring of a larger window is visible in the render (see Plate 3)



**Plate 41** – Chichester Hall as seen from the west on Dick Trod Lane



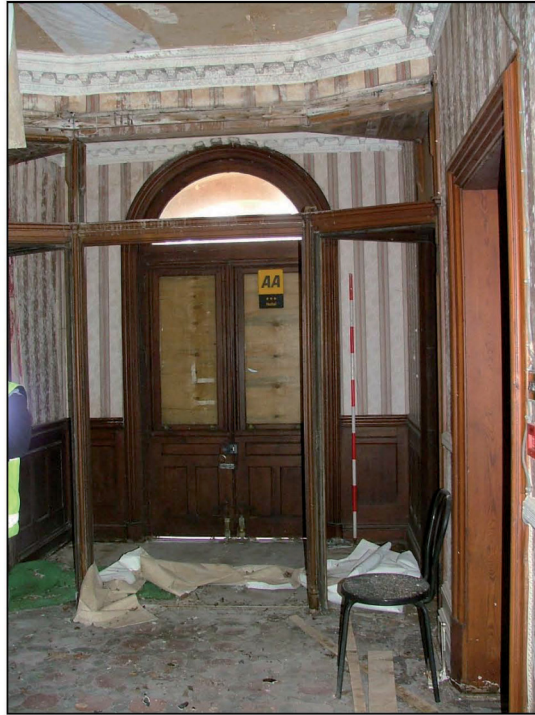
## 4.3 SKINBURNESS HOTEL - INTERIOR

- 4.3.1 The main entrance hall (accessed from the main doorway shown on Plate 30) still retains the framework for the vestibule, although the panelling itself has been removed (Plate 41). At the tops of the walls in the hallway (where the reception was more latterly located) is decorative coving (Plate 42). Other architectural features which survive include the architrave around the doorways to the dining room and the former bar (The Old Dukes Bar) located either side of the main hallway, and the skirting boards (Plates 43 and 44). At the far end of the entrance hallway is a doorway was originally a rear entrance, but is now covered by a modern extension (Plate 46) and a further doorway which provides access to the ground floor of the tower. Some of what may be the original floor tiles survive in places (Plate 47). Set into the floor close to the present reception desk is an aperture which would generally have been covered over with floor boards, and presumably a carpet, which provides access to a steep set of stairs to the cellar (Plate 48). It is interesting that this should be located in such a public space, and it is possible that this was the original cellar access, although there is a further staircase located to the north-west of the building accessed from the leisure club.
- 4.3.2 Located within the ground floor of the tower is a store room, and a gentleman's toilet which appears to still retain its original urinals, which have the maker's or supplier's stamp of 'Farrer, Birmingham' (Plates 49 and 50).
- 4.3.3 The room to the left-hand side of the main entrance hallway, possibly an original dining room, still retains its panelled bay window and decorative coving (Plates 51 and 52). The 'Old Dukes Bar' located on the opposite side of the main entrance hall way has a decorative wood-panelled ceiling which was apparently bought at the time of the auction, but which provided difficult to remove. Evidence for the attempted removal of the panelling could be noted in the north-west corner of the room (Plate 53). Central to this panelling is a well-carved wooden ceiling rose (Plate 54), and 'bosses' in the style of a Tudor rose are located within some of the panels (Plate 55). Where some of the wooden panelling around the bay window has been removed it was possible to note that the building was constructed of brick (Plate 56).
- 4.3.4 Located within the single-storey extension visible on Plate 14 is the former sun lounge, which was illustrated in Wood's Souvenir Album of 1892 (compare Plates 58 and 59). The sun lounge could be accessed separately from the exterior by the double doors visible in Plate 59. The glazed hipped roof over the sun lounge, which cannot be seen from the exterior as it is hidden by a sandstone parapet, would have provided plenty of light and heat into the space (Plate 60).
- 4.3.5 To the north of this sun lounge a swimming pool has been inserted, although the lack of light in this area did not allow for adequate photography. It is not known what the original function of this area was, it may have been one of the many sitting rooms, or the coffee room noted on the sales particulars from c.1898 (Plate 10).
- 4.3.6 The main staircase from the entrance hall way has lost its original balustrades and handrails, which is unfortunate. It was possible to note however that the stair treads themselves were constructed from concrete (Plate 45). At the top of the first flight of stairs from the main hallway is a first floor office, located within the tower (Plate 61).

The panelling from the doorway into this room has been removed, but its frame survives and it appears to be similar to that noted in the main vestibule (see Plate 41). A safe remains within this office space (Plate 62).

- 4.3.7 At first floor level there are 13 bedrooms, set on different levels. The bedrooms all retain what appear to be the original cupboards (Plates 63 and 64). Some of the rooms have had ceilings inserted, presumably when en-suites were added to hide pipework etc, therefore in several of the bedrooms the original coving at the tops of the walls was not visible. At the front of the building, located over the main entrance, is a large room which appears to have more latterly been used as a conference suite or a function room (Plate 65). This room appears to have been described on the sales particulars of c.1898 as a 'drawing room'. This room does retain its original coving, and at various locations decorative metal ventilators are situated close to the top of the wall (Plate 66). This room originally had a double doorway which provided access onto the balcony visible on Plate 2. This balcony has been removed and its former presence is only shown by holes in the external walls. Plate 67 shows the profile of the skirting board in this room (Plate 67). Some of the original window fittings survive in this room (Plate 68).
- 4.3.8 It was noted at the time of the building assessment that few of the bedrooms retained their fireplaces, which have presumably now been removed and the apertures in the walls blocked in and covered over. One of the bedrooms on the first floor provides some evidence for the decorative hearth (Plate 69). On the second floor a fireplace has seemingly survived, although the surround and fittings have been removed (Plate 76).
- 4.3.9 To the rear of the first floor is a small room which has been sub-divided and now contains a dumb waiter (Plate 70).
- 4.3.10 Located at first floor level in the octagonal tower visible on Plate 16 is a roomy bedroom, which is well-lit from its four windows and provides lovely views towards Silloth. The wooden panelling survives beneath the window panes (Plate 71). Some of the rooms appear to contain architectural features which may not have had a structural function such as the recessed archway in one of the first floor bedrooms (Plate 72). Another bedroom on the first floor has spilt levels, with the space for the bed located at the lower level, and a balustraded balcony separating the two spaces; it is not known if this is an original feature or a modern alteration (Plate 73).
- 4.3.11 Located at first floor level, in the section of building which more latterly housed the leisure club (Plate 14), is a staircase with decorative 'wave' metal balusters, and wooden hand rail (Plate 74). The level between first and ground floor of this staircase has been blocked up, but originally it would appear to have run to where the reception area for the leisure club is located (Plate 75).
- 4.3.12 At second floor level from the main staircase, the door from the stairs is set within an archway which originally had decorative capitals but which have now been removed (Plate 77).
- 4.3.13 In the attic space over the main body of the hotel, i.e. the section which houses the main entrance and the bar, there are several bedrooms as well as a communal bathroom and kitchen, which were presumably used as servants quarters, even up until quite recently, as there is a lack of head space as well as architectural detail. These rooms were also accessed from more inferior staircases suggesting that this was indeed a

space for servants. Plate 78 shows the former location of one of the fireplaces in the attic space, the locations of others are now hidden. Plate 79 shows the use of space within the rafters, with a small window in the north-west wall. The skylight is a later insertion. An access hole within the sloping wall of the attic rooms allowed for the observation of the roof space (Plate 80). Here, it was noted that certainly the internal walls were constructed of brick (Plate 81).



**Plate 42** – View from the reception area towards the remains of the main vestibule (Scale = 2m)





**Plate 43** – Detailed of decorative cornice in main entrance hall of hotel



**Plate 44** – Doorway to former dining room as seen from the main entrance hall (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 45** – Detail of skirting board and dado rail, main entrance hall (Scale is in 20cm graduations)



**Plate 46** – Main staircase and doorway to gent's toilets as seen from main entrance hall (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 47** – Rear doors beside the reception area with a small fireplace to the right-hand side  
(Scale = 2m)



**Plate 48** – Detail of flooring in main entrance hall





**Plate 49** – Boarded over stairs to cellar from reception area



**Plate 50** – Detail of gent's toilet located at ground floor level of the tower to the rear of the hotel (Scale = 2m)



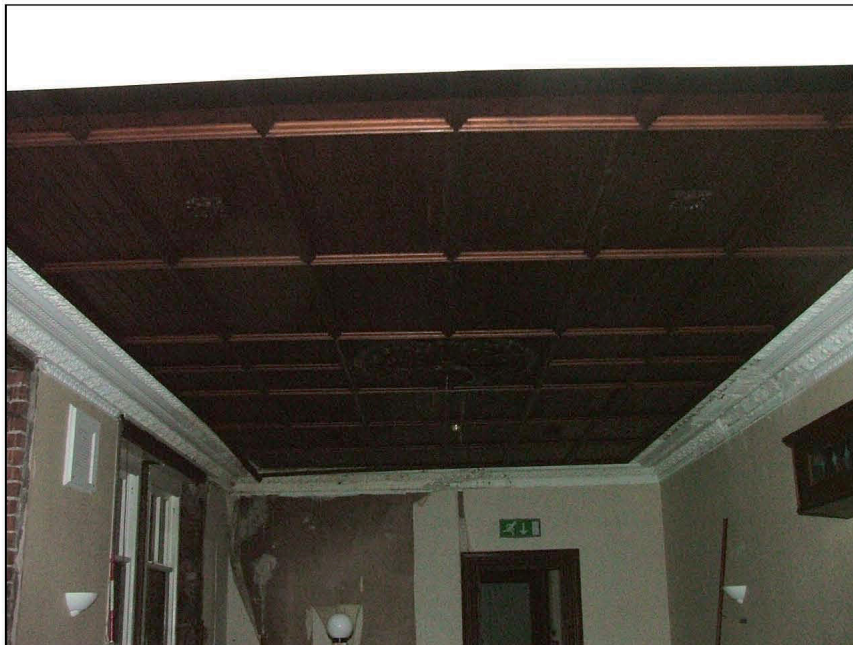
**Plate 51** – Detail of maker's or supplier's mark 'Farrer Birmingham', on pipes in gent's toilet, ground floor or hotel



**Plate 52** – Bay window in former dining room showing the decorative panelling (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 53** – Detail of coving in the former dining room

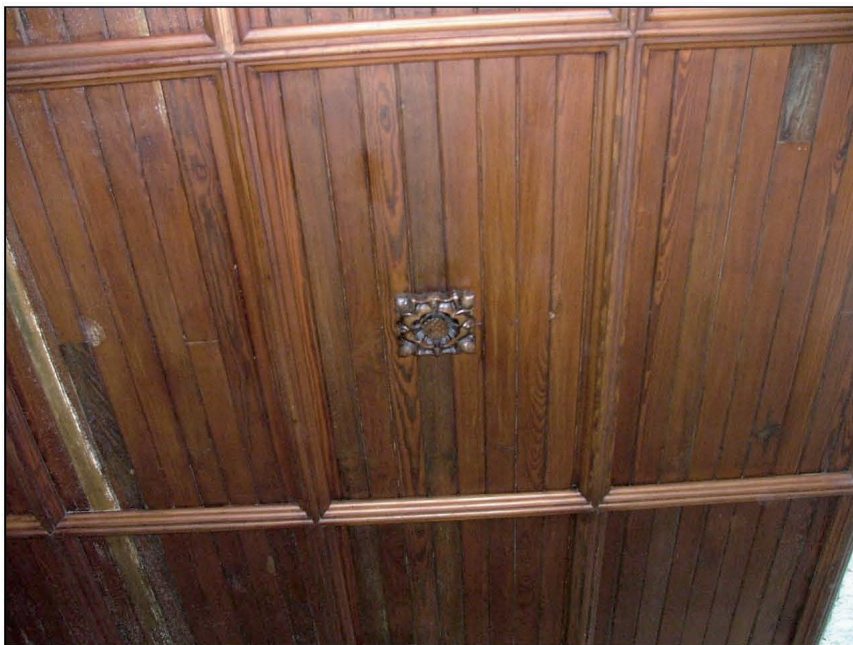


**Plate 54** – Wood panelled ceiling in bar, ground floor





**Plate 55** – Detail of wood carved ceiling rose in the bar, ground floor



**Plate 56** – Decorative detail in panelled ceiling of bar, ground floor



**Plate 57** – Bay window in bar showing exposed brickwork (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 58** – View looking along the former sun lounge





**Plate 59** – View of the sun lounge c.1892



**Plate 60** – Detail of door from exterior to sun lounge, ground floor (Scale = 2m)





**Plate 61** – Detail of sun lounge roof



**Plate 62** – First floor of ‘tower’ more latterly used as an office (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 63** – Detail of safe housed on first floor of tower



**Plate 64** – Detail of cupboard, first floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 65** – Detail of interior of cupboard, first floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 66** – Function room, first floor (Scale = 2m)





**Plate 67** – Detail of coving and metal ventilator, first floor function room



**Plate 68** – Detail of skirting board, first floor function room



**Plate 69** – Detail of window latch, first floor function room



**Plate 70** – Detail of former fireplace hearth, first floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)





**Plate 71** – Detail of dumb waiter, first floor



**Plate 72** – First floor bedroom, octagonal tower (Scale = 2m)

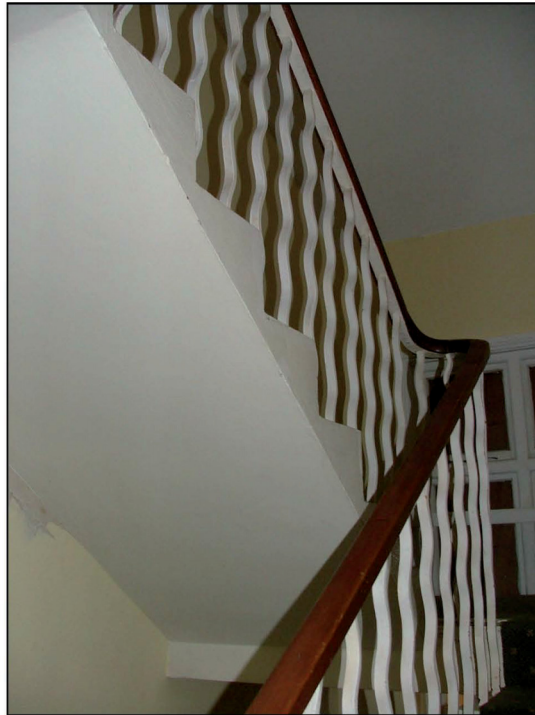




**Plate 73** – Architectural detail, first floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 74** – Split-level, first floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 75** – Detail of first floor staircase



**Plate 76** – Detail of blocked staircase at first floor level, over leisure club reception





**Plate 77** – Fireplace, second floor bedroom (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 78** – Second floor landing from main staircase (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 79** – Fireplace, attic room (presumed servants quarters) (Scale = 2m)



**Plate 80** – One of the attic rooms showing boxed-in beams and purlins and inserted skylight  
(Scale = 2m)





**Plate 81** – Access hole to roof space, attic room (Scale = 1m)



**Plate 82** – Detail of roof space showing brickwork and timber as viewed from the attic rooms

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## 5 CONCLUSION

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### 5.1 RESULTS OF THE DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.1 The desk-based assessment revealed the potential for Roman archaeology due to the close proximity of Milefortlet No. 9 and Turret 9B to the proposed development area. The settlement at Skinburness would appear to have been an important port during the early 14<sup>th</sup> century when it was used as a supply base by Edward I during his campaigns into Scotland. The village of Skinburness was supposedly ‘washed away’ in the first decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and now lies beneath the sea, although it has been suggested that this may have been slightly exaggerated. Despite the supposed loss of the settlement, Skinburness appears to have continued as a supply base into the next decade.
- 5.1.2 It is possible that at least part of the sea dyke may have originated in the medieval period, although there is as yet no archaeological evidence for this. A chapel (St John’s) was located on Grune Point, which had been licensed in 1301, but which appears to have been short-lived although the site appears to have continued to be used for burials. The site of this chapel is shown on historical mapping dating as far back as 1590 (Figure 4).
- 5.1.3 Very little is known about Skinburness following its status as an important supply base in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Reference was made following the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to an ‘*ox byar and barn*’ at ‘*Skinbughg*’. The settlement seems to have lost its importance as far as sea traffic was concerned by 1565 when it was recorded that the ‘*creek of Skinburness be not commonly used not occupied with any traffic or trade of merchandise*’.
- 5.1.4 By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Skinburness was described as a fishing village and fashionable bathing place. An inn is listed in Jollie’s Cumberland Guide and Directory of 1811, although this may have been the Greyhound Inn (now known as the Longhouse) located on the sea shore. The Duke’s Head Inn is first recorded in 1829, occupied by Foster Penrice, who still resided at the property by 1850 when the building is shown on the Tithe Map of that date (Figure 9). It would appear from cartographic evidence that the Dukes Head Inn and another property were demolished to make way for the Skinburness Hotel at some point between 1865 and 1900 (compare Figures 11 and 12). An article in the Carlisle Journal refers to the building of a new hotel at Skinburness in 1887 for Mr E H Banks of Wigton, designed by architect Mr Ferguson.
- 5.1.5 The Skinburness Hotel, also known as the Marine Hotel, was sold in 1898 to George Brown, and then was up for sale again in 1904 following Mr Brown’s death. Sales particulars and lists of contents from the sale in 1898 appear to suggest the high quality of the interior decoration and furnishings, as well as providing an interesting insight into late 19<sup>th</sup> century hotel layouts and provisions. In 1918 the hotel was taken over by the Carlisle and District State Management Scheme, along with many similar establishments, in an attempt to control drinking.
- 5.1.6 No information was revealed during the desk-based assessment as to how the Skinburness Hotel was used during the World Wars, if it was in use as anything other



than a hotel. The area around Skinburness has several features relating to these periods in the form of pill boxes and dummy airstrips. Although several bombs were dropped in the locality, none appear to have fallen within close proximity to the proposed development area.

- 5.1.7 A function room appears to have been constructed to the north-west side of the hotel after 1985, as it is not shown on an Ordnance Survey map of that date (Figure 2). Several buildings associated with the original hotel appear to have been demolished throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example the stables, the laundry, and the engine and dynamo house. These buildings should be taken into consideration when assessing the extent of the original building constructed in 1887. The Skinburness Hotel continued in use until 2006 when it was sold at auction.

## **5.2 RESULTS OF THE BUILDING ASSESSMENT**

- 5.2.1 The building recording project revealed that the building known as the Skinburness Hotel appears to have been constructed as a single-phase in the 1880s, to a complicated design incorporating varying floor levels, different styles of windows, dormers, well-dressed architectural elements in particular on the main façade, and decorative features such as finials, vertically-hung tiles and decorative lead-work. The building which stands is characteristic of a late Victorian structure, in this case a purpose-built hotel, to serve the tourist industry.
- 5.2.2 Internally very little remains of the original features having either been sold at auction or suffered from vandalism or theft. Details such as coving, ceiling roses, skirting boards, window fittings, and architrave do survive providing information on late Victorian internal features. The apparent survival of the original fittings for the gentlemen's toilets on the ground floor is an interesting feature. The only space within the hotel where any earlier structures may have survived, presumably from the two properties which occupied the site prior to the construction of the hotel in 1887, was two rubble walls in the cellar, both of which were in different locations. Due to a lack of ground plan it was difficult to assess where these rubble walls were located in relation to these earlier buildings. No other features or structural elements were noted which may have suggested that the hotel incorporated earlier fabric, although it must be noted that externally the buildings are covered in either render or tiles, and internally wall coverings remain.
- 5.2.3 The Skinburness Hotel is a nice example of a purpose-built hotel dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which exhibits characteristics of late Victorian architecture, as well as containing high quality fixtures and fittings which were either still extant or were noted in sales particulars. The building provides an interesting insight into a period when tourism was flourishing in the area, aided greatly by the railway into Silloth and boats from Annan. The Skinburness Hotel should be seen as an interesting building in its own right, as well as its relationship with Chichester Hall which is contemporary.



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CL = Carlisle Library Local Studies

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## APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF HER SITES

List of HER Sites located within a 1km radius of the proposed development area:

HER No.	Site Name	Description	Grid Ref	General Period
346	Skinburness Marsh Sea Dykes	Sea dyke runs for c. 1km south from Skinburness, probably built about the time of the port of Skinburness destroyed by sea in early 14 <sup>th</sup> century. Consists of an earth and stone bank averaging 1.8m high	E:313100 N:555300	Medieval
353	Hadrian's Wall Milefortlet 9 and Camp	Fortlet No.9 visible on air photographs. Bruce mentions foundations of clay and cobble, Bellhouse says Roman pottery on surface and mussel shells in surrounding ditch. St Joseph says platform is distinct with hollow of ditch system on SW and SE. AP's also reveal possible temporary Roman camp predating and underlying the milefortlet	E:312920 N:556140	Roman
372	Altar Find, Skinburness	Part of inscribed Roman altar dedicated to Matres found 1866 on seashore south of Skinburness	E:313000 N:556000	Roman
373	Coin Find, Sillioth	Lead, metal and several coins, one of Elizabeth I found here by Mr C Bell 1894, whereabouts unknown	E:312030 N:555570	Medieval and Post Medieval
4413	Hadrian's Wall Tower 9A, Skinburness	Established position of Roman tower 9A	E:312600 N:555830	Roman
4798	Hadrian's Wall Turret 9B, Sillioth	Due to land development a geophysical survey was carried out to try and located Turret No.9B on Hadrian's Wall. Not located with complete certainty, but approx 2 concentric positive anomalies, roughly square of sides, 35m and 12m were recognised	E:312250 N:555520	Roman
9608	Grune House Enclosure	There is a small sub-rectangular cropmark feature. It is visible as a hollow, parched outline, quite broad, and fronted on the NW side by a darker, positive cropmark, a probable ditch	E:312800 N:555980	Unknown
10209	Skinburness Pond	Site of a pond at Skinburness shown on the First Ed OS c.1865	E:312800 N:555980	Unknown
15228	Pillbox near Skinburness	According to Alan Rudd there is a World War II pillbox at this grid reference. Nothing visible in 2003	E:312800 N:555400	Modern
15229	Holme Low, Pillbox near Skinburness	According to Alan Rudd there is a World War II pillbox at this grid reference. Nothing visible in 2003	E:313000 N:555400	Modern
15230	Holme Low, Pillbox near Skinburness Marsh	According to Alan Rudd there is a World War II pillbox at this grid reference. Nothing visible in 2003	E:313300 N:555300	Modern
15231	Pillbox, Holme Low	According to Alan Rudd there is a World War II pillbox at this grid reference. Nothing visible in 2003	E:313200 N:555400	Modern
17589	Skinburness Deserted Medieval Village	The MVRG Index records a failed medieval town at this site, where the port	E:312500 N:556100	Medieval

HER No.	Site Name	Description	Grid Ref	General Period
		was eroded by the sea in the 14 <sup>th</sup> century. Although not mentioned in the Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1334/36, the town is mentioned in uncited 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> century sources		
41801	Duke's Head Inn/Skinburness Hotel	Duke's Head Inn is shown on the First Ed OS map of 1867, and referenced in Mannex's Directory of 1847 as an inn catering for visitors coming to bathe. The Second Edition OS map of 1900 shows a larger building named Skinburness Hotel on the site and so it seems likely it could contain elements of an inn of at least 18 <sup>th</sup> century date, possibly the earliest bespoke facility for tourists in the Silloth area	E:312740 N:555950	Post Medieval



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## **APPENDIX 2: FIGURES**

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North Pennines Archaeology Ltd  
2009

PROJECT: Skinburness Hotel, Skinburness

SCALE: 1:50 000 at A4

REPORT No: CP930/09

CLIENT North Star Projects Ltd

DRAWN BY: FW

DATE: May 2009

FIGURE: 1

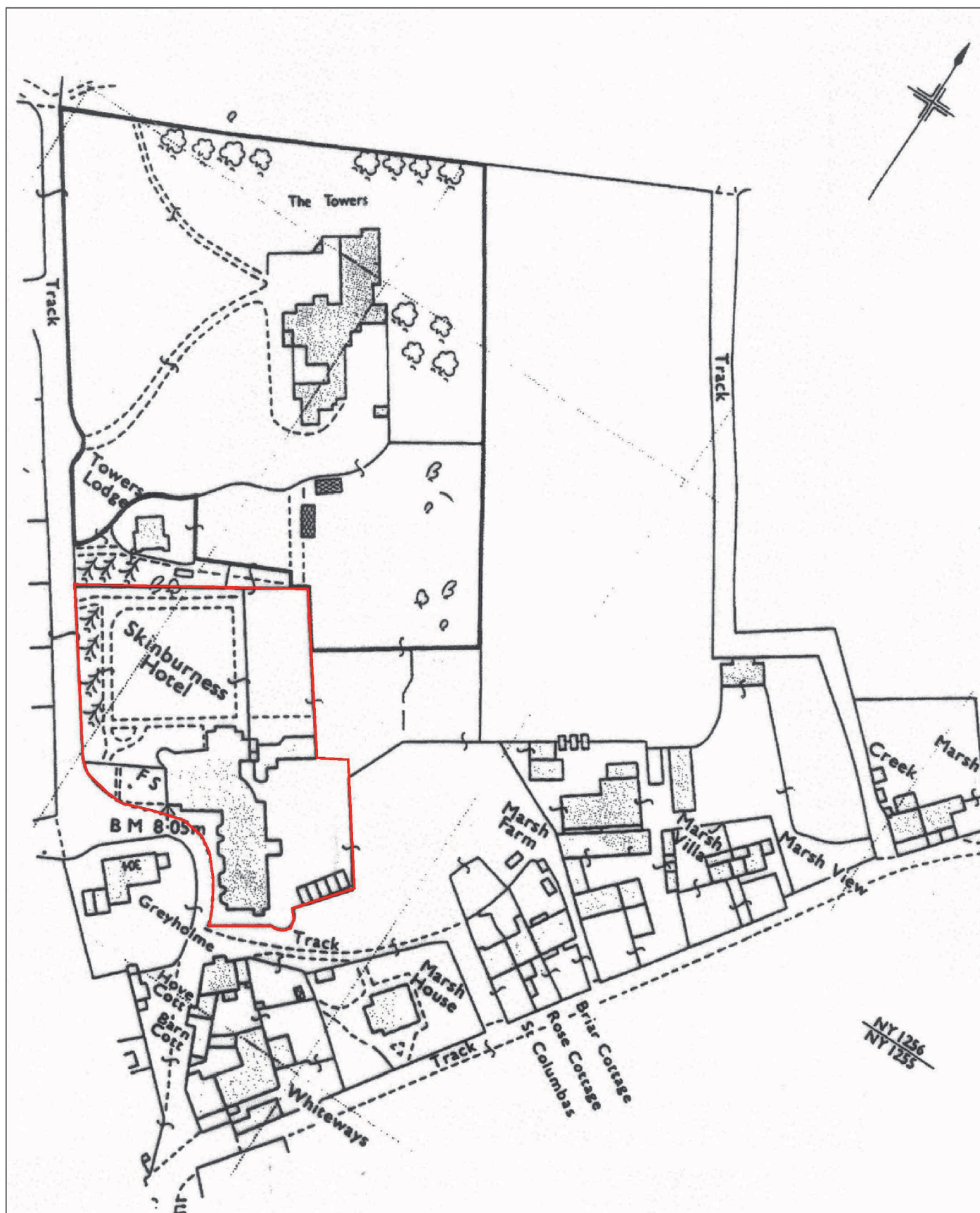
KEY:



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on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's  
Stationary Office. © Crown copyright.  
All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732

Figure 1 : Site Location





North Pennines Archaeology Ltd  
2009

PROJECT: Skinburness Hotel, Skinburness  
SCALE: 1:1500 at A4  
REPORT No: CP930/09  
CLIENT: North Star Projects Ltd  
DRAWN BY: FW  
DATE: May 2009  
FIGURE: 2

KEY:

 Site Boundary



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Figure 2 : Detailed Site Location



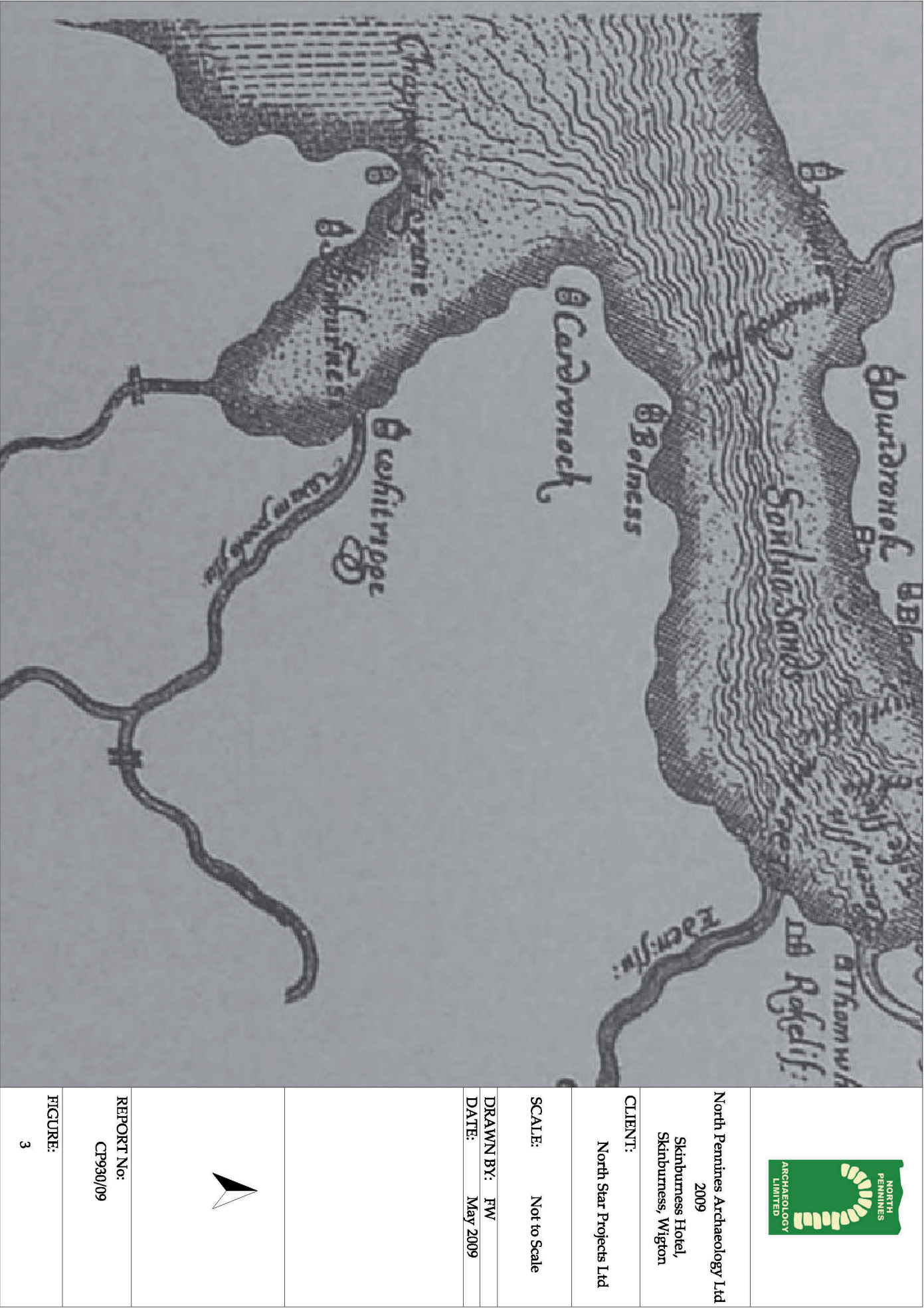


Figure 3 : Aglionby's 'Platf' 1590 (Source: Neilson)





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FIGURE:

4

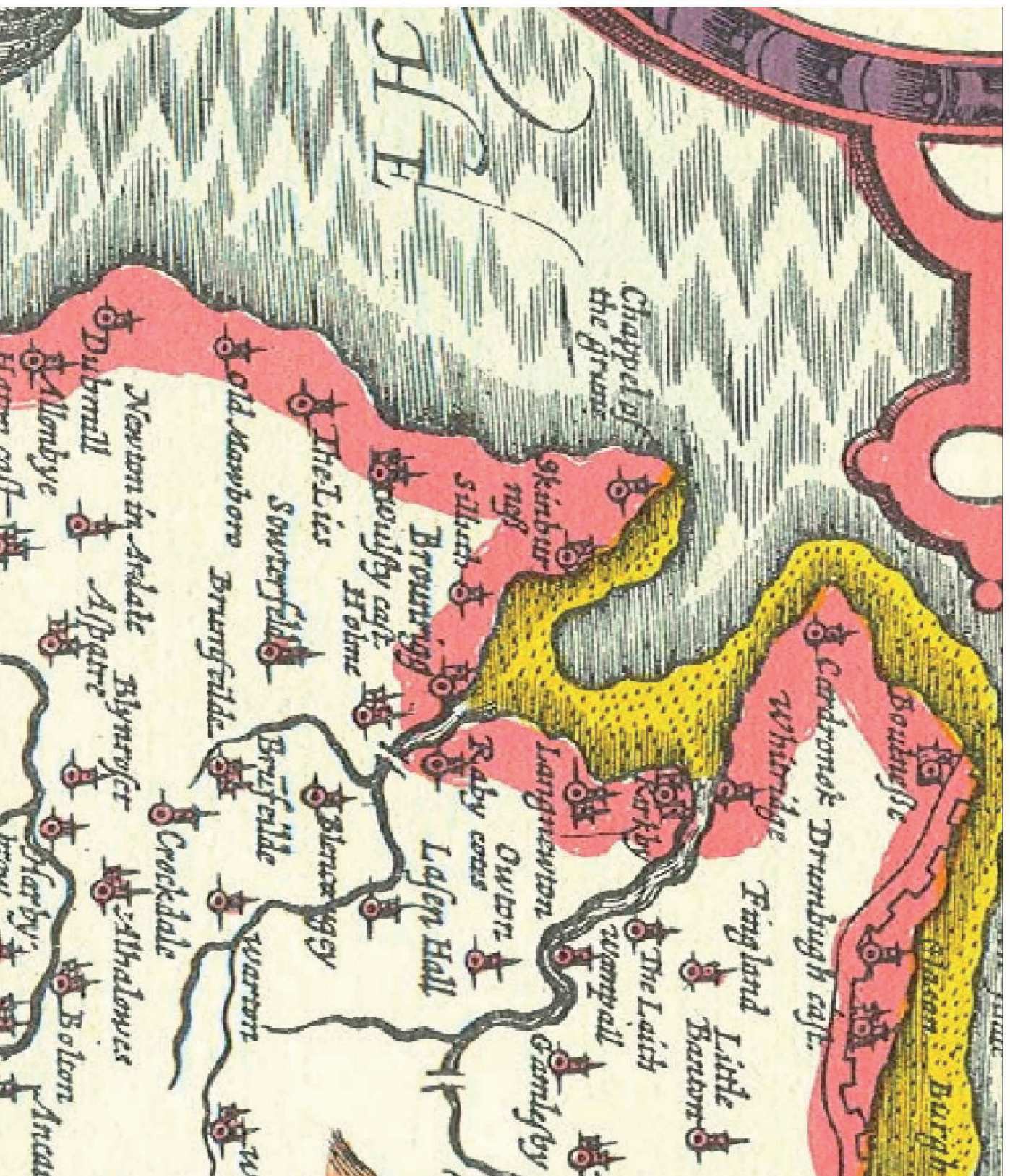


Figure 4 : Extract from John Speed's Map of Cumberland 1610





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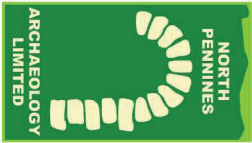
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Figure 5 : Extract from Hodkinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland 1774





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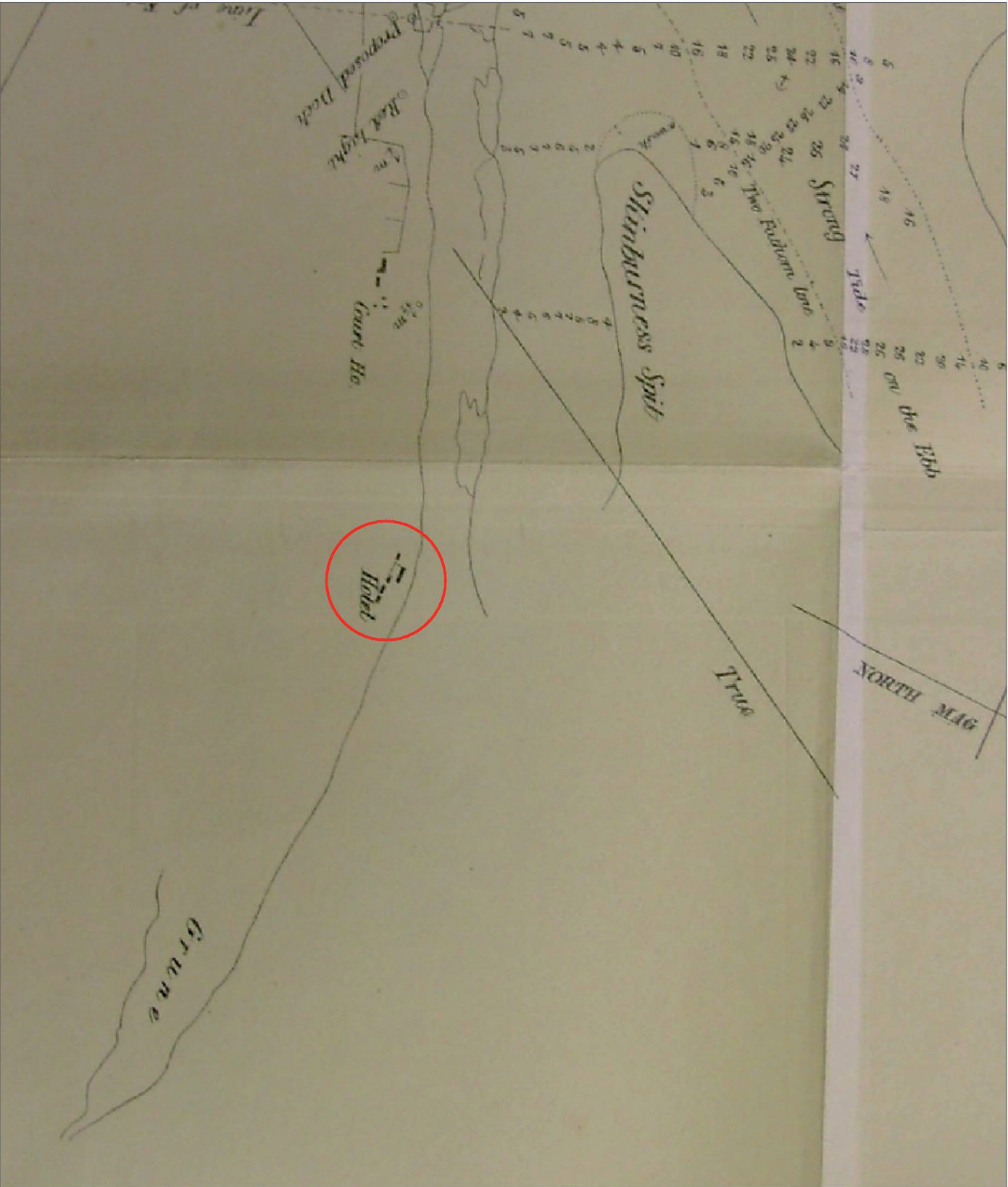
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Figure 6 : Extract from Holme Cultram Enclosure Map 1814



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Location of  
Skinburness

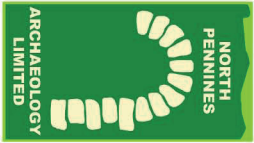


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Figure 7 : Railway Bill Map 1837





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Site Location

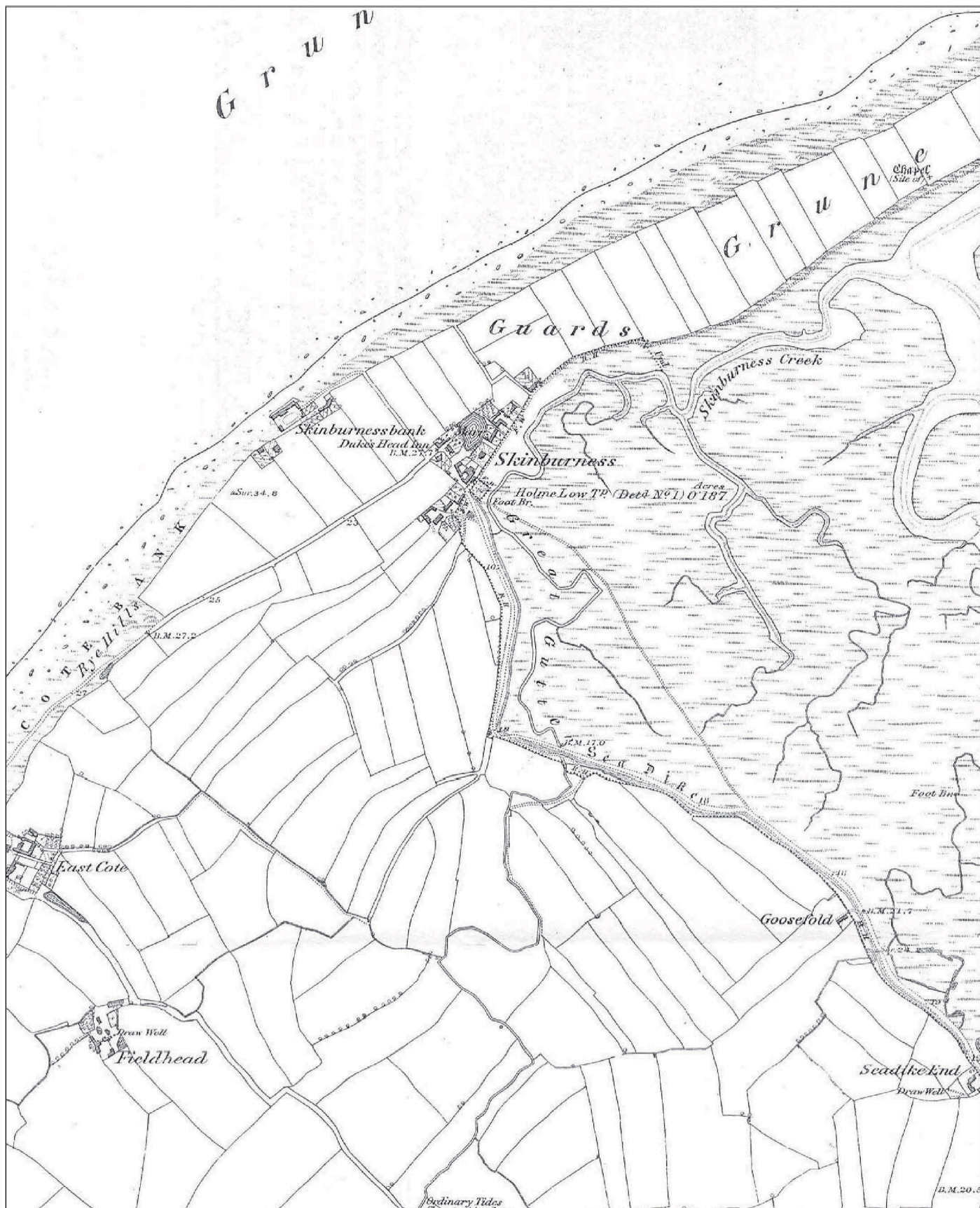


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FIGURE:  
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Figure 8 : Extract from Holme Cultram Tithe Map 1850





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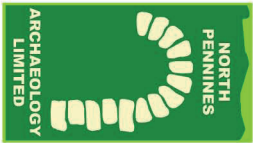
PROJECT: Skinburness Hotel, Skinburness  
SCALE: Not to Scale  
REPORT No: CP930/09  
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FIGURE: 9



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Figure 9 : First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1868 (6" scale)





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Site Boundary of  
Skinbuness Hotel



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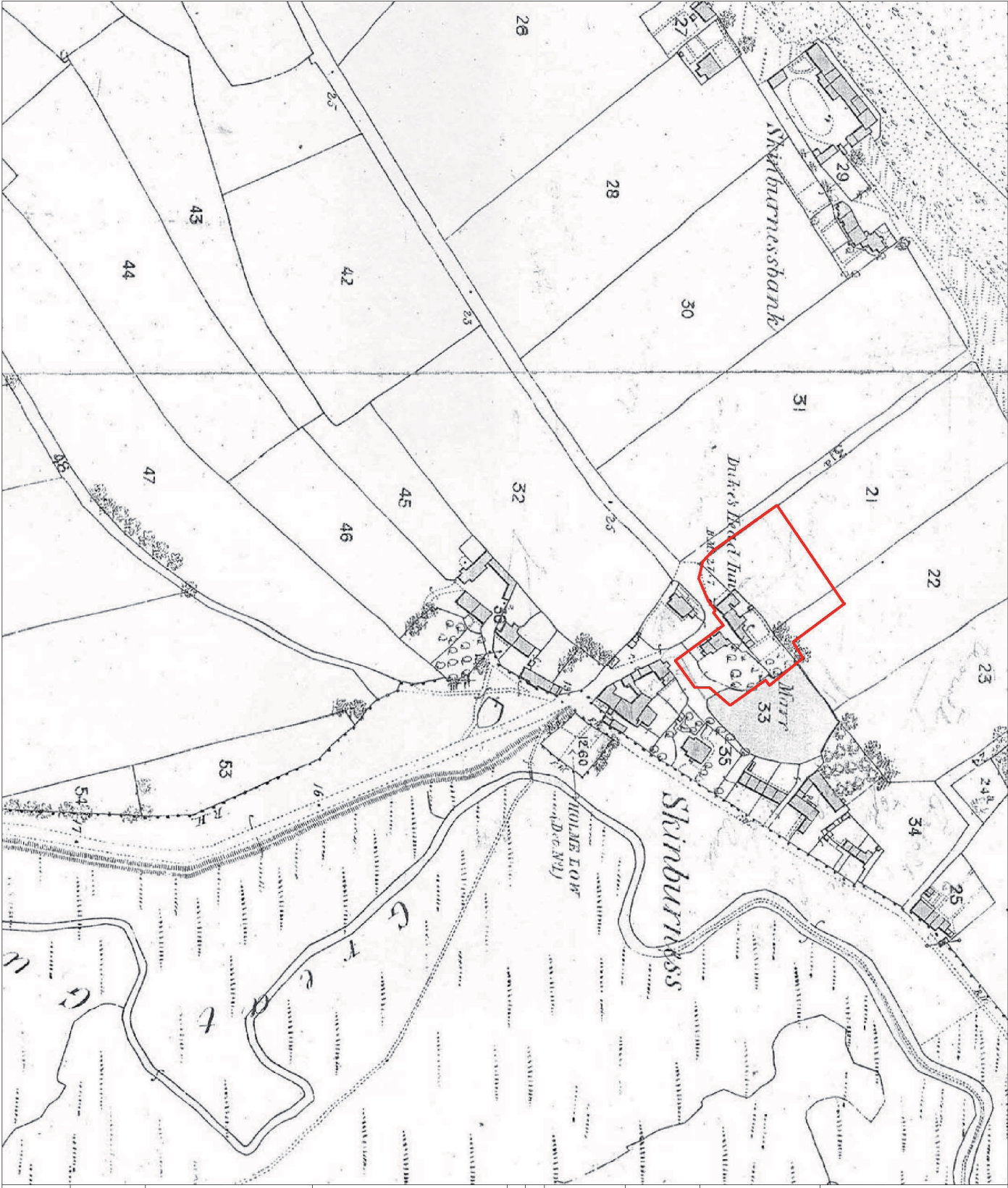
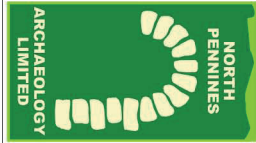
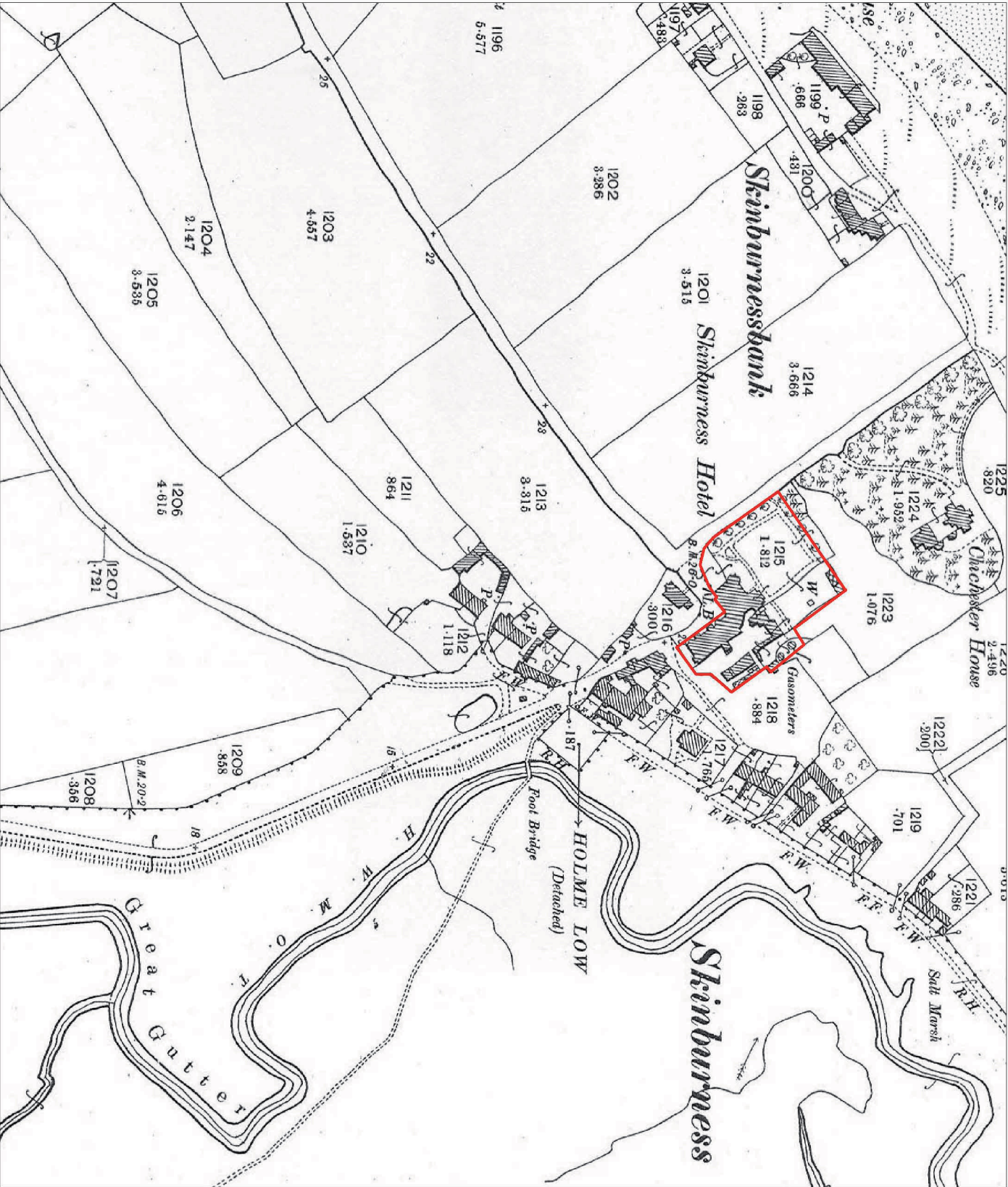


Figure 10 : First Edition Ordnance Survey Map c.1868 (25" scale)





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Approximate Site  
Boundary



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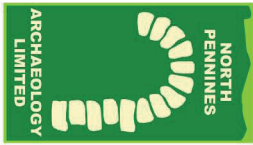
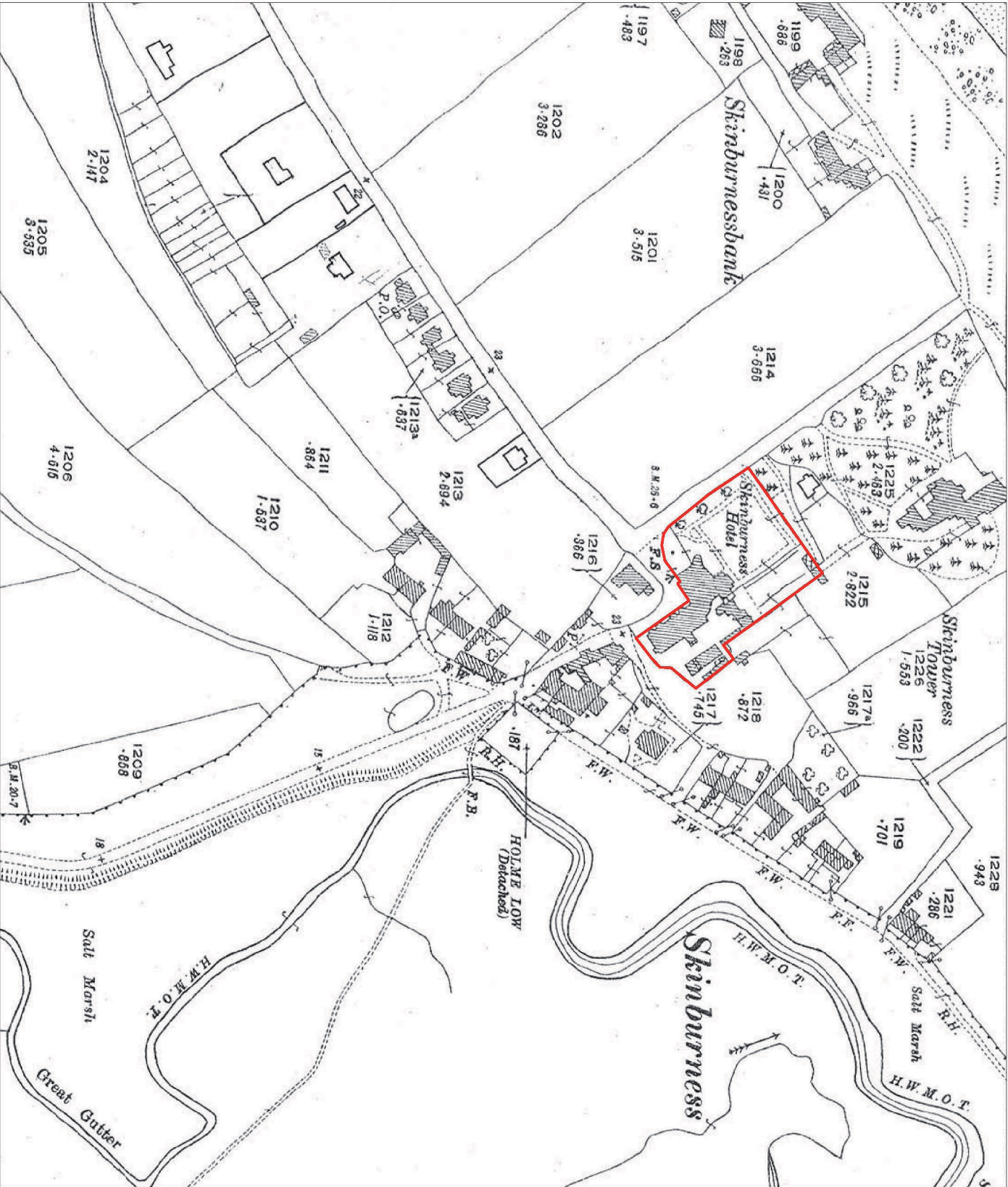
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Figure 11 : Second Edition Ordnance Survey 1900





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Figure 12 : Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1926



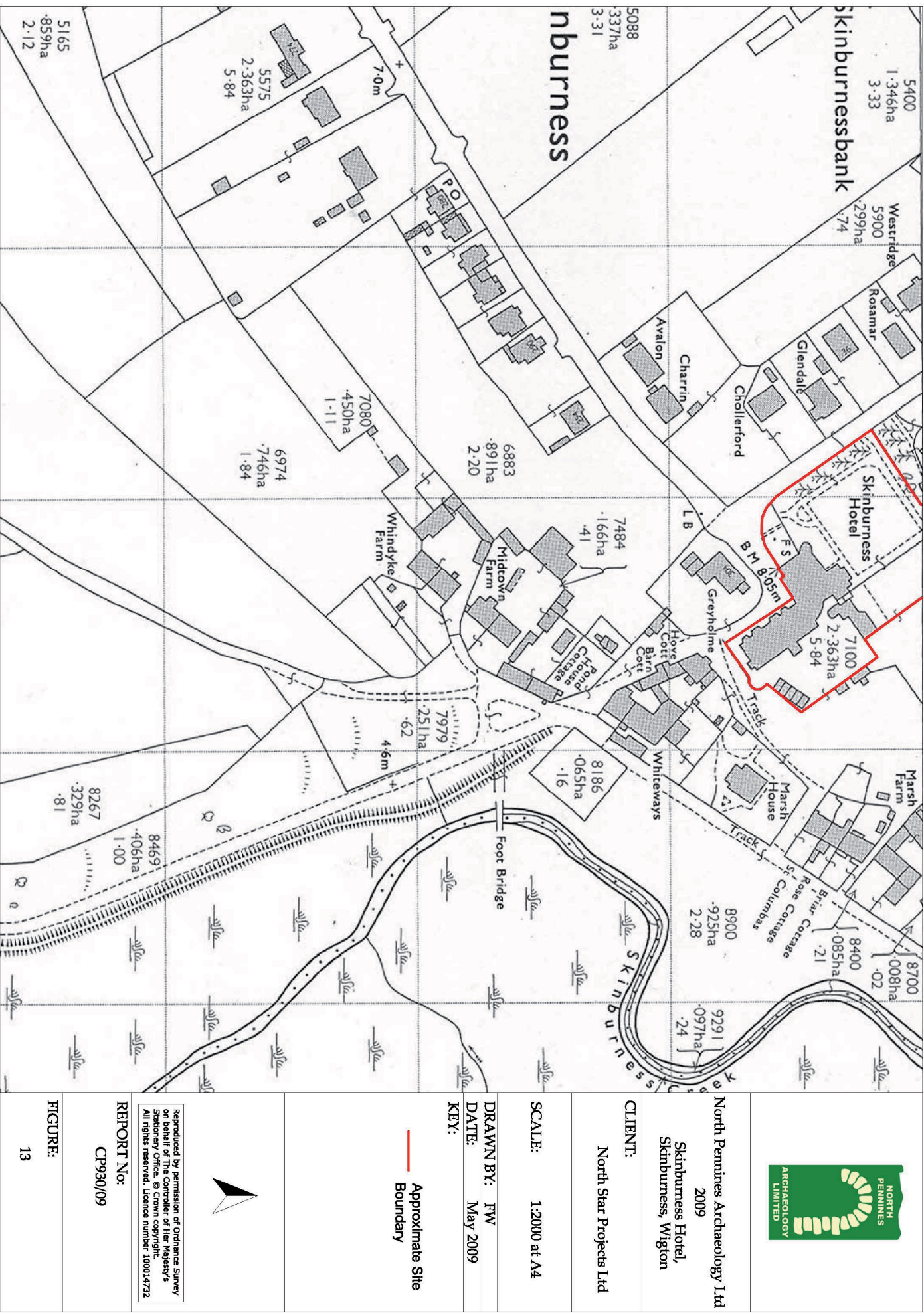


Figure 13 : Ordnance Survey Map 1971



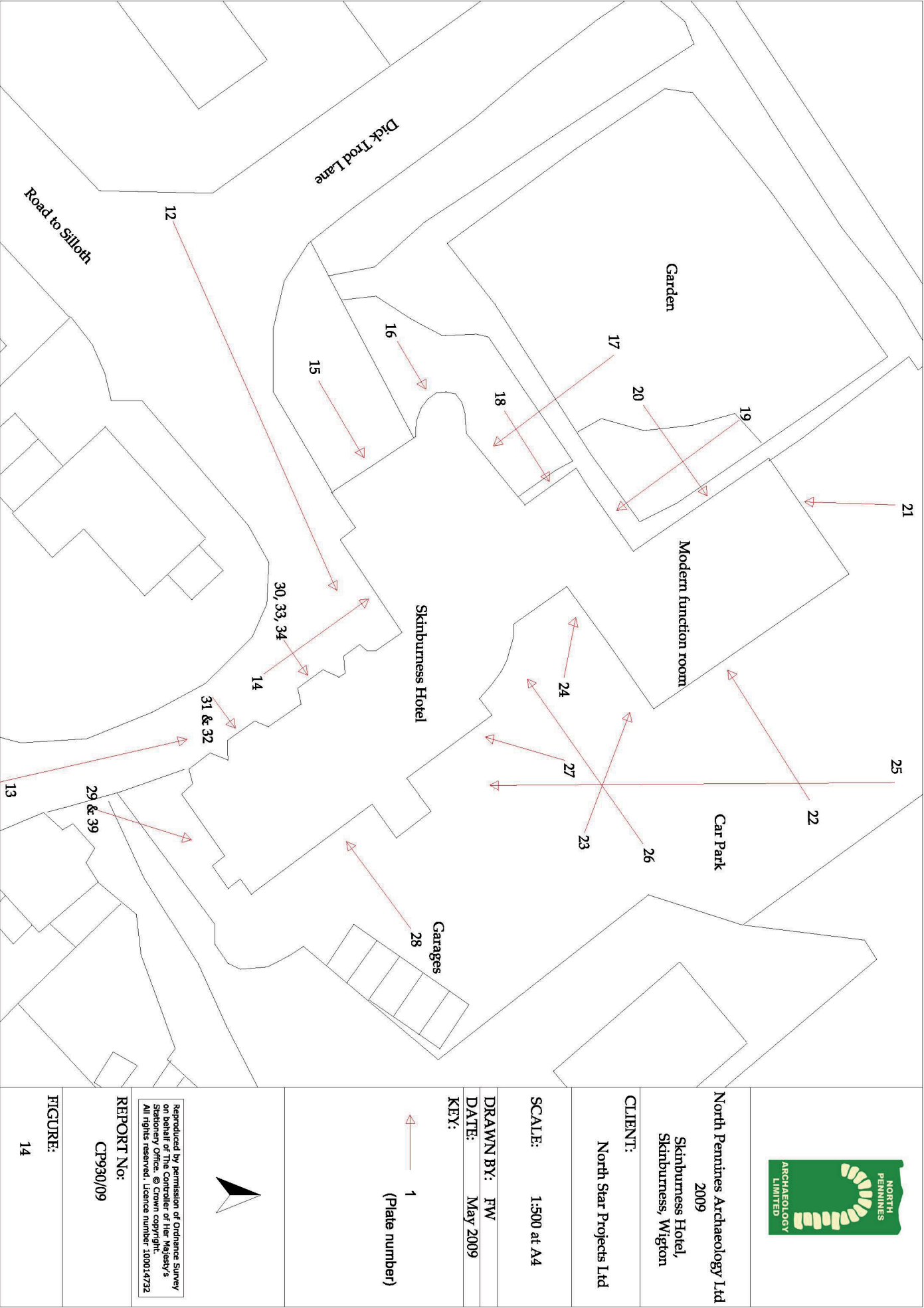
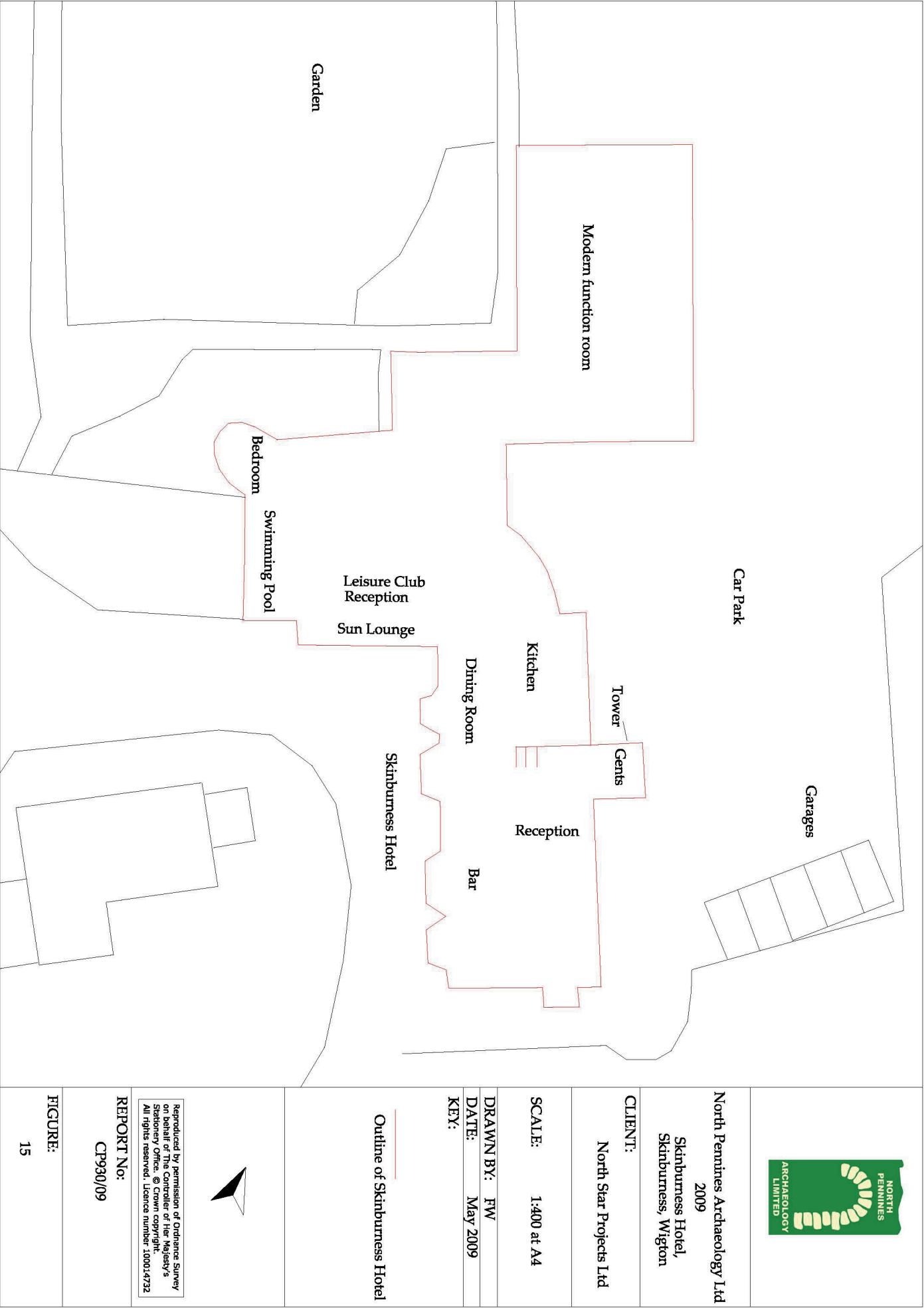


Figure 14 : Site Plan showing directions of external photographs



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Outline of Skinburness Hotel



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Figure 15 : Ground plan showing locations of principal rooms of hotel