
BURNSIDE SCHOOL,
WALLSEND

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD AND
DOCUMENTARY SURVEY

December 2002



Prepared for *Kajima Construction International* by:

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.
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Frontispiece: Moulded brick doorway and surrounding ornamental brickwork in the Central School courtyard

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SUMMARY

This report provides a brief summary of sources available for charting the history of the Burnside School complex at Wallsend, including historic maps, aerial photographs, secondary historical works and the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR.). It collates these sources to provide a brief account of the origins and development of the complex, as well as providing a background history of the wider area in order to provide a social context not only for the school, but for cropmark and earthwork features found in and around the school grounds.

The report also gives details of photographs provided as a permanent record of school buildings earmarked for imminent demolition.

Finally, attention is drawn to a number of interesting or unusual internal and external features of the buildings, including moulded brickwork and a commemorative plaque at the former Central School. A number of recommendations are made with respect to salvaging some of these features during demolition works.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of Assessment

The Burnside School complex lies north of High Street/Church Bank, bordered to the west by the B 1315 and to the north by Wallsend burn in the western part of the Wallsend urban area. Proposals for the redevelopment of the schools complex include the demolition of all buildings opened between 1913 and 1959.

This report, prepared by The Archaeological Practice, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, was commissioned by *Kajima Construction International (UK) Limited* following the imposition by Tyne and Wear County Council of a requirement to carry out recording work, prior to proposed demolition works, in order to provide a permanent record of the school buildings.

In addition to recording significant internal and external features of the school complex, the brief supplied by T&WCC stipulates a requirement for a limited amount of research into the origins and historical development of the complex. Accordingly, a number of historical and archive sources have been accessed and interrogated in order to present an historical overview of the site and provide appropriate recommendations with respect to further mitigation actions.

2. SOURCES FOR ASSESSMENT

2.1 Archival Material and Secondary Sources

The following sources of documentary, cartographic and photographic evidence were consulted:

- ◆ *Tyne and Wear County Record Office (TWRO)*
- ◆ *Northumberland County Record Office (NRO)*
- ◆ *Tyne and Wear County Sites and Monuments Record, Jesmond Road, Newcastle (SMR)*
- ◆ *Newcastle Central Library, Local Studies Room (NCL)*
- ◆ *Museum of Antiquities Record Room, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (MA)*
- ◆ *Wallsend Library (WL)*
- ◆ *Wallsend Borough Council (WBC)*

2.2 Types of Information

Included amongst the various kinds of information used from each of the above sources are the following:

2.2.1 Documentary Records

The Borough Planning Dept index (High Street East extract) refers to the following plans:

2016 Northumberland County Council November 1911 School
2066 Northumberland County Council (no date) New Secondary School
3164 County Council January 1937 Secondary School Entrance
2799 Wallsend Secondary School 11th October 1929 New Extension science labs etc.
4218 Grammar School 16th September 1952 Covered way to junior school
4303 Grammar School May 1953 Proposed Fencing
4393 Grammar School 5th February 1954 Science lab

Unfortunately, none of the above were available for consultation at any of the listed archives and it is believed they do not survive.

2.2.2 Map Evidence

The following have been used in compiling a developmental history of the area:

NRO - Map of the County of Northumberland, Armstrong, 1769 (Figure 3)

NCL - First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1863, Northumberland, 25" Sheet LXIV

NCL - Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1898, Northumberland, 6" Sheet LXIV (Figure 00)

NCL - Third Edition Ordnance Survey, 1924, Northumberland, 6" Sheet LXIX (Figure 00)

NCL - Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey, 1938, Northumberland, 6" Sheet LXIX (Figure 00)

2.2.3 Aerial Photographs

An aerial photographic search was made of archive sources and a number of photographs retrieved, amongst which the most useful is a near vertical colour photograph from 1991:

Ref.: GEONEX 102 91 018; 7/9/91; 1:5000 near vertical

The photograph shows the site on the fringe of the urban area with its present range of buildings as well as a number of others destroyed in the intervening period, the most prominent of which are on the playing fields adjacent to the current main car park of the Grammar School site. The most interesting features inside the school complex are linear cropmarks indicating the presence of buried or flattened ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks which, judging from their dimensions, are most likely to be medieval in origin. Although these do not appear as earthworks on the surface, similar features do occur in the wider vicinity, particularly on the north side of the Wallsend burn, some 50 metres north of the northern boundary of the site (Central School site)

2.2.4 Site Inspection and Local Information

Following a preliminary appraisal visit, two extended visits were made to the site for purposes of photographic recording and gathering background information. A number of past and present staff members, school governors and local historians associated with the Wallsend History Group kindly provided information on the site.

2.3 Established and Potential Significance of the Site

The established and potential significance of the site can be summarised with respect to a number of defined categories, as follows:

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The Scheduling of a site by the Secretary of State denotes it is of at least national significance and provides statutory protection over the defined area of the monument. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the overall defined assessment area.

Listed Buildings

Listing of built structures by the Secretary of State denotes historical or architectural interest but does not necessarily include all buildings of significance or local importance. There are no listed structures within the defined assessment area. The Grammar School building was considered for listing by representatives of English Heritage, but it was not judged to be a regionally outstanding example of its period-type. One of the features mentioned which militated against listing were the windows which are of a modern type and replaced the originals in the 1960s.

Sites Appearing on the County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

Northumberland County Council SMR has been accessed for entries within and in close proximity to the overall assessment area which may be impacted upon by proposed developments. Consideration of sites outside the defined zone enables better evaluation of its archaeological and historical context, highlighting the nature of potential remains within the assessment area. There are no entries within the defined assessment area.

Previous Investigations

There have been no previous archaeological studies or investigations made of the site, and no information has come to light from primary or secondary sources with regard to archaeological discoveries from the site or in the immediate locality.

3. HISTORICAL SYNTHESIS

Wallsend is named after its location on the Roman Wall and is known historically as a centre of mining and shipbuilding. Coal mines which opened towards the end of the eighteenth century close to the Roman fort on the riverside led to building developments on the fort site for the first time since its abandonment in the early medieval period, since which time it had been used only as a quarry for building materials and as a farmed space. The Burnside school site lay outside the area impacted directly by the Roman civilian vicus settlement or the later medieval village - which lies about one and a half kilometres from the river, some one kilometre west of the Burnside site - but clearly formed part of the farmed area attached to the medieval village, the centre of which, around the present Green, is less than a kilometre from the Burnside site.

The beginnings of the present Wallsend Community High School can be traced to 1913 when the Wallsend Grammar School, the present Annexe to the main school building on Boyd road, was built on open land north of St Peter's church (built 1807-09). Aerial photographic evidence reveals the existence of surviving ridge and furrow earthwork features in the close vicinity of the site on the north side of the Wallsend burn, suggesting that the area had remained open and largely uncultivated since the later medieval or early post-medieval period. A surviving patch of agricultural land, albeit divided by the Killingworth wagonway and recently partially occupied by allotments, survives on the third edition Ordnance Survey Series (1916) around East Farm, within view of the school site to the south-west. The later technical college, opened in 1960, was built upon part of the land annexed for allotments. Within the school site itself, the only surviving traces of an agricultural past are the flattened or buried remains of ridge and furrow features visible on a recent aerial photograph as crop marks on the school playing fields.

Also visible on the aerial photograph are traces of the coal industry, notably in the courses of wagonways east and west of the site, both moving in a south-easterly direction towards the Tyne - at the time of the schools' construction, the (then) operational Killingworth Wagonway passed some 100 metres to the south-west. Map evidence confirms the presence of these features, along with others, such as the Wallsend colliery some 150 metres south of St Peter's church and the New Winning Tavern, which still occupies a position bordering the south side of the school grounds, next to the Grammar school site. Coal mining had driven the local economy in the nineteenth century and was responsible for the first expansion of settlement around the medieval village.

The economy of Wallsend in the early twentieth century was dominated by shipbuilding, the growth of which had been responsible for a concomitant expansion in both population size and the built-up area. The opening of the Central primary and secondary schools in 1913, and Wallsend Grammar School and Technical Institute buildings in 1914, represents a later phase in the urban development of the district. Plans for the latter school had been drawn up in 1911 and the building was opened by Sir Francis Blake on 23rd September, 1914, under the headship of Mr Walter McBretney, BSc. This building, located on the slopes of the Wallsend Burn which forms the western edge of the medieval township and modern parish, faces onto Church Bank, a western extension of Wallsend High Street, looking south towards the river Tyne and western suburbs of Wallsend. The separate, Central school complex lay some distance to the north, close to the banks of the Wallsend burn. This part of the present Burnside complex is accessed from the B 1315 which runs northwards from Church Bank and crosses the Wallsend Burn north-west of the school.

In 1960 the present main school building, built in 1959, was opened on Boyd Road as 'The County Technical School, Wallsend', and was the first technical school to be built in the old educational

administrative area of Northumberland. The original Wallsend Grammar School building underwent a £95,000 refurbishment in 1987, during which the dining room and kitchen facilities of the old building were redesigned as study areas, 6th form common rooms and a community activities suite. The original Grammar School building is now referred to as the Annex of the Burnside Community School, created in 1988.

Regrettably there are very few sources available documenting the developmental history of the school buildings. A search for buildings plans proved fruitless and local sources have confirmed that none of the archived plans of the school survive.

4. PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING

Photographic recording of the Burnside School complex has been undertaken in accordance with the specification provided by the county planning archaeologist.¹

Brief visits were made to Burnside to discuss access arrangements and gather historical information on October 30th and November 26th. The schools complex was recorded in four main parts (as follows) during visits on November 3rd and November 27th.²

Part 1: *Wallsend Grammar School main building* (photographed internally and externally). Colour slide and monochrome print photographs, with colour digital back-up.

Part 2: *Wallsend Grammar School – gymnasium and wooden ‘temporary structures’* (photographed externally). Colour slide and monochrome print photographs, with colour digital back-up.

Part 3: *Central Secondary School and house [subsequently Central Middle School]* (photographed internally and externally). Colour slide and monochrome print photographs, with colour digital back-up.

Part 4: *Central Primary School [subsequently offices]* (photographed externally only). Colour slide and monochrome print photographs, with colour digital back-up.

The parts of the complex not recorded were the modern County Technical School (opened 1960), presently the main Burnside Community School building, and the modern, unoccupied Primary school on the east side of the former Central Primary School.

¹ *Specification for Building Recording in Advance of Demolition of Wallsend Grammar School (Burnside School)*, Tyne and Wear County Council, October 2002.

² It was originally intended to photograph the buildings on October 27th, but no access could be gained to the site. A second attempt was made to photograph the site on November 3rd, but on this occasion access was not granted to the buildings interiors, so only the exteriors were recorded.

5..CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Burnside School complex, the present Burnside Community School, comprises three main groups of buildings of which two, the former Wallsend Grammar School, opened in 1914 with substantial inter-war period additions, and the former Central Primary and Secondary (subsequently Middle) schools, opened in 1913, have been photographed as part of a recording exercise required as a condition of planning consent by Tyne and Wear County Council.

Neither of the two groups of buildings is regarded as of great regional importance, although both represent classes and architectural styles of buildings which are becoming increasingly scarce. Both contain a number of features, both externally and internally, which were considered significant enough to merit photographic recording. Notable amongst these are a commemorative plaque and moulded brickwork door surrounds at the Central School, the main entrance of the Grammar School, with its Corinthian pillars and decorative brickwork, an internal balcony surrounding the central hall in the Grammar School building, and certain rounded and other windows in both buildings.

An extensive search of local archives for buildings records and other information of significance to the history of the site met with limited success. It seems likely that the buildings records for the school have been lost or destroyed, although it remains possible that records survive in the possession of architects' offices or other professionals previously engaged in work on the site.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that consideration is given to further internal recording of the Grammar School building before its demolition, following the vacation of the building and removal of posters, furniture, etc. which presently obscure windows and other features.

Consideration should also be given to the preservation of certain, highly representative features of the Grammar School building, such as examples of Corinthian columns and metal bannister railings, which may be incorporated into the fabric or furniture of the successor school structure, or included as features in the grounds.

Examples of moulded brickwork entrance doorway surrounds in the Central School should be preserved during demolition works for display in the grounds of the successor school building. Likewise, the surviving metal plaque on the Central Secondary School external wall should be preserved and kept at the successor school.

6. PHOTOGRAPHIC APPENDICES

6.1 Monochrome Prints

6.1.1 Wallsend Grammar School main building

REF. No.	<i>MONOCHROME PRINT</i>	DESCRIPTION
M1	BGS -02-2 EX	Grammar School S-E facing frontage
M2	BGS -02-3 EX	Grammar School S-E facing frontage
M3	BGS -02-4 EX	Grammar School S-E facing frontage from N-W
M4	BGS -02-5 EX	Grammar School; N-E facing hemispherical columned porch
M5	BGS -02-6 EX	Ionic capitals on columns of N-E facing porch
M6	BGS -02-7 EX	Grammar School; N-W facing wall of N-E end (side of porch)
M7	BGS -02-8 EX	Grammar School; N-E facing rear school building
M8	BGS -02-9 EX	Grammar School; N-W facing rear of building
M9	BGS -02-10 EX	Grammar School; S-W facing side of rear school building
M10	BGS -02-11 EX	Grammar School; S-W facing side of rear school building
M11	BGS -02-12 EX	Grammar School; N-W facing wall of S-W end (side of porch)
M12	BGS -02-13i EX	Grammar School; S-W facing hemispherical columned porch
M13	BGS -02-13i EX	Grammar School; S-E facing frontage from S-W
M14	BGS -02-14 EX	Detail of window in side of porch at S-W end of S-E facing frontage
M15	BGS -02-15 EX	Back of Caretaker's House adjacent to Grammar School
M16	BGS -02-16 EX	S-E facing frontage of 1930s Grammar School extension buildings
M17	BGS -02-17 EX	S-E facing doorway in frontage of 1930s Grammar School
M18	BGS -02-18 EX	Detail of windows, S-W facing frontage 1930s Grammar School extension
M19	BGS -02-19 EX	Rear of 1930s Grammar School extension (from N-W)
M20	BGS -02-20 EX	Rear of 1930s Grammar School extension
M21	BGS -02-21 EX	Corridor in 1930s Grammar School extension
M22	BGS -02-22 EX	1930s Grammar School extension, gymnasium (from N-W)
M23	BGS -02-23 EX	1930s Grammar School extension, gymnasium (from N)
M24	BGS -02-24 EX	Classroom interior, 1930s Grammar School extension
M25	BGS -02-25 EX	N-E face of 1930s Grammar School extension
M26	BGS -02-1 INT	Entrance corridor with main entrance on left
M27	BGS -02-2 INT	Entrance to main assembly hall
M28	BGS -02-3 INT	Assembly hall balcony pillar
M29	BGS -02-4 INT	Assembly hall
M30	BGS -02-5 INT	Assembly hall
M31	BGS -02-6 INT	Assembly hall stage
M32	BGS -02-7 INT	Assembly hall balcony pillars
M33	BGS -02-8 INT	Assembly hall balcony pillar
M34	BGS -02-9 INT	Corridor
M35	BGS -02-10 INT	Stairway
M36	BGS -02-11 INT	Corridor and stairway
M37	BGS -02-12 INT	Stairways to first and second floors
M38	BGS -02-13 INT	Assembly hall balcony
M39	BGS -02-14 INT	Stairway
M40	BGS -02-15 INT	Stairway
M41	BGS -02-16 INT	Corridor
M42	BGS -02-17 INT	Corridor

6.1.2 Central Secondary School and house [subsequently Central Middle School] and Central Primary School [subsequently offices]

REF. No.	MONOCHROME PRINT	DESCRIPTION
M43	BMS-02-1EX	Job description
M44	BMS-02-2EX	Central Primary School [latterly offices] E facing frontage
M45	BMS-02-3EX	Infants School entrance, N facing side of extension to main E-facing building
M46	BMS-02-4EX	Windows, E facing frontage of Central Primary School
M47	BMS-02-5EX	Top of drainpipe, N end of E facing frontage of Central Primary School
M48	BMS-02-6EX	Main entrance to Central Secondary School [latterly Central Middle School]; S end of E facing frontage
M49	BMS-02-7EX	Detail of doorway to Central Secondary School [latterly Central Middle School]
M50	BMS-02-8EX	Detail of Girls entrance doorway to Central Secondary School [latterly Central Middle School]; S facing north-east annexe of building
M51	BMS-02-9EX	Detail of metal plaque on S facing north-east end of building
M52	BMS-02-10EX	Site of metal plaque on S facing north-east end of building, next to house
M53	BMS-02-11EX	S facing side of house, E of north-east annexe of school building
M54	BMS-02-12EX	N facing N-E end of school building, next to house
M55	BMS-02-13EX	N facing N-E end of school building, next to house
M56	BMS-02-14EX	Burnt out central section of N side of school building
M57	BMS-02-15EX	Central section of N side of school building
M58	BMS-02-16EX	Looking back to central and N-E end sections of N side of school building
M59	BMS-02-17EX	Brickwork detail in central section of N side of school building
M60	BMS-02-18EX	S facing south-east end of Central Secondary School building
M61	BMS-02-19EX	S facing south-west end of Central Secondary School building, and bike shed
M62	BMS-02-20EX	Inside of bike shed
M63	BMS-02-21EX	S side of Central Primary School
M64	BMS-02-22EX	View across playground of W facing back wall of Central Primary School
M65	BMS-02-23EX	View from courtyard of Boys entrance on S facing wall of Central Secondary School
M66	BMS-02-24EX	View across courtyard of Central Secondary School towards the South
M67	BMS-02-25EX	View across courtyard of Central Secondary School towards E facing wall
M68	BMS-02-26EX	Corridor forming S boundary of courtyard
M69	BMS-02-27EX	Position of second plaque (now absent) on S facing wall of Central Secondary School building, above Girls entrance (BMS-02-22EX, above)

M70	BMS-02-1 INT	Central Secondary School building classroom
M71	BMS-02-3 INT	Central Secondary School building classroom
M72	BMS-02-4 INT	Central Secondary School building corridor
M73	BMS-02-5 INT	Central Secondary School building classroom, corner cupboard
M74	BMS-02-6 INT	Central Secondary School building bannister and stairway
M75	BMS-02-10 INT	Central Secondary School Home Economics classroom and round windows
M76	BMS-02-12 INT	Central Secondary School building wooden roof and floor of sports hall
M77	BMS-02-13 INT	Central Secondary School building wooden roof and floor of sports hall
M78	BMS-02-14 INT	Central Secondary School building corridor leading W from Sports hall
M79	BMS-02-15 INT	Central Secondary School building washroom
M80	BMS-02-16 INT	Burnt out interior of room at N end of Central Secondary School building
M81	BMS-02-17 INT	Burnt out interior of room at N end of Central Secondary School building
M82	BMS-02-19 INT	Central Secondary School building first floor landing railings and hemispherical window
M83	BMS-02-20 INT	Central Secondary School building first floor Chemistry laboratory
M84	BMS-02-21 INT	Stairway at N-E end of Central Secondary School building
M85	BMS-02-23 INT	Central Secondary School building bannister and stairway
M86	BMS-02-24 INT	Central Secondary School building staffroom, hemispherical wondow

6.2 Colour Slides

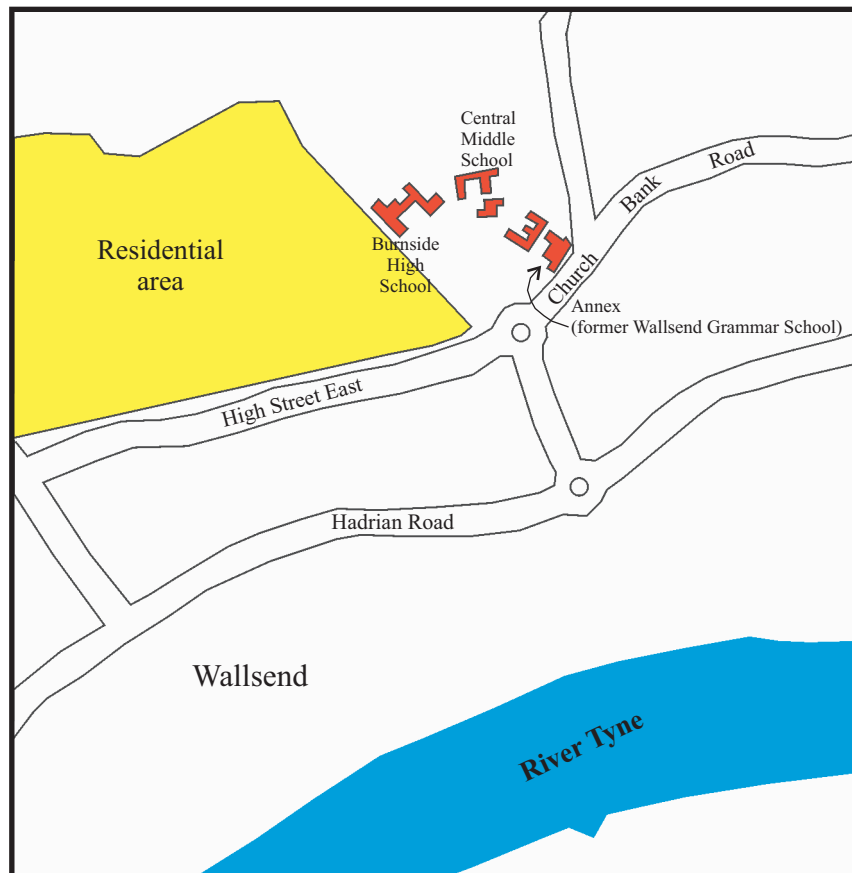
6.2.1 Wallsend Grammar School (see *Illus. 10*).

FRAME NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
<i>COLOUR SLIDE</i>	
BGS 02-01	S-E facing frontage
BGS 02-02	S-E facing entrance
BGS 02-03	S-E facing entrance
BGS 02-04	N-E facing hemispherical columned porch
BGS 02-05	Side view of hemispherical columned porch
BGS 02-06	N-E facing hemispherical columned porch
BGS 02-07	Porch pillar
BGS 02-08	N-E facing hemispherical columned porch
BGS 02-09	Porch pillar
BGS 02-10	S-E facing frontage from east
BGS 02-11	S-E facing frontage, N-E end
BGS 02-12	N-E facing side
BGS 02-13	N-E facing side
BGS 02-14	N-W side
BGS 02-15	NE-SW corridor with main entrance on left
BGS 02-16	Doorway to main hall
BGS 02-17	Main hall
BGS 02-18	Main hall
BGS 02-19	Main hall
BGS 02-20	Main hall
BGS 02-21	Main hall
BGS 02-22	Stairway
BGS 02-23	Stairway
BGS 02-24	Corridor
BGS 02-25	First floor landing
BGS 02-26	Corridor
BGS 02-27	Stairway/landing ballisters
BGS 02-28	First floor balcony & stairs to second floor
BGS 02-29	First floor window
BGS 02-30	Ground floor classroom
BGS 02-31	Ground floor classroom
BGS 02-32	Ground floor classroom
BGS 02-33	Corridor
BGS 02-34	Ground floor classroom
BGS 02-35	Ground floor classroom
BGS 02-36	Wooden classroom building
BGS 02-37	Wooden classroom building, SE face
BGS 02-38	Wooden classroom building, SE face, window detail
BGS 02-39	Wooden classroom building, SE face, NW end
BGS 02-40	Wooden classroom building
BGS 02-41	Wooden classroom building looking SE towards main grammar school building

6.2.2 *Central Secondary School and house [subsequently Central Middle School] and Central Primary School [subsequently offices] (see **Illus. 10**).*

FRAME NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
COLOUR SLIDE	
BMS 02-01	Job reference board
BMS 02-02	Central Primary School [latterly offices] E facing frontage
BMS 02-03	Infants School entrance, N facing side of extension to main E-facing building
BMS 02-04	Central Primary School E facing window
BMS 02-05	Central Primary School Drainpipe on E facing wall
BMS 02-06	Central Primary School E facing windows
BMS 02-07	Infants School entrance, moulded brickwork detail
BMS 02-08	Infants School entrance, moulded brickwork detail
BMS 02-09	Central Secondary School/Central Middle School, 'main entrance' detail
BMS 02-10	Central Secondary School/Central Middle School, 'main entrance'
BMS 02-11	S facing wall with plaque base
BMS 02-12	S facing wall plaque base
BMS 02-13	'Girls entrance'
BMS 02-14	Plaque on S facing wall
BMS 02-15	Plaque on S facing wall and window
BMS 02-16	Plaque on S facing wall and windows
BMS 02-17	Girls entrance detail and window.
BMS 02-18	S facing wall and caretaker's house
BMS 02-19	Caretaker's house from SE
BMS 02-20	N facing wall, E end
BMS 02-21	N facing wall, E end
BMS 02-22	Burnt N facing wall, centre
BMS 02-23	N facing wall, W end
BMS 02-24	N facing wall, W end
BMS 02-25	N facing wall, centre
BMS 02-26	N facing wall, centre/E end
BMS 02-27	E facing wall
BMS 02-28	S facing wall, E end (entrance to playground)
BMS 02-29	S facing wall, W end
BMS 02-30	Bike shed interior
BMS 02-31	Bike shed interior
BMS 02-32	W facing wall
BMS 02-37	Classroom
BMS 02-38	Corridor
BMS 02-39	Classroom
BMS 02-40	Stair
BMS 02-41	First floor landing
BMS 02-42	First floor classroom
BMS 02-43	Ground floor classroom
BMS 02-44	Hall, with wooden roof structure
BMS 02-45	Hall, with wooden roof structure
BMS 02-46	Wooden roof structure of Hall
BMS 02-47	Toilets
BMS 02-48	Classroom drawings
BMS 02-49	Classroom

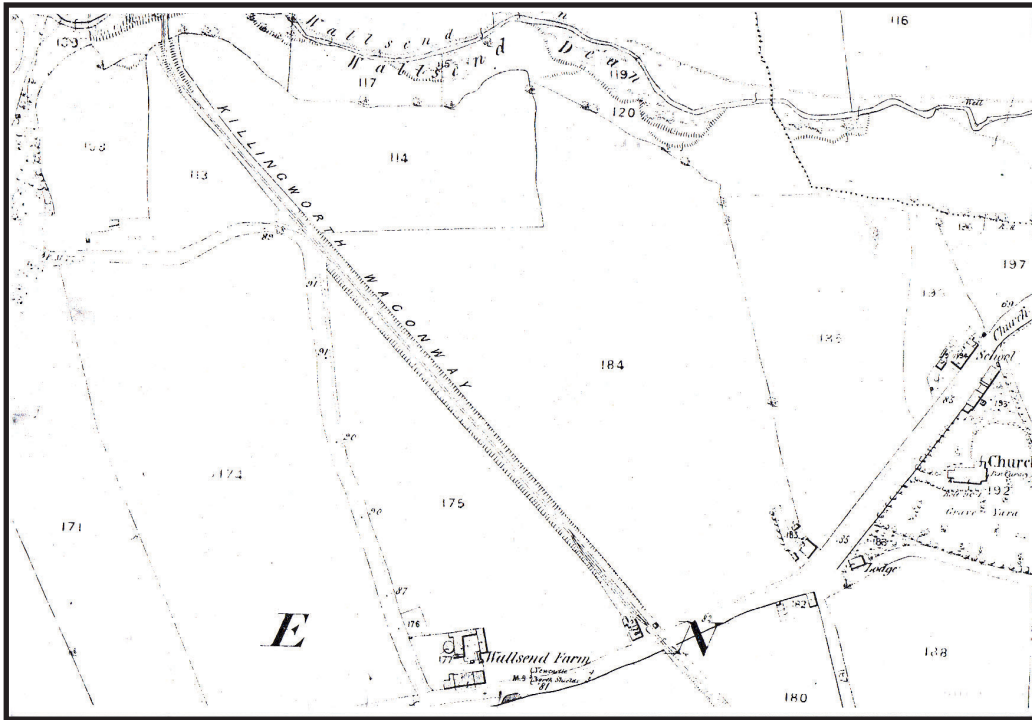
FRAME NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
<i>COLOUR SLIDE</i>	
BMS 02-50	Stairs to staffroom
BMS 02-51	Staffroom
BMS 02-52	Corridor enclosing courtyard
BMS 02-53	Boys entrance in S facing wall of courtyard, W end
BMS 02-54	Boys entrance in courtyard, detail
BMS 02-55	Corridor (see BMS 02-52, above) from courtyard
BMS 02-56	W facing wall in courtyard
BMS 02-57	Boys entrance in courtyard (see BMS 02-54, above)
BMS 02-58	'Central Middle School' noticeboard
BMS 02-59	Classroom
BMS 02-60	Burnt area, N part of school



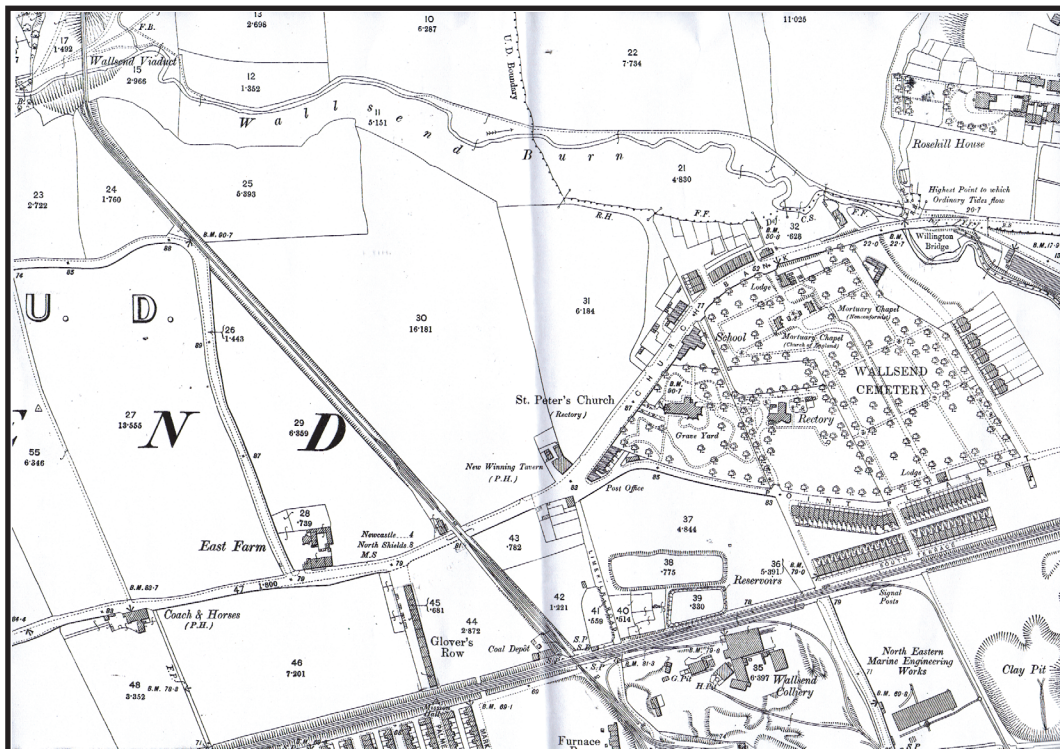
Illus 1: Map showing the location of the Burnside School complex, Wallsend



Illus 2: Aerial Photograph showing Burnside School schools complex (outlined in red); 1:5,000 (07/09/91)



Illus 3: First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1857, showing the area where Wallsend Grammar School was to be built in 1914



Illus 4: Second Edition Ordnance Survey, 1895, showing the area subsequently occupied by Wallsend Grammar School

WALLSEND SECONDARY SCHOOL

Opening Ceremony.

A new secondary school and technical institute erected by the Northumberland County Council at Wallsend was opened yesterday afternoon. The building is in the English renaissance style of brick and stone and terra cotta facings, and occupies a site of three acres. On the ground floor there are eight large classrooms, assembly hall, gymnasium, and domestic science and mechanical department, with a boiler house adjoining. On the first floor there are chemical and physical laboratories with adjacent lecture rooms. The second floor is occupied by art and mechanical drawing rooms, with rooms for the staff and the officers. In a separate block there are dining rooms for the students, manual instruction rooms and caretaker's house. There is accommodation for 280 students, and the building will also be used for evening class instruction purposes. Mr J. Douglas, Newcastle, was the contractor, and Mr M. J. Martineau, architect to the County Council, superintended the erection of the building.

Dr P. P. Bedson, Newcastle, presided at the opening ceremony, which was largely attended. Amongst those present were Sir Francis Blake, chairman of the County Education Committee; Mr G. B. Hunter, Rev C. R. Osborne (Rector of Wallsend), Ald Hogg, North Shields; Ald O'Hanlon (Mayor of Wallsend), Miss Ella Pease, Prof. Hedow, Ald Elliott, Mr S. T. Harrison, Mr S. Hunter, Rev T. A. Allen, Rev A. T. Ogilvie, and Mr C. Williams, secretary of the County Education Committee.

The chairman said that the old pupil teachers' centre had been the nucleus of the Secondary School, the curriculum of which had been carefully adapted to the particular needs of the district. The building would also be utilised for evening class work, which, in Wallsend, had always been characterised by efficiency, and large numbers of students, and in which special support had been given by the employing firms of the district.

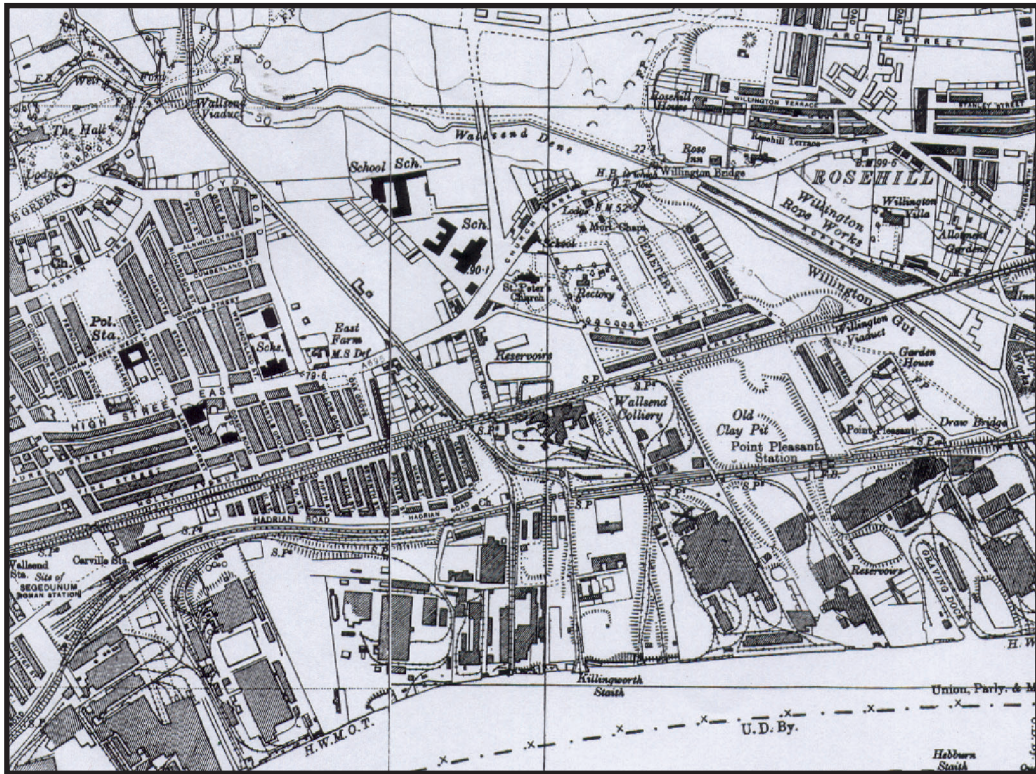
Sir Francis Blake, who declared the school open, said that since 1903 the County Education Committee had done a great deal of work, some of it good, some indifferent, but none of it, he believed of a bad quality. They had always worked with a high aim and object in view. Of all their achievements they were not more proud of anything than they were of the school at Wallsend. He had always been an admirer of the Act of 1903 which went just as far as public opinion was prepared to go at that time. As regarded secondary education, the Act placed no obligation on them, and the County Council found themselves in the position of having to create public opinion in favour of secondary education. The original estimate of the school was something like £9,000, but they soon found that Wallsend people had their own idea of what kind of an institution they required. There was no place in the county where evening class instruction was so thorough and the desire of learning so keen as at Wallsend. He hoped the outlay on that school would be fully justified and a foundation of learning would be laid which would react on the whole community of Wallsend, and set up a high standard of efficiency in the shipyards and work shops, and in the drawing rooms, parlours, and kitchens of the homes. (Applause.)

Ald J. R. Hogg said his view of education was to make men good. They had on the Continent at the present time an illustration that learning was not always the best, and of what could be done by learned men.

A vote of thanks was passed to Sir Francis Blake, on the motion of Mr W. McBretney, head master, seconded by Ald Elliott, and supported by Miss R. Giles, head mistress.

On the motion of the Mayor, seconded by Miss Ella Pease, a vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman.

Illus 5: Article from the Shields Daily News, 24th September 1914, reporting the opening of the Wallsend Grammar School



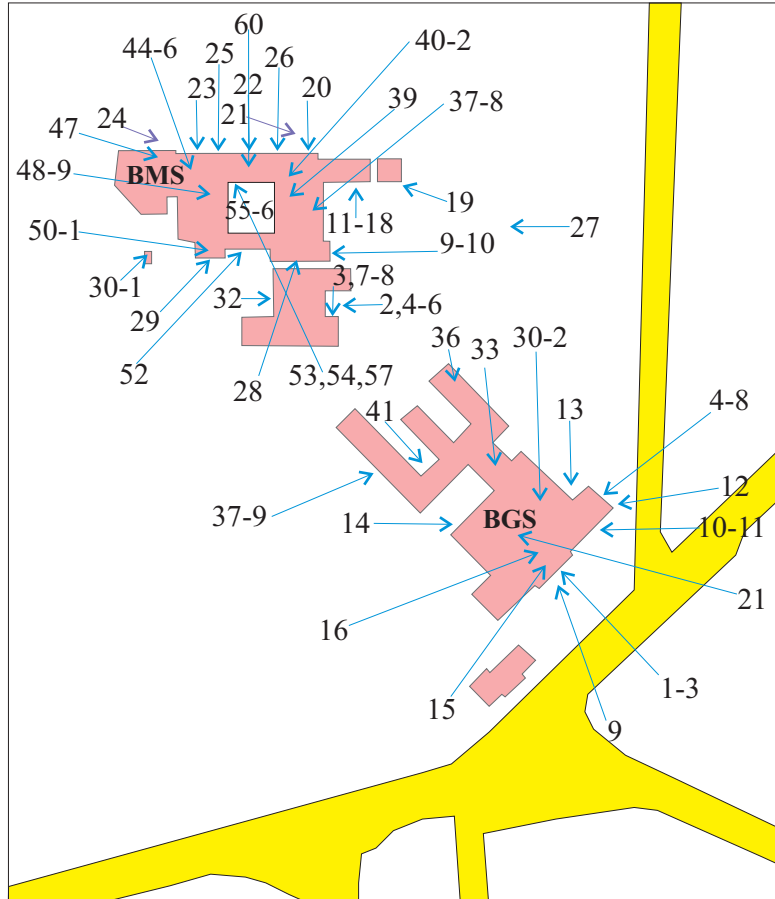
Illus 7: Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Series Map, 1938



Illus 8: Commemorative plaque on the south facing wall of the Central Secondary School building



Illus 9: View of ground and first floor internal features, Grammar School building



Illus 10: Burnside School complex, showing features shown by colour slides produced as a record of (Burnside) Wallsend Grammar School (BGS) and Burnside Middle School (BMS) - see Photographic Appendix (Section 6)