



# FORMER MANSION STAGSTONES Penrith Cumbria

## Desk-Based Study and Fabric Survey Report



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## SUMMARY

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Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by Manning Elliot to undertake an archaeological assessment and fabric survey of the former mansion at Stagstones, Penrith, Cumbria (NY 5339 3164), prior to the construction of four dwellings on the site. The work was undertaken in accordance with a project design by OA North and a brief by Cumbria County Council Archaeological Service.

The desk-based assessment consisted of a search of primary records, maps, and documents relating to the study area, as well as both published and unpublished secondary sources. The Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) in Kendal was also consulted, as was the Cumbria Record Offices in Kendal and Carlisle, together with the Penrith local studies library and OA North's own archive. The fabric survey involved the recording of the plan and principal elevations of the ruinous former mansion, by means of reflectorless instrument survey and rectified photography. The survey was partly restricted for health and safety reasons; in addition, large sections of the elevations could not be examined because of ivy cover, but a photographic record was subsequently undertaken immediately prior to the demolition of the building.

The assessment established that there was little direct evidence of activity on the site prior to the construction of the first house at Stagstones. The most significant archaeological feature identified was a Bronze Age cup and ring marked stone; however, this was found at the base of a dry-stone wall on a verge, immediately south of the farm, and was evidently not *in-situ*. It is not known if it has moved a short or large distance from its original location; indeed it is possible it was imported to the mansion as a garden feature.

Three phases of construction were identified for the mansion, which was constructed in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century in a variation of the double-pile design, with the addition of a ground floor hallway. The block plan of this layout was clearly documented by 1834.

The second phase of construction appears to relate to a major status change, from a house with polite features, such as kneeler stones, string course and plinth, to a far more grand mansion. The documentary study revealed this to have probably taken place between 1867 and 1900, and appears consistent with the analysis of the upstanding remains. The original house was entirely incorporated within the new mansion, which was extended in all directions. The gardens appear to have also been re-designed at this time. The final phase of construction observed dates to the twentieth century, and comprises the internal reorientation of the structure rather than the construction of a new building.

It was apparent that more of the original fabric of the house was surviving than anticipated, with much of it obscured by dense vegetation. It is likely that many features, important in understanding the function of the house, lie preserved *in-situ* below ground.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Oxford Archaeology North would like to thank Richard Forester of Manning Elliot for commissioning the work. Particular thanks are extended to Bette Hopkins at the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record for her help and additional references, and to the staff of the Carlisle and Kendal Record Offices.

The desk based assessment was carried out by Daniel Elsworth and the building investigation was undertaken by Chris Wild. The report was written by Daniel Elsworth and Chris Wild, and was edited by Jamie Quartermaine and Emily Mercer. The project was managed by Jamie Quartermaine.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In response to proposals to demolish the remains of a former mansion at Stagstones, Penrith, Cumbria (NY 5339 3164) (Fig 1), prior to the construction of four new dwellings on the site, Cumbria County Council Archaeological Service (CCCAS) recommended a programme of archaeological recording. The building is recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR 16728) and considered to be of some historical significance, a cup and ring marked stone of probable Bronze Age date was also found in the immediate environs (SMR 6507), increasing the archaeological potential of the general area.
- 1.1.2 The work programme involved a desk-based assessment of the site, in order to fully establish its historical and archaeological background. This was undertaken in conjunction with a Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments (RCHM(E)) Level 3 survey of the standing remains as mitigation for its demolition.
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment consisted of a search of primary records, maps, and documents relating to the study area, as well as both published and unpublished secondary sources. The Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) in Kendal was also consulted, as was the Penrith local studies library and OA North's own extensive archive.
- 1.1.4 The results are set out in the form of a short report outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the area, and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design (*Appendix 2*) was submitted by OA North in response to a request from Mr Richard Forester of Manning Elliot, for an archaeological assessment of the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service (CCCAS) (*Appendix 1*). Following the acceptance of the design by CCCAS, OA North was commissioned to undertake the work. The project design was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and generally accepted best practice.

### 2.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.2.1 Several archives were visited, in accordance with the project design. An area of approximately 1km around the site was examined, with particular emphasis on Stagstones itself.

2.2.2 **Sites and Monuments Record (SMR):** the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record, a database of archaeological sites within the county and maintained by Cumbria County Council in Kendal, was accessed. A brief record including grid reference and description was obtained for the various sites within the study area, and the sources for each record were examined in order to extract any further relevant information. There were no available aerial photographs relevant to the study area.

2.2.3 **County Record Office (Carlisle):** the County Record Office in Carlisle was visited, primarily to consult original documents specific to Stagstones itself, as well as the more general area. Documents relating specifically to Stagstones consist only of sales particulars, although records relating to the Earl of Lonsdale's estate also contained relevant information. Historic maps of the study area, in particular the Enclosure map, Tithe map, and Ordnance Survey maps were consulted. Maps prior to the Enclosure map were of little use as they do not show sufficient detail to mark individual farms. In contrast the later maps can demonstrate the development of not only the structures but also the land use as well. Several secondary sources and archaeological journals were also consulted.

2.2.4 **County Records Office (Kendal):** a single map of the Parish of Penrith was examined in Kendal. There were no other relevant primary sources as Kendal, historically lay within Westmorland and not Cumberland, although secondary sources were consulted.

### 2.3 FABRIC SURVEY

2.3.1 **Photographic Archive:** a photographic archive was produced utilising 35mm cameras to produce both black and white contact prints and colour slides. The archive comprises general shots of the site and its surroundings and detailed coverage of architectural/industrial features. Colour illustrations were also produced for the report.

- 2.3.2 A further photographic archive was produced using a 35mm camera and a medium format camera, to record the structure after significant amounts of ivy had been removed and therefore exposing the walls.
- 2.3.3 **Instrument Survey:** an instrument survey was undertaken for the majority of the structures. Data was captured with a reflectorless total station, which was downloaded into an industry-standard CAD package (AutoCad 14) for the production of drawings. These were enhanced on site by hand-measurement.
- 2.3.4 **Rectified Photography:** although not appropriate for the majority of the site, due to sloping and curved surfaces, some architectural detail was recorded using rectified photography.
- 2.3.5 **Site Drawings:** the digital instrument survey data, in conjunction with detail extracted from the rectified photographic prints, were manipulated in AutoCad 14 for the production of the final drawings.
- 2.3.6 A visual inspection of the building was undertaken utilising the OA North buildings pro forma sheets. A description was maintained to RCHM(E) Level 3 standards type survey. This is a descriptive survey, allowing for a basic analysis of the fabric and would result in a textual assessment of the development and form of the building.

## 2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design (*Appendix 2*), and in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited in the Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, on completion of the project.



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## 3. BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The topography is entirely rural in character, and typical of the wider Eden valley area. This is characterised by undulating mixed farmland divided by mature hedges and drystone walls, with occasional woodland (Countryside Commission 1998, 38). The low lying areas are relatively well sheltered by the more open fells to the east (*ibid*) and the plantation on Beacon Fell to the west.
- 3.1.2 The solid geology of the area around Penrith principally comprises Permian Penrith Sandstone, the south-west side of the town being on the edge of this and a thin band of millstone grit (Moseley 1978, Plate 1). The overlying drift geology was formed principally of glacial till made up of boulder clay with some sand and gravel, and in places small mires have formed in small hollows (Countryside Commission 1998, 40).

### 3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 **Introduction:** the historical and archaeological background is principally compiled through secondary sources and is intended to place the results of the assessment of the site into a wider context.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric:** Cumbria has few confirmed archaeological sites dating to the post-glacial period, however, sites have been identified in the south of the county (Young 2002), demonstrating that the area was perhaps not as uninhabitable as previously thought. Kirkhead Cave, on the northern side of Morecambe Bay, has produced artefacts of Upper Palaeolithic type and disputed stratigraphic evidence, which dates the occupation to around 8700 BC (Cowell 1996, 21). Evidence for hunter-gatherer sites of the Mesolithic period is, by contrast, well represented with numerous sites known along the coast from St Bees to Walney Island. These tend to be of the late Mesolithic period and consist of flint and tuff scatters, dating as late as the fourth millennium BC (Cherry and Cherry 2002, 3). Much closer to the site, in the Shap area to the south of Penrith, sites apparently dating to the late Mesolithic period have been found at heights of around 275 – 300m above mean sea level (*op cit*, 4). There appears to be a degree of continuity between the end of the Mesolithic period and the start of the Neolithic period; flint artefacts typically belonging to the early Neolithic period are essentially indistinguishable from the late Mesolithic period (*ibid*). The Neolithic period was, however, a time of significant social changes with the introduction of ceramics, large funerary and ritual monuments, more intensive agricultural practices and the large-scale production of polished stone axes in the Central Lake District. These are found throughout Cumbria, and were traded across Britain and into Europe (Rollinson 1967). The association of henges, stone circles, and long mounds with the movement of axes appears established, and the location of these monuments appears to suggest a shift in emphasis of activity from the coastal plain to the edge of the Lake District hills and the Eden Valley (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 37).
- 3.2.3 There is a relatively high concentration of ritual Neolithic monuments in the area of Penrith. Landscape survey undertaken in 1988 on Askham Fell, approximately

10km south of Stagstones (Quartermaine and Leech forthcoming), has demonstrated intermittent but non-intensive use of the moorland until the present day. The earliest monument within the Askham Fell survey area is the Cockpit stone circle, which possibly dates to the Neolithic period, and is associated with a stone avenue (*ibid*). The well-known Neolithic stone circle, Long Meg and her daughters, lies to the north-east of the study area (Burl 1979, 90). The Long Meg stone has one face carved in rock art. Inside the stone circle are a number of burial cairns, believed to be later in date than the stone circle (Beckensall 2002, 118). Ditched enclosures, thought to be of an earlier date than the stone circle, are known to lie in the immediate vicinity to the Long Meg site (*ibid*). Close by is Little Meg, a burial cairn which also depicts rock art (*op cit*, 119).

- 3.2.4 Evidence of human activity located 3km to the south of the site is known to date back to the late Neolithic period, with three important henge monuments: King Arthur's Round Table, Mayburgh and Little Round Table. King Arthur's Round Table, to the south of the River Eamont, has been dated to the late Neolithic, around 3000 – 2400 BC (Burl 1979, 64). It survives as a concentric circular bank with an inner ditch, cut by roads on the northern and eastern sides, and an entrance in the south. Excavations at King Arthur's Round Table during the twentieth century revealed a small mound had once existed in the centre, that covered a trench containing a burnt body (Clare 1981, 12).
- 3.2.5 Mayburgh Henge to the west of King Arthur's Round Table survives as a circular bank with an entrance in the east. It is also believed to date to the end of the Neolithic period or the early Bronze Age (Burl 1979, 231). The discovery of a bronze axe implies that the henge was in use during the Bronze Age. Stukeley described Mayburgh Henge in 1776, saying that previously there had been two circles of stones around Mayburgh, four stones of the inner circle surviving until a year or two before he wrote his account, when they had been blown to pieces by gunpowder (Atkinson 1883, 454-5).
- 3.2.6 The third henge is Little Round Table lying to the south of the site. It was described in 1776 as being 300 feet in diameter with a small vallum and the ditch outermost, with 1000 feet separating it from King Arthur's Round Table to the north (Bersu 1940, 202). Excavations in 1939 found no evidence of a bank, but it was suggested that, had a bank been present, it was more likely to have been outside the ditch, and thereby contradicting the 1776 observations (*op cit*, 205).
- 3.2.7 **Bronze Age:** during the early Bronze Age, the human population was highly selective in its habitat, and was principally confined to well-drained lowlands similar to land in the Eden Valley (Higham 1986, 82). However, high proportions of sown pasture land in the valley have meant that conditions for aerial reconnaissance are not very favourable, and this has led to a lack of visibility of Bronze Age sites in the area (*op cit*, 83). Palaeoenvironmental evidence has shown that during the late Bronze Age upland woodland was cleared on the fringes of the valley (*op cit*, 81) and there is substantial evidence for Bronze Age activity on the marginal lands on the edge of the Eden valley. On Askham Fell, to the south of the study area was a line of Bronze Age funerary monuments constructed adjacent to the cross ridge between the Lowther and Ullswater valleys (*ibid*), and probably indicate a prehistoric route-way which utilised the natural communication route between the two valleys (*ibid*). Adjacent and elsewhere in the area of Shap are cairnfields reflecting the clearance of land for agriculture.

- 3.2.8 **Iron Age:** by the Iron Age, the Eden Valley was probably becoming increasingly filled with farming settlements (*op cit*, 135); however, site visibility is poor because of the intensity of cultivation in the valley. On the marginal lands Iron Age monuments are less in evidence than their Bronze Age equivalents, but there is the notable example of a hill-fort at Lowther Hall to the south of Stagstones.
- 3.2.9 **Roman:** there is no specific evidence of Roman activity in the immediate vicinity of the study area. However, the Roman road running south from Carlisle, to the east of the Roman fort of Old Penrith, approximately 2km west of the development site, passed through Brougham Roman fort (Shotter 1997, 35). The fort's rectangular earthwork is plainly visible, and whilst there is little dating evidence for the site, it is hardly conceivable that this important road-junction fort does not go back at least to Agricola's period of office (*op cit*, 24). A second Roman road also passes through Brougham fort and runs east through Kirkby Thore and Brough (*op cit*, 44). The function of the fort was to guard the nearby crossing of the River Eamont and the junction of the Roman road from Manchester to Carlisle, mentioned above, with the road from York to Stainmore Pass (Allan 1994, 6). The road is thought to have continued west from Brougham, crossing the River Lowther (*ibid*), and then is believed to have run due west towards Yanwath (*ibid*), and thence over High Street to Ambleside; the line of the road is c2.5km to the south of the site. Two late Roman coin hoards have been found near Brougham, with more found further south (Shotter 1997, 62).
- 3.2.10 **Early Medieval:** Penrith is thought to have been an important early medieval site. Its convenient transport links and proximity to the major river crossing at Eamont bridge make it an obvious choice (Phythian-Adams 1996, 28), while the dedication of the parish church to St Andrew acknowledges a connection to an early Scottish influence (*op cit*, 120). The town may have been established around the seat of power of a local ruler (*op cit*, 121), which might have remained until the tenth century (Newman *et al* 2000, 108). Penrith was also clearly influenced by Viking activity in Cumbria, with a major collection of hog back grave stones and crosses still situated in the church yard (Phythian-Adams 1996, 120-121), and similarly there are hog back stones at Lowther Church to the south of the study area (Bailey and Cramp 1988).
- 3.2.11 Three significant post-Roman settlement sites have been excavated in the area. The first is at Dacre, approximately 8km south-west of Eamont Bridge, where activity seems to have commenced in the fifth or sixth century. The religious settlement, however, with well attested monastic activity, flourished from the eighth to eleventh centuries (Oliver *et al* 1996, 168-9). The finds from the site included a turned mudstone spindle whorl, bun shaped loomweights dating to the eighth to tenth centuries (*op cit*, 152), and a single sherd of handmade pottery in an unusually heavily gritted fabric. Evidence for bead-making, associated with a small amount of Roman and early medieval vessel glass, was also discovered (*op cit*, 160).
- 3.2.12 The second site is that of Fremington, lying approximately 1.5km east of Eamont Bridge. The site was excavated in 1991, revealing that the first phase of activity on the site consisted of a possible agricultural building with associated features (*op cit*, 165). The second phase of activity dated to the early medieval period (*ibid*). Three building forms were represented – a sunken-floored building, a post-built hall and a kiln (*ibid*). The first of these types has traditionally been associated with Anglo-

Saxon activity (*ibid*). The finds included sherds of Roman and early medieval pottery, spindle whorls and whetstones (*op cit*, 148-162).

- 3.2.13 The third site is at Whinfall Forest, Brougham, and was excavated in 1996 (Heawood and Howard-Davis 2002, 159). It tentatively identified four or five rectangular structures defined by postholes (*op cit*, 165). There were, unfortunately, very few finds, which made the dating of the structures extremely difficult (*op cit*, 166). The form of the structures, lack of finds, and position in relation to other known archaeological sites within the area were therefore used to arrive at a likely date for the structures in the second half of the first millennium (*op cit*, 167).
- 3.2.14 **Medieval:** Penrith had a relatively early origin (Winchester 1987, 124), and continued to grow following the Norman Conquest (*ibid*), although it was originally held by the crown of Scotland (Furness 1894). Its wealth was principally based on agriculture, the production and processing of fabric in particular, as well as the production of grain (Winchester 1987, 127). This growth continued until the middle of the fourteenth century, and would have no doubt involved rural areas such as Stagstones. The fourteenth century saw something of a reversal as the whole county was ravaged by plague and war. Disease affected animals as badly as humans and, consequently, had a devastating impact on the economy. Meanwhile continued Scottish raiding caused untold damage to the area (*op cit*, 44-47) and the virtual destruction of Penrith (Furness 1894, 74-75). It was not until the fifteenth century that the situation recovered sufficiently enough that new areas of land began to be enclosed, including some that were previously waste (Winchester 1987).
- 3.2.15 **Late medieval and Post-medieval:** Cumbria remained an unstable place into the seventeenth century due to the continuing border problems (Rollinson 1996). It was not until 1603 and the union of the English and Scottish crowns that the area became close to stabilised (*ibid*). The dominating form of rural livelihood at this time was the statesman or yeoman farmer, a powerful middle class who ‘although tenants of the lord of the manor... enjoyed certain rights and privileges, which, in effect, transformed their tenure into something akin to freehold’ (*op cit*, 65). It seems likely that the origins of the farm at Stagstones grew out of this increasingly prosperous middle class, people who were evidently able to purchase plots of land outright during the enclosures of the nineteenth century.
- 3.2.16 **History of Stagstones:** the first concrete reference to Stagstones in the historical record was not until 1835 when the estate was sold by the executors of a Mr William Varty (D/B/S6/1/314). William Varty was mentioned prior to this, however, because of his connections with John Wesley, who visited Penrith in 1786 (Furness 1894, 190). William Varty was one of the earliest notable converts, and he allowed the fledgling group to meet in a room he owned in Penrith until his death in 1814 (Walker 1858, 111; Furness 1894, 190). He was evidently a man of some means (Burgess 1980, 12), although it does not appear that Stagstones had been built before the time of his death. A William Varty is recorded as paying rent to the Earl of Lonsdale, who owns a large amount of the adjoining land recorded on the Tithe map of 1849, between 1787 and 1808 (D/Lons/L5/2/44/11 and D/Lons/L5/2/44/15). He is also recorded in 1791 as a freeholder (Anon 1791, 216) and in 1811 he is listed as ‘a person out of trade’ living at Nether-end (Jollie and Sons 1811, xxxii).
- 3.2.17 William Varty certainly appears to have been a freehold farmer, between approximately 1786 and 1814, and was potentially the founder of the Stagstones estate albeit at the latter part of his life as the 1819 enclosure map marks the area of

Stagstones as a newly enclosed plot (QRE/1/135/9) (Fig 2). Presumably he had acquired this plot having been a former tenant of the Earl of Lonsdale, although his death in 1814 (Walker 1858, 111) perhaps means that it had been passed to his descendants (the 1819 map describes it as ‘the representative of William Varty’. The first actual reference to Stagstones names Daniel Hartley as resident there (Pigot and Co 1834), who had formerly been listed at neighbouring Roundthorns (Parson and White 1829, 504). It is not clear what happened to the property following William Varty’s death, but it seems possible that his neighbour took it over, before it went for sale in 1835.

- 3.2.18 The sale of 1835 is the only, and earliest, reference to the original house (Fig 4). The sales particulars (D/B/S6/1/314) describe it as a: ‘Very compact farm with a Gentlemanly residence, superior outbuildings and one hundred and five acres of capital land.’; also other lots of land were associated. Executors of Mr William Varty described the house as: ‘containing suitable accommodation for a moderate family, including Four good Bedchambers, with Closets, and a small Bed-room, adjoining; Two parlours neatly fitted up, Kitchen, Wash-house, large Dairy, and various domestic Appendages, with Gardens, and requisite Outbuildings, of a superior character, for Agricultural Purposes, and otherwise’. Clearly it was a house of some standing, if not grand, although there are no direct indications as to when it was built. One possible clue is that a portion of woodland sold with it is described as being of ‘nearly 21 years growth’, which would date its planting to around 1814, about the same time as William Varty’s death. It seems likely, however, that William Varty did build the house, although exactly when is less clear, as is how it was affected by his death.
- 3.2.19 In 1847 Jonathan Varty is listed as living at Stagstones (Mannex and Whellan 1847; Grigg 1990), presumably a descendant of William. It is not clear whether the house was actually sold in 1835, but it appears it had returned to the Varty family within 12 years. Jonathan Varty continues to be listed at Stagstones under gentry, nobility and clergy appearing in 1861 (Morris, Harrison and Co 1861, 252) and 1869 (Slater 1869, 81). He is followed by Thomas Varty, listed as a yeoman farmer (Kelly 1873), Captain (Slater 1884, 142), and Major (Bulmer 1884, 670), and present until at least 1897 (Kelly and Co 1894; 1897). It was presumably Thomas Varty who rebuilt the house, which was massively altered between the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition of 1867 and the 2nd Edition of 1900. During this time the original farm was essentially removed, and a new farm complex built to the north-west (the current Stagstones Farm). The site of the old farmhouse was apparently used for a new, much larger mansion, with a large garden, outbuildings, sundial and other ornamental features. The date of 1869 identified in the garden during the Historic Gardens Register survey would also correlate as a date for the construction of the new mansion.
- 3.2.20 The sale of 1900 reveals a very different building, being considerably larger; the house itself consisting of: ‘Ground Floor – Entrance Hall, Dining Room, Drawing Room, Study, Library, Smoke Room, Billiard Room, Kitchen, Larder, Lavatory, and other conveniences; there is also a cellar below. First Floor – Nine bedrooms, three Dressing Rooms, Bath Room, two wcs, and there are also two attic rooms. There are also gardens and pleasure grounds with trees, two greenhouses, Frames, Potting Sheds, and a kitchen garden well stocked with fruit trees’ (D/Mil/Mounsey/153/53). The grounds also contains numerous outbuildings including a ‘Carriage Horse Stable, Harness Room, with granary and workshop

over, two coach houses, barn with horse-powered threshing machine, farm horse stable and harness room, with loft over, smithy, cart shed, lambing shed, 16 stall byre, Turnip house, calf house, 2 pigbulls, wash-house and dairy' (*ibid*). It evidently passed from the Varty family this time and becomes difficult to trace after 1900, there being no evident listing in directories after this time (Bulmer and co 1901; Kelly's Directories Ltd 1906; 1910). It is not clear from the historical records when the house became derelict and was demolished, although it was described as 'a mansion' by Irving (c1935).

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## 4. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The desk-based assessment results are based on primary documents, in particular maps, as well as secondary sources. The Sites and Monuments Record in Kendal was also consulted. Stagstones is in the present county of Cumbria, although it was formerly within Cumberland. It is part of Penrith parish, within the historic Leath Ward.

### 4.2 SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD (SMR)

4.2.1 Very few sites were recorded in the SMR, only five for an area of approximately 1km around the study area, all of which are included in the gazetteer (*Appendix 3*) and on Figure 7; none had corresponding aerial photographs. One of these sites (Site 1; SMR 16728) is the former mansion at Stagstones, while Site 2 (SMR 11057) is a former sundial in the gardens. Two of the sites are quarries (Site 13 (SMR 11275) and Site 12 (SMR 11274)). The remaining site is a cup and ring marked stone (Site 8 (SMR 6507), found at the base of a dry-stone wall on a verge, immediately south of the farm. It was evidently not *in situ*, and its original location is unknown; indeed it is possible it was imported to the mansion as a garden feature. The SMR also held a list of features in the garden for possible inclusion on the Historic Gardens Register, although it is not clear if the garden was ever included.

4.2.2 All but one of these sites date to the post-medieval period, and two are related directly to the former mansion at Stagstones. The cup and ring marked stone is probably late Neolithic/early Bronze age in date, but the nature of its discovery suggests that it has been moved from its original position (Frodsham 1989).

### 4.3 CUMBRIA RECORD OFFICES (CARLISLE AND KENDAL)

4.3.1 The Cumbria Record Office in Carlisle (CRO(C)) was largely consulted for the desk-based assessment, in particular early maps and other relevant original documents. The tithe map, enclosure map and Ordnance Survey maps were of particular use, although an original copy of the 1st Edition was not available. Documents within the Lowther family estate records were also of some interest in understanding the early history of the site. Further records in Kendal were also consulted, but only one of these, a plan of the parish of Penrith of 1851, was of any relevance (WD/DF).

4.3.2 *Enclosure Map, 1819 (QRE/1/135/9) (Fig 2)*: although the buildings at Stagstones are not shown, the area of the estate can be seen. A single additional site, (Site 14) the quarry in the south-west corner of the estate was identified from this map.

4.3.3 *Estate Sales Particulars, 1835 (D/B/S6/1/314) (Figs 4 and 5)*: this is by far the most clear and detailed record of the original farm at Stagstones. Not only is there a plan of the farm, showing a relatively modest farm house and outbuildings, but there is also a drawing of the farm (Fig 5). This shows it to be a small, double pile plan-type house, probably of eighteenth or early nineteenth century date. The

quarry (Site 14) was also recorded on this plan, as was the cottage (Site 11), the guide post (Site 8), and possibly the sundial (Site 2).

- 4.3.4 **Plan of Beacon Fell (D/Lons/L5/3/66):** although this is undated the style of this plan suggests that it was of mid-nineteenth century date. It is significant only because it does not show Stagstones, while it does show nearby Round Thorn. It is not clear why this is, but may be because Round Thorn was an earlier building and so was considered worth including on the plan.
- 4.3.5 **Tithe Map, 1849 (DRC/8/150):** the copy of the tithe map was very unclear, but it showed the house at Stagstones to be a much smaller building than the later mansion, with only a small cluster of outbuildings, although further detail was difficult to observe. The field names revealed some additional details, including 'guide post field' (Site 8) and the cottage (Site 11).
- 4.3.6 **Plan of the Parish of Penrith in the County of Cumberland, 1851 (WD/DF) (Fig 3):** this was essentially a smaller scale copy of the tithe map, and the same field names also revealed Sites 8 and 11. More significantly it showed the possible track leading from Stagstones to the beacon (Site 15).
- 4.3.7 **Ordnance Survey 1st Edn 6" to 1 mile, 1867:** an original copy of this map was not available in the Record Office in Carlisle, but a copy was obtained from the SMR in Kendal. It shows the farm with a similar form to that shown on the tithe map, although there does appear to be a more complex arrangement of outbuildings. The sundial (Site 2) was present and a 'flagstaff' was marked north of the farmhouse. The wells (Sites 5 and 6), gravel pit (Site 10), and quarry (Site 9) were all present on this map, as was the guide post (Site 8).
- 4.3.8 **Ordnance Survey 2nd Edn 25" to 1 mile, 1900:** by the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition there had been a substantial change to the farm (Fig 6). The original layout was almost entirely gone, with the new, larger, mansion house built on its site. It is not clear from this plan whether any parts of the earlier house were incorporated into the new building, although elements of the north-west side potentially may have been. A new farm complex had evidently been built to the north-west, outside of the gardens of the mansion. The same quarries (Sites 9 and 10) and wells were visible (Sites 4 and 5), as were the more outlying sites (Sites 12 and 13).
- 4.3.9 **Ordnance Survey 3rd Edn 25" to 1 mile, 1925:** by 1925 the house and gardens were essentially the same as on the 2nd edition map, some outbuildings within the garden had disappeared, while others had been built. Sites 4 and 5, 9 and 10, and 12 and 13 were all depicted on the map.



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## 5. FABRIC SURVEY

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### 5.1 FORMER STAGSTONES MANSION: GENERAL DESCRIPTION (FIGS 8-11)

- 5.1.1 The building comprised the ruinous remains of the former Stagstones mansion, and consisted of the northern part of the main house and a small range of buildings attached to the north (Figs 8 and 9; Plate 5). The two-storey house was of local red sandstone rubble construction, faced with roughly dressed sandstone blocks, and bonded with pale lime mortar with red sandstone inclusions. The eastern facade was covered with a thick, pale lime render. The building was cellared, but only that at the northern end was visible/accessible. The structures to the north comprised three single-storey structures, of similar construction to the house. Substantial parts of the formal garden layout survive, including the ha-ha and many of the terraces and associated steps.
- 5.1.2 The survey was restricted on grounds of health and safety. The building was in a very poor state of repair, and it was, therefore, not possible to enter the building. It was necessary to maintain a respectable distance away from the standing walls at all time in case of collapse. Large areas of the fabric were obscured by ivy, and it was not safe to remove this at the time of the survey. Instead an oblique photographic record was made at the demolition stage; the ivy was then selectively removed by mechanical excavator and following the photography the building was dropped.

### 5.2 EAST (FRONT) ELEVATION [1] (FIG 10 AND PLATE 1)

- 5.2.1 The front elevation of the main house faces to the south-east, away from the farm. It would appear, from the sketch view of 1835 (Fig 5), that it was not intended as the main access to the building, but rather as the main facade viewed on the approach from the south, and from the gardens. The wall comprised two main phases, the northern bay being a later addition; however because of the render this was not evident from the south-east face. The wall survived to wall-head height, apart from the southern end, which was covered with ivy and had partially collapsed.
- 5.2.2 **Phase 1:** the earliest phase comprised a two-storey structure, with a central doorway flanked by windows, with first floor windows above each aperture, typical of a double-pile plan building type (Fig 5). Door and window ashlar surrounds were projecting, the sills projecting slightly further than jambs and lintels, with each element comprising a single dressed red sandstone piece. The windows were generously sized, with those on the first floor positioned one course below the wall-head. A uniform render was applied after the second phase of construction, apart from the very southernmost 0.5m length of wall, where dressed sandstone quoins were observed. The front face of these had been roughly tooled for better adherence of plaster/render.
- 5.2.3 The internal face of the wall was roughly pointed, suggesting that it had a plastered wall finish; a small patch was observed at the base of the northern end, but this was considered to be later than the original construction. The lintels were timber, although that above the door was missing, and may have been stone. The internal

window cases extended below the level of the external sill (it appeared that they extended to floor level on both floors), suggesting they were constructed for box-framed windows with internal window-seats. Pegs for the attachment of box-framing were observed on either side of both the ground floor windows, within the slightly splayed reveals. Evidence of fixing points for the door frame were also observed.

- 5.2.4 The stub of a contemporary single-skinned, faced, cross-wall, constructed of roughly dressed sandstone blocks, was observed to have been keyed into the internal wall-face to the immediate south of the doorway. Several stone and cement rendered blocked apertures in a corresponding position to the north of the doorway suggest that there were originally walls on both sides of the door, forming an internal hall.
- 5.2.5 Evidence of first floor joist sockets was observed, but the majority of these apertures had been enlarged by wall collapse, making it difficult to determine their size or spacing.
- 5.2.6 **Phase 2:** the second phase of construction comprised the addition of a cell to the north, with the extension of the facade. An additional window was added on both floors, in the same style as the original windows, except that the ground floor window was slightly larger, being 0.28m taller, and 0.30m wider. The wall was re-rendered at this time, with a hard grey cement render. A render plinth was added, or more likely replaced, and the surface of the wall was smooth-finished with incisions to give the appearance of ashlar block construction. The string course shown on the sketch view of 1835 was not re-instated, and it is probable that if it was part of the original construction it was formed of an increased thickness of render, along with the plinth, rather than from projecting stonework.
- 5.2.7 On the internal face it was evident that the mortar belonging to the second phase extension differed from that of the earlier phase in that it was greyer, suggesting the use of cement. The window cases continued to floor level, as with the earlier wall. Joist sockets for the ground floor were observed, estimated at c0.15m x 0.08m, but were not present at first floor level, demonstrating that the floorboards of the first floor must have been aligned east/west, and opposite to those on the ground floor, and in the earlier structure. Below floor level, part of the heavily limewashed/whitewashed cellar wall could be seen, but could not be investigated in detail for health and safety reasons.
- 5.2.7 **Southern extension:** the southern 0.5m length of the wall was not rendered, with the end of the render appearing to 'lip' round a return in the wall extending to the east. This latter wall was subsequently demolished, but must have butted the external face of the original east facing wall [1], and appears to be part of the structure shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1900 (Fig 6). To judge by the OS map this was a sizeable southern extension, of which the only survival is a small stub of walling to the south of, and remote from, the extant structure. The original double pile building (Phase 1) was clearly extended to both the north and south at some stage between 1835 and 1900, and while it was possible that both extensions were not constructed at the same time, there is no archaeological evidence to demonstrate which, if any, was the earlier; consequently they are both defined as Phase 2.

### 5.3 NORTH WALL [2] (PLATE 6)

- 5.3.1 The north wall of the surviving house was a second phase gable wall, contemporary with, and keyed into, the northern end of the east wall [I]. The eastern part of the gable was slightly damaged, but suggested that it was recessed from the facade. Most of the western half of the wall was obscured by ivy, on both the internal and external wall-faces. Some small patches of possibly original smooth render were observed adhering to the exposed stone external elevation, whilst later, rough cement render had been added to most of the exposed lower external face.
- 5.3.2 A window was observed within the ivy, 1.55m from the western end of the elevation. It appeared to be of similar size and style to the Phase 1 windows in the eastern elevation. A cellar window was also observed, positioned just east of centre, and had similar external surrounds. It had vertical iron bars, flush with the external wall face, to protect the two-light casement window from debris falling from ground level, approximately half way up the window. Internally, it had a sloping sandstone sill, but was obscured by the build-up of internal demolition debris.
- 5.3.3 Above the window, and offset slightly to the east, was a fireplace with a dressed three-piece sandstone surround. This was subsequently blocked, and the whole wall was rendered to cover it. Access to the fireplace was provided in the external wall-face via an aperture, 0.25m x 0.19m with a top-hinged iron cover. Blocked flue access was also observed in the external wall-face at ground and first floor level.
- 5.3.4 Two fireplaces were observed on the first floor, suggesting two bedrooms in this new extension to the original structure. The fire-surrounds were the same as that on the ground floor, and the western fireplace had a simple grate. The eastern grate, however, had a larger grate with a cast iron back-piece, suggesting it was most probably the higher status bedroom (Plate 3). Alcoves half the thickness of the wall were observed either side of the large chimney breast, which spanned most of the first floor. Ceiling joists c0.15m x 0.25m were observed at first floor ceiling level, although many were obscured within the ivy.
- 5.3.5 The wall-scar of a dividing wall on the first floor, constructed of timber stud with lath-and-plaster covering, was observed but was obscured by ivy.

#### **5.4 INTERNAL CROSS-WALL [3] (FIG 11 AND PLATES 2 AND 4)**

- 5.4.1 The cross wall observed within the surviving fabric originally formed the northern gable of the building (Phase 1); it was a continuous build with the southern parts of the east and west walls, and was of the same construction materials and bonding. The northern side of the wall, the original external face, was covered with a rough gritty render, which was possibly original. This was overlain in patches by a later render, and pegs driven into the wall fabric suggest that the wall was finished with lath-and-plaster during a later phase.
- 5.4.2 Three doorways were observed at ground floor level. The eastern doorway appeared to have been cut through the northern skin of the wall, but not the southern, inner, wall-face, strongly suggesting that it was an alcove in Phase 1, and was knocked through to form a doorway into the extension in Phase 2. The timber lintel of the internal alcove had been remodelled, with a section removed across most of its width to allow a higher door to be inserted. The doorway observed at the western end of the wall was also a remodelled Phase 1 feature. Originally it was a window, but in Phase 2 it was narrowed and extended to floor level to create a doorway into the western part of the new extension to the building. The original

central doorway, just about shown on the sketch of 1835 (Fig 5), was blocked on the northern face in Phase 2, using the same stone and mortar as that used in the northern end of the east and west long-walls. It was open on the internal face, forming an alcove.

- 5.4.3 Inserted joist sockets were observed on the north face, added in phase two for the insertion of a first floor to the new extension, and a larger socket at the western end of the wall was possibly related to the positioning of the stairs; however, more detailed examination was not possible. Evidence for a straight stair, probably in stone, was observed leading down from the western doorway into the cellar of the Phase 2 extension. A north/south aligned double skin dividing wall was also observed at cellar level, butting the northern face of wall 3. It was narrower than the external walls, having no rubble core, and appeared to terminate c0.8m to the south of the external gable (wall 2), suggesting a doorway between the two cells formed within the cellar by the wall. No access was possible during the survey to the cellar for health and safety reasons.
- 5.4.4 Internally, the wall had fireplaces to the east, both at ground and first floor level. Both had sandstone surrounds similar to the later ones observed in wall 2. The ground floor fireplace was slightly wider, and access into the flue was observed just below ceiling level, to the east of the central, blocked, doorway.
- 5.4.5 A door was observed at first floor level, immediately to the west of a central dividing wall [5]. It cut through the Phase 1 external wall, which would have had no need of a door on the first floor, and gave access to the stairs, which appear to have been positioned within the new extension.
- 5.4.6 Ceiling joists were observed for the first floor, it being floored on the opposite axis to the ground floor.

## 5.5 WEST ELEVATION [4]

- 5.5.1 The rear, western elevation was similar to the east elevation [1], in that it was constructed in two phases, the south being original and the north a secondary extension. Its construction was as for wall 1; however, the original render, suggested by the tooling of the quoins at the northern end of the Phase 1 wall, was removed, and was not present over the majority of the wall at the time of survey. Some render survived within the wall-scar outline of a porch, added in Phase 2, and this appears to be of the same style as that suggested as on the original external side of wall 3. The porch had a hard cement render roof-line scar, and several holes within the external face of the wall which probably relate to its insertion in Phase 2.
- 5.5.2 Almost all of the remainder of the wall was ivy covered at the time of the survey, but a small ground floor window, only 0.3m wide and 0.5m high, was observed within the ivy to the south of the porch and had squared section metal bars, similar to the cellar window in wall 2. A first floor window above it appeared to be similar to those on the eastern facade. A possible aperture was also observed at, and extending into a hollow below, ground level on the external face, most probably a door into a cellar. Unfortunately, this potentially important feature was extremely overgrown, and removal of the ivy would have risked collapse of parts of the structure and, therefore, could not be examined. Internally, the wall was entirely ivy covered.

- 5.5.3 The Phase 2 northern extension was roughly keyed into the earlier fabric at four points. It had a central first floor window, similar to that on the eastern elevation, and another similar, but smaller window at the southern end of the first floor. A diagonal row of sockets on the internal face of the wall, with three level sockets below this small window, suggest that the stairs rose from the north of the extension along this wall, and had a half-landing with a window at the southern end of the extension, turning south and up a short flight to the doorway inserted into wall 3.
- 5.5.4 A large central window at ground level appears to be a late insertion, cut into the wall-faces and with only concrete rendering forming the jambs and sill. The area above the lintel had collapsed, suggesting that it was no more substantial. The window extended below the string of the stair, suggesting that it had been removed by this time.

## 5.6 SOUTHERN INTERNAL PARTITION WALL [5]

- 5.6.1 A single skin stone wall butted the southern face of wall 3. It was bonded with similar mortar to the Phase 1 walls 1, 2 and 3, and was most probably contemporary. It had joist sockets for the first floor in both faces, and it is unclear how the first floor might have been supported if this was a Phase 2 addition. If closer examination had been safe, it may potentially have revealed occasional keystones into wall 3, and a similar construction to the single skin walls observed on the internal face of the east wall [1]. The wall probably joined the northern of these walls, but no upstanding relationship survived. The wall was only constructed to first floor ceiling height, suggesting that the roof space was open above this line along the whole width of the building.

## 5.7 CARTSHED [6] AND SHED [7]

- 5.7.1 **Cartshed [6]:** a double-faced wall butted the northern face of the Phase 2 extension (wall 2). The narrow wall (0.34m wide) had no core, and was similar to that observed within the cellar. It was bonded with the same mortar as the other Phase 2 walls, and was aligned parallel to the building for a length of 7.8m to a contemporary junction with structure 7. A socket c2m above ground level, observed in the quoin of the north-west corner of the Phase 2 extension (walls 2 and 4), formed the housing of the ridge of a single-pitch roof, dropping to the east. Several sandstone flags were observed *in-situ*, overlying a later temporary timber structure, but which were possibly in their original position. The structure, which was probably a cartshed, was 3.8m wide and was open-fronted on the eastern side.
- 5.7.2 **Shed [7]:** wall 6 continued beyond the cartshed to form the eastern wall of a sub-rectangular structure, 2.7m long and 3.8m wide, flush with the front of the cartshed [7]. It was of continuous build with the cartshed, and had a north/south aligned central internal dividing wall of similar contemporary build. Both cells had doors on their external faces with single-piece sandstone jambs and lintels, placed flush with the wall-face. Each cell had an alcove, 0.35m wide, set 0.25m deep within the wall thickness, and presumably formed keep holes. The structure had a pitched roof, with sandstone ridge tiles and sandstone flags on the eastern pitch. The western pitch was slated, and the western half of the south gable wall continued above the roof-line to a height level with the socket in the north-west corner of the

mansion, to form a pad for the ridge of the cartshed [6]. It is not clear whether the slates were a replaced roof, or whether the lower status, rear, pitch was originally slated to reduce expense. The original function of these two small rooms is not entirely clear. Both were internally rendered, and the western room contained a broken twentieth century toilet. It is unlikely that this represented their original function, as there are two, and outhouse toilets were much later in origin than the presumed date of this structure. It is more likely to have been a storage shed, possibly for implements, rather than wood or coal, given the keeping holes.

- 5.7.3 **Walls [8] to the north of the shed:** two mainly demolished low walls [8] to the north of the shed [7], appeared to be continuations of the shed walls. The eastern wall was keyed to a height of 1.2m, and partially survived to this height. The western wall was only keyed to 0.5m, and was more poorly preserved, but did survive to this height at its northern end. The northern wall of this structure 3.7m x 2.7m had been partially remodelled into a field-wall, but had a central blocked opening that was 0.9m wide. Thus it would appear that this structure formed a pen, with an entrance into the field to the north, and which had a lower wall on the western side than that on the east. It may possibly have had an opening in the western wall, but survival was so poor at ground level, this could not be confidently established. There was no evidence of any roof.

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## 6. DISCUSSION

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### 6.1 EARLY ACTIVITY

6.1.1 The desk-based assessment has demonstrated that the site of Stagstones is within an area of considerable prehistoric activity. In particular, there are a number of important Neolithic ritual monuments in the environs including two henges and the important stone circle of Long Meg and her daughters. In the immediate area of Stagstones there was the discovery of a Bronze Age cup and ring marked rock, which had three concentric rings around a central cup mark, with further small cup marks on either side. It was found at the base of a dry stone wall on a verge, immediately south of the farm, and was evidently not *in situ* (Frodsham 1989). It is not known, therefore, if it was an indicator of prehistoric activity at the site.

### 6.2 The Mansion

6.2.1 Three phases of construction were identified for the mansion, which was constructed, probably in the late eighteenth, or early nineteenth century using local materials.

6.2.2 **Phase 1:** the original building comprised a double-pile house of three bays length, and one bay wide. The house appears to have been of moderately high status, with the roof recessed behind a simple cornice, and probably with kneeler stones to the gables. The documentary study suggests that the eastern façade also had a string-course and plinth. Internally, the house had box windows, probably incorporating window seats.

6.2.3 The surviving plan of the structure is incomplete, particularly at the southern end, but suggests a slightly more complex arrangement. The ground floor plan had a central hall, with rooms on either side in the front (east) of the house. The northern of these had a fireplace and alcove and was probably a parlour. The remainder of the plan is unclear, but appears to have included a room in the north-west corner with a window and an external door, but without a fireplace. This was possibly a kitchen and probably served as the main access into the house for daily use.

6.2.4 The first floor appears to have been divided into four rooms, and the stairs were probably located on the western wall. A cellar appears to have been incorporated into the original structure, and was accessed externally from the south-west side; its form, plan and function remain unclear.

6.2.5 **Phase 2:** the second phase of construction appears to relate to a major status change, from a house with polite features, to a far more grand mansion. The documentary study revealed this to have probably taken place between 1867 and 1900, which is consistent with the analysis of the upstanding remains. The original house appears to have been entirely incorporated within the new mansion, which was extended in all directions.

6.2.6 Little survives of this massively enlarged structure as shown on the OS 2nd Edition map (1900) (Fig 6); a wall-scar on the eastern façade shows the northern end of the southern extension, and the walls of the northern extension survive almost intact. The rest is lost as upstanding fabric, but may be preserved *in situ* below ground.

- 6.2.7 Access into the new bay from the existing building was provided by the insertion of a door through the east end of the former gable wall. This entailed the complete re-orientation of the ground floor apertures, and the creation of an access at first floor level to the new staircase, complete with a half-landing and window. This was positioned in the south-west corner of the extension, and apparently continuing into the new cellar below. The ground floor appears to have comprised a large parlour, although the staircase may have been partitioned. The cellar below was partitioned into two cells. The gardens appear to have also been re-designed at this time, with the creation of the ha-ha and much of the terracing and associated steps.
- 6.2.8 **Phase 3:** the final phase of construction observed dates to the twentieth century, and comprises the internal reorientation of the structure rather than new construction, and as such is not shown on any mapping. Within the surviving fabric it was evidenced by the insertion of a large window in the western wall of the Phase 2 extension, and by the blocking of the ground floor fireplace within the same extension. It appears likely that the stair was also removed at this time.

### 6.3 Impact

- 6.3.1 The development has now resulted in the removal of all above ground fabric, and the loss of the below surface deposits. Given the level of fabric recording already undertaken at the site and the health and safety restrictions imposed on further recording, it was agreed with Cumbria County Council that the mitigation for this loss should be a photographic record of the extant fabric following the removal of the ivy, immediately prior to the demolition of the building. This was undertaken in May 2003, and some of the photographs are presented below (Plates 2, 5 and 6), and the remainder are incorporated within the project archive.



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## APPENDIX 1: PROJECT BRIEF

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## APPENDIX 2: PROJECT DESIGN

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**Oxford  
Archaeology  
North**

**August 2002**

### **FORMER MANSION, STAGSTONES, PENRITH CUMBRIA**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT, FABRIC SURVEY, AND WATCHING BRIEF**

#### ***Proposals***

*The following design is offered in response to a request from Richard Forester, of Manning Elliott for an archaeological assessment, fabric survey and watching brief in advance of a residential development of the remains of the former mansion, Stagstones, Penrith, Cumbria.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

- 1.1.1 Richard Forester, of Manning Elliott has requested that Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) submit proposals for archaeological recording at Stagstones, Penrith, Cumbria in advance of a proposed residential development at the site.
- 1.1.2 The now ruined building was first documented in 1835 sales particulars which recorded a farm house of late Georgian character. It was substantially developed between 1867 and 1900, becoming a large non-agricultural mansion house. The unrelated find of a late Neolithic / early Bronze Age cup and ring marked stone was recorded at the base of a wall to the south of Stagstones Farm. The presence of the stone indicates local mid-prehistoric activity and highlights the potential for further remains within the extent of the proposed development.

### **1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH**

- 1.2.1 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) has considerable experience of the archaeological survey and evaluation of sites and monuments of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large projects during the past 20 years. Projects have been undertaken to fulfil the different requirements of various clients and planning authorities, and to very rigorous timetables. OA North has considerable experience of the recording of historic buildings together with the evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large scale projects during the past 20 years. Fieldwork has taken place within the planning process and construction programmes, to fulfil the requirements of clients and planning authorities, to very rigorous timetables.
- 1.2.2 OA North has the professional expertise and resources to undertake the project detailed below to a high level of quality and efficiency. OA North is an Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) registered organisation, registration number 17, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IFA Code of Conduct.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The following programme has been designed, in accordance with a brief by Cumbria County Council Archaeological Service (CCCAS) to provide a desk-based assessment, a fabric survey of the former mansion, and a watching brief during groundworks. The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:

### **2.2 DESK-BASED STUDY**

- 2.2.1 To provide a rapid desk-based assessment of the site.

### **2.3 FABRIC SURVEY**

- 2.2.1 To provide a basic survey record of the extant fabric of the mansion house, in accordance with Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments (England) (RCHME) Level 3 survey. This would involve the production of a ground plan, and the rectified photographic recording of two elevations. The survey would provide for a basic analysis of the fabric and would result in a textual assessment of the development and form of the building.

### **2.4 WATCHING BRIEF**

- 2.4.1 To record any surviving archaeological features or deposits by means of detailed observation and recording in the course of the groundworks for the development. To record the presence of buried features by appropriate recovery techniques, where applicable.

### **2.5 REPORT**

- 2.5.1 A written report will assess the significance of the data generated by this programme within a local and regional context. It will present the desk-based study, fabric survey and watching brief results and would make an assessment of the development of the building and site.

### 3. METHOD STATEMENT

#### 3.1 DESK- BASED STUDY

3.1.1 The following will be undertaken as appropriate, depending on the availability of source material. The level of such work will be dictated by the timescale of the project.

3.1.2 **Documentary and cartographic material:** this work will rapidly address the full range of potential sources of information. It will include an appraisal of the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record, as well as appropriate sections of County histories, early maps, and such primary documentation (tithe and estate plans etc.) as may be reasonably available. Particular emphasis will be upon the early cartographic evidence which has the potential to inform post-medieval occupation and land-use of the area. Any photographic material lodged in either the County Sites and Monuments Record or the County Record Offices will also be studied. Published documentary sources will also be examined and assessed. This work will involve visits to the County Record Office in Carlisle.

3.1.3 **Aerial photography:** a brief survey of the extant air photographic cover will be undertaken. This would provide an indication of recent land-use, but is not likely to significantly inform the archaeological potential of the site. The Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record has a valuable aerial photographic collection. Aerial photographic work will also entail liaison with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments (England) (NMR), although, within the timescale available, it is unlikely that prints will be forthcoming from this body for inclusion in this report.

#### 3.2 FABRIC SURVEY

3.2.1 A survey will be undertaken of the former mansion house in accordance with the RCHM(E) Level 3 recording. This would involve the creation of a ground floor plan of the building coupled with a rectified photographic survey of the principle extant elevations.

3.2.2 **Oblique Photography:** a general photographic survey will record the character of the building. The photographic coverage will include close up views of architectural details, both structural and decorative. Oblique photography will be undertaken using both monochrome and colour (35mm) and/or digital photography in order to provide a general record of these buildings. The site will need to have been cleared of obscuring vegetation at ground level by the client in advance of the photographic survey and other elements of the survey.

3.2.3 **Ground Plan of Building:** a ground plan will be created for the building and its environs which will be tied into a 1:10,000 digital base for the site. The building will be surveyed by means of a reflectorless total station, which is capable of measuring distances to architectural detail by reflection from the surface of that detail element; consequently it does not require the placement of a prism on the detail. It is therefore an ideal tool for the recording of detail where there is no safe physical access. The survey will be undertaken with respect to a series of accurately surveyed control stations established by traverse around the outside of the building. The data from the instrument will be incorporated into a CAD system and output as a series of plots to enable the enhancement of the drawing by manual survey. The graphic results of the survey will be digitised into the CAD system to enhance the manipulation and presentation of the results.

3.2.4 **Elevation Recording:** a record will be created of internal and external elevations of the building, using a combination of rectified photography and reflectorless survey instrument. The survey will record the south facing internal elevation and the east facing external elevation. Where possible rectified photography will be taken to provide a basic face on record of the elevations. The rectified photography will be undertaken by in-house survey specialists and will be undertaken in black and white using a medium format camera. Control for the rectified photography will be provided by reflectorless instrument, and will record the locations of clearly defined elements of structural detail, rather than targets, to prevent the need for physically accessing the walls. The photography will be output at an appropriate scale; it will be scanned into a computer and presented as a raster backdrop within AutoCAD. Where there is any distortion within the photographic base, the digital image will be subject to digital correction using Archis software to convert the images to

fully rectified images. The corrected images will then be incorporated as a raster backdrop within AutoCad and the elevation drawings will be drawn up as a vector drawing from the rectified base.

- 3.2.5 Parts of the walls may not be appropriate for survey by rectified photography either because there is obscured detail as a result of vegetation. In these situations the elevation will be part recorded by reflectorless instrument. The data will be superimposed with that of the rectified photography in the CAD system. Both elements of the survey will utilise the same survey control and will therefore be closely tied.
- 3.2.6 The final drawings will show all significant stone detail, such as quoins, ashlar stones, and significant detail, but will not involve the digitising of all stone detail.
- 3.2.7 **Analysis:** a programme of analysis will be undertaken examining the construction and form of the building. This will involve the internal and external examination of the extant fabric, where health and safety allows, and will generate a description and assessment of the function, operation and phasing of the building.

### 3.3 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.3.1 A programme of field observation will accurately record the location, extent, and character of any surviving archaeological features in the course of the ground works for the proposed residential development. This work will comprise the observation of the process of excavation for these works, the systematic examination of any subsoil horizons exposed during the course of works, and the accurate recording of all archaeological features and horizons, and any artefacts, identified during observation.
- 3.3.2 During this phase of work, recording will comprise a full description and preliminary classification of features or materials revealed, and their accurate location (either on plan and/or section, and as grid coordinates where appropriate). All archaeological information collected in the course of fieldwork will be recorded in standardised form, and will include accurate national grid references. Features will be planned accurately at appropriate scales and annotated on to a large scale plan provided by the Client. A photographic record will be undertaken simultaneously. The recording techniques and procedures employed by OA North for such detailed recording represent current best practice.
- 3.3.3 It is assumed that OA North will have the authority to stop works for up to one hour to enable the recording of important deposits, and to call in additional archaeological support if a find of particular importance is identified. This would only be called into effect in agreement with the Client and CCCAS and will require a variation to costing. In normal circumstances, field recording will also include a continual process of analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of the data, in order to establish the necessity for any further more detailed recording that may prove essential.

### 3.4 REPORT

- 3.4.1 **Archive:** the results of the fieldwork will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. It will include summary processing and analysis of all features, finds, or palaeoenvironmental data recovered during fieldwork, which will be catalogued by context. This archive can be provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format and a synthesis will be included in the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record. A copy of the archive can also be made available for deposition with the National Archaeological Record. OA North practice is to deposit the original record archive of projects (paper, magnetic and plastic media) with the appropriate County Record Office, and a full copy of the record archive (microform or microfiche) together with the material archive (artefacts, ecofacts, and samples) with an appropriate museum.
- 3.4.2 **Report:** one bound and one unbound copy of a written synthetic report will be submitted to the Client, and a further copy submitted to the Cumbria County Council SMR. The report



will include a copy of this project design, and indications of any agreed departure from that design. It will present, summarise, and interpret the results of the programme detailed above and present an assessment of the sites history, the architectural significance of the structures on the site and an assessment of the sites below ground survival; the report will include photographs of any significant features. The report will also include a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived, and a list of further sources identified during the programme of work, but not examined in detail.

- 3.4.3 Illustrative material will include a location map, site map, historic maps, building plans, elevations, site plans and also pertinent photographs. It can be tailored to the specific requests of the client (eg particular scales etc), subject to discussion. The report will be in the same basic format as this project design.

### 3.5 OTHER MATTERS

- 3.5.1 **Health and Safety:** OA North conforms to all health and safety guidelines as contained in the Lancaster University Manual of Health and Safety and the safety manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers. The work will be in accordance with Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Council for British Archaeology Handbook No. 6, *Safety in Archaeological Fieldwork* (1989).
- 3.5.2 Full regard will, of course, be given to all constraints (services etc) during the watching brief and fabric survey, as well as to all Health and Safety considerations. OA North provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Unit Safety policy. A risk assessment will be completed in advance of the project's commencement.
- 3.5.3 The programme is designed so that there is no need for project staff to work against or in the immediate vicinity of unstable high walls, as all recording techniques will be remote from the face.
- 3.5.4 **Insurance:** the insurance in respect of claims for personal injury to or the death of any person under a contract of service with the unit and arising out of an in the course of such person's employment shall comply with the employers' liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 and any statutory orders made there under. For all other claims to cover the liability of OA North, in respect of personal injury or damage to property by negligence of OA North or any of its employees, there applies the insurance cover of £2m for any one occurrence or series of occurrences arising out of one event.
- 3.5.5 **Confidentiality:** the report is designed as a document for the specific use of the Client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project design, and should be treated as such; it is not suitable for publication as an academic report, or otherwise, without amendment or revision. Any requirement to revise or reorder the material for submission or presentation to third parties beyond the project brief and project design, or for any other explicit purpose can be fulfilled, but will require separate discussion and funding.
- 3.5.6 **Project Monitoring:** OA North will consult with the client regarding access to the site. Whilst the work is undertaken for the client, the County Archaeologist will be kept fully informed of the work and its results. Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with CCCAS in consultation with the Client.

## 4. WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The following programme is proposed:

### **Desk-based Assessment**

A five day period would be required for this element

### **Fabric Survey**

A three day period would be required for this element

**Watching Brief**

Timetable to be dictated by the development

**Report**

A fifteen day period would be to complete this element

- 4.2 OA NORTH can execute projects at short notice once an agreement has been signed with the client.
- 4.3 The project will be managed by **Jamie Quartermaine BA Surv Dip MIFA** (Unit Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed. OA NORTH adheres by the IFA's Code of Conduct and the Code of Approved Practice for the regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology.

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## APPENDIX 3: GAZETTEER OF SITES

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**Site Number** 01  
**Site name** Stagstones  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35336 53163  
**SMR** 16728  
**Source** Hopkins 1991; Estate sale particulars of 1835 and 1900  
 Ruin of former mansion of Stagstones. Its origins were probably in the early nineteenth century, and in 1835 it was described as 'a very compact farm with a gentlemanly residence... with gardens and requisite outbuildings'. By 1900 it had developed into a larger mansion, with a separate farm to the north-west.

---

**Site Number** 02  
**Site name** Stagstones  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 3534153162  
**SMR** 11057  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; Estate sale particulars of 1835  
 A sundial shown on the 1st Edition map but not subsequent maps. It also appears to be on the plan with the 1835 estate sale particulars.

---

**Site Number** 03  
**Site name** Stagstones Road  
**Period** Bronze Age  
**NGR** 35366 53157  
**SMR** 6507  
**Source** Frodsham 1989; Beckensall 2002  
 A cup and ring marked stone found in 1984 during the construction of a gas pipeline; it had been disturbed and was not in situ. It was decorated with three concentric rings around a central cup mark, with further small cup marks on either side.

---

**Site Number** 04  
**Site name** Stagstones  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35339 53157  
**Source** OS 2nd Edition 1900; OS 3rd Edition 1925  
 The later garden on the south side of the enlarged house. An index was compiled for possible inclusion on the Historic Gardens Index which lists sunken features, a lawn, grotto and rock garden, a wooden summerhouse (site of), a bridge (site of), an ornamental stone wall stop (dated 1869), an ice house, a stone ha-ha and a path, with other ornamental features.

---

**Site Number** 05  
**Site name** Stagstones  
**Period** Medieval/Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35339 53173  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; OS 2nd Edition 1900; OS 3rd Edition 1925  
 A well is recorded on the OS maps, of unknown date.

---

**Site Number** 06  
**Site name** Stagstones  
**Period** Medieval/Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35334 53172  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; OS 2nd Edition 1900; OS 3rd Edition 1925

---

A well is recorded on OS maps, with an associated pond and possible earthworks, of unknown date.

---

**Site Number** 07  
**Site name** Stagstone  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35333 53169  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; OS 2nd Edition 1900; OS 3rd Edition 1925

A stone is marked as 'Stag Stone', but it is not clear what exactly this is. The presence of a cup and ring marked stone in the vicinity suggests that this might be of some significance. It is still marked on current OS maps.

---

**Site Number** 08  
**Site name** Stagstones Road  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35377 53176  
**Source** Estate Sale Papers 1835; Tithe Map 1849; OS 1st Edition 1867

A 'guide post' is marked on the 1st Edition OS. The estate sale papers of 1835 and the Tithe map both refer to this field as 'Guide Post field'.

---

**Site Number** 09  
**Site name** East of Stagstones Road  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35395 53146  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; OS 2nd Edition 1900

A quarry, named 'old quarry' on the 1900 OS map.

---

**Site Number** 10  
**Site name** East of Stagstones Road  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35370 53147  
**Source** OS 1st Edition 1867; OS 2nd Edition 1900; OS 3rd Edition 1925

A gravel pit, named 'old gravel pit' on OS 1st and 2nd Edition maps.

---

**Site Number** 11  
**Site name** North-west of Stagstones Lodge  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35340 53136  
**Source** Estate Sale Papers 1835; Plan of 1851; Estate sales particulars 1900

The site of a cottage is marked on the 1835 and 1851 plan, with surrounding land. It is possibly that mentioned in the 1900 sale particulars as 'not lived in for some time'.

---

**Site Number** 12  
**Site name** Rimington Quarry  
**Period** Post-medieval  
**NGR** 35290 53220  
**SMR** 11275  
**Source** Current OS

An old quarry is observed on current OS mapping but the date is unknown.

---

**Site Number** 13  
**Site name** Beacon Quarry  
**Period** Post-medieval

**NGR** 35377 53176  
**SMR** 11274  
**Source** Current OS

An old quarry is observed on current OS mapping but the date is unknown.

---

**Site Number** 14

**Site name** North-east of Stagstones Lodge

**Period** Post-medieval

**NGR** 35345 53138

**Source** Enclosure plan 1819; Estate Sale Papers 1835; Tithe Map 1849; Plan 1851

A field named as quarry ground on the 1835 estate sale papers. On the enclosure plan of 1819 a common quarry is marked in this area, and on the tithe map of 1849 and plan of 1851 the field is called 'quarry'.

---

**Site Number** 15

**Site name** Beacon Plantation

**Period** Post-medieval

**NGR** 35301 53150

. Plan of beacon plantation c1820-1860; Tithe map 1849

This is what appears to be a track running from the corner of the Stagstone Estate leading towards the beacon; the adjoining field is called 'Beacon Field'.

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

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Fig 1: Location Map of Stagstones

Fig 2: Enclosure Map of 1819 showing William Varty's Freehold

Fig 3: 1851 Plan of the Parish of Penrith, Showing the Stagstones Estate

Fig 4: Plan of the House and Gardens from the 1835 Estate Papers

Fig 5: View of the Farm in 1835, looking approximately west

Fig 6: Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition map, 1900

Fig 7: Gazetteer Sites

Fig 8: Location of Buildings

Fig 9: Plan of former mansion

Fig 10: Elevation of east-facing wall

Fig 11: Elevation of south-facing interior wall

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## PLATES

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Plate 1: Eastern facade [1] of the mansion looking west

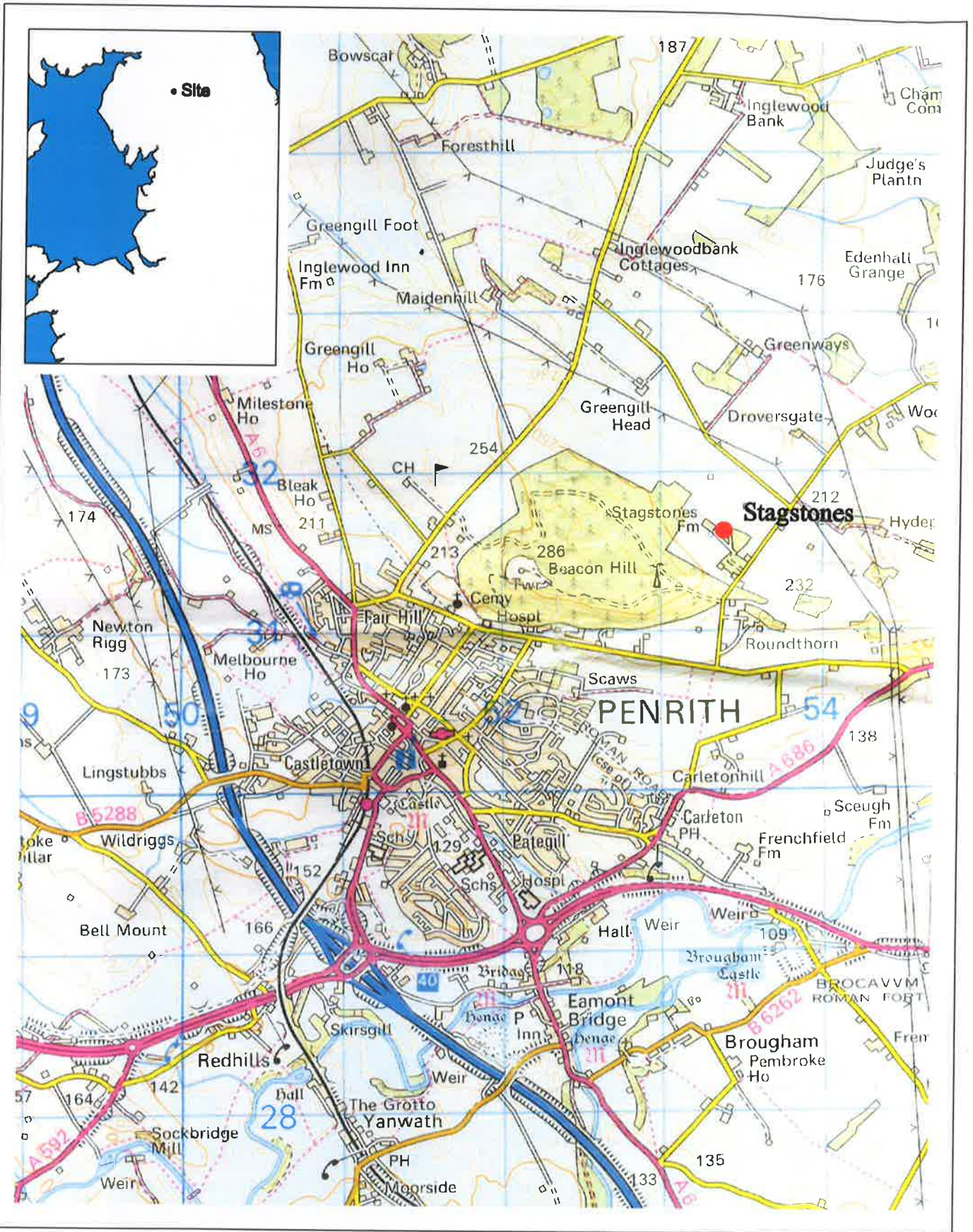
Plate 2: Internal cross wall [3] following selective removal of the ivy

Plate 3: First floor fire place on the North Wall [2]

Plate 4: Northern face of the internal cross wall [3]

Plate 5: General view of the mansion looking north-east

Plate 6: Phase 2 extension of the mansion looking east



based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:50000  
 with the permission of the controller of HMSO  
 © Crown Copyright

0 1000  
 metres



Figure 1: Location Map of Stagstones





Fig 2: Enclosure Map of 1819 showing William Varty's Freehold

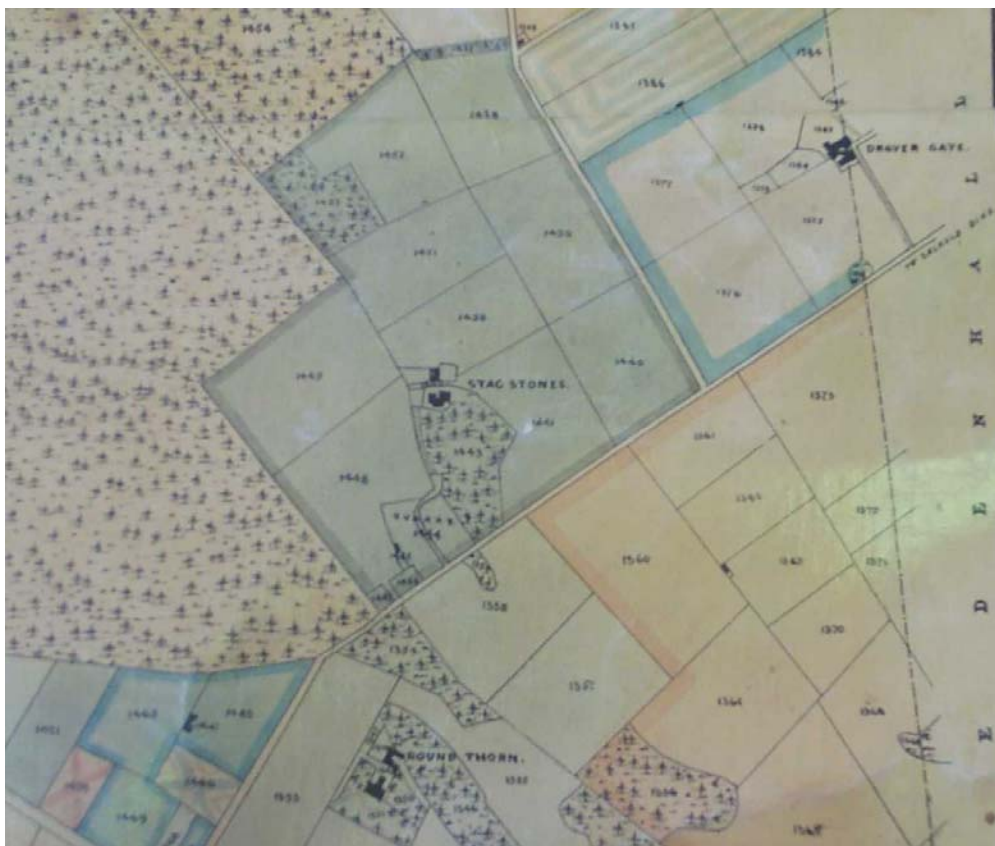


Fig 3: 1851 Plan of the Parish of Penrith, Showing the Stagstones Estate

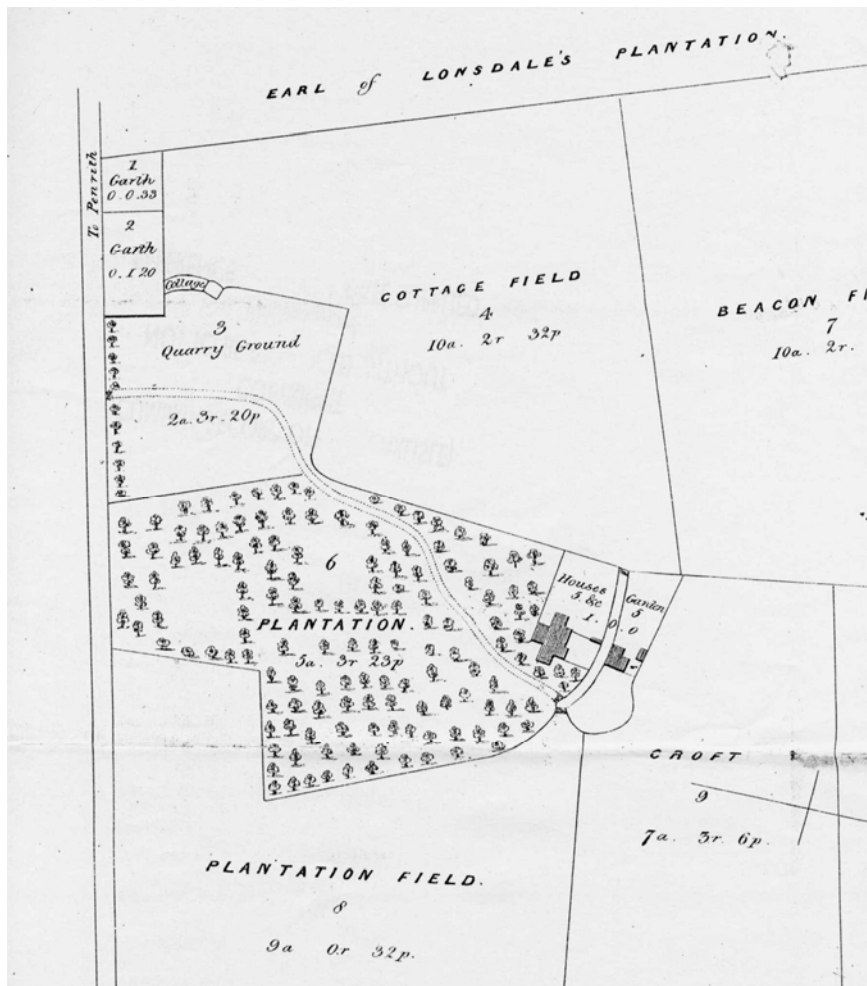


Fig 4: Plan of the House and Gardens from the 1835 Estate Papers

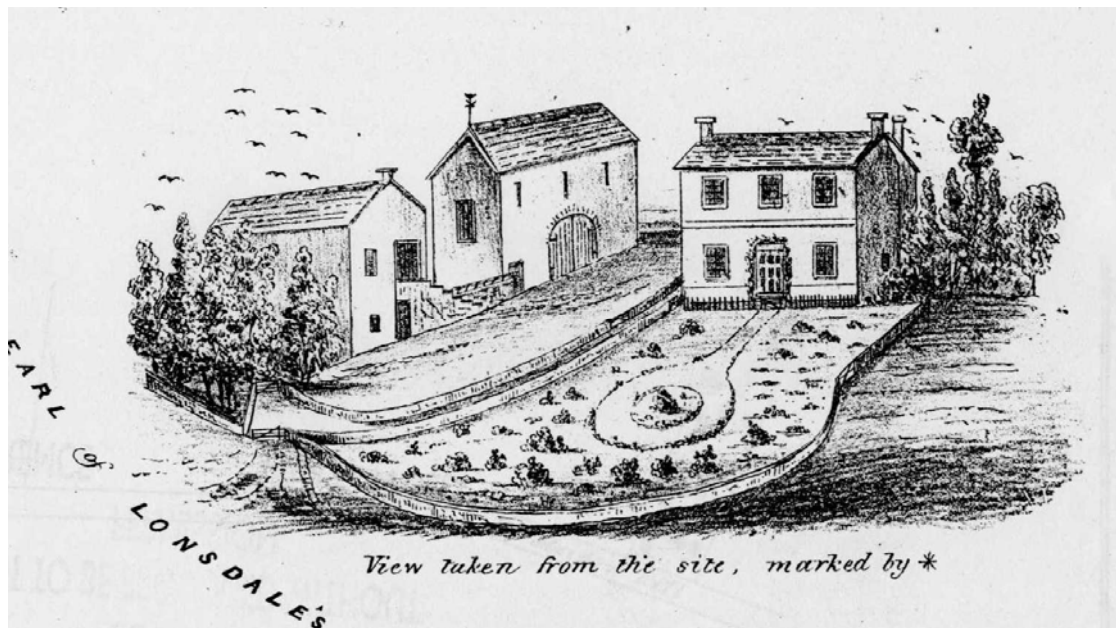


Fig 5: View of the Farm in 1835, looking approximately west



Fig 6: Ordnance Survey 2nd Edn map, 1900



Cultural Archaeology North  
 Shree Institute  
 Meeting House Lane  
 Larcaster  
 LA1 1TF  
 Tel 01624 848686  
 Fax 01624 848606

PROJECT:

**Former Mansion  
 Stagstones**

DRAWING No:

2



Scale 1:10000

DRAWN BY: DWE

DATE: October 2003

LOCATION:

KEY

● 10 Gazeteeer Sites

TITLE

Gazeteeer Sites

COMMISSIONED BY:

Manning Elliot

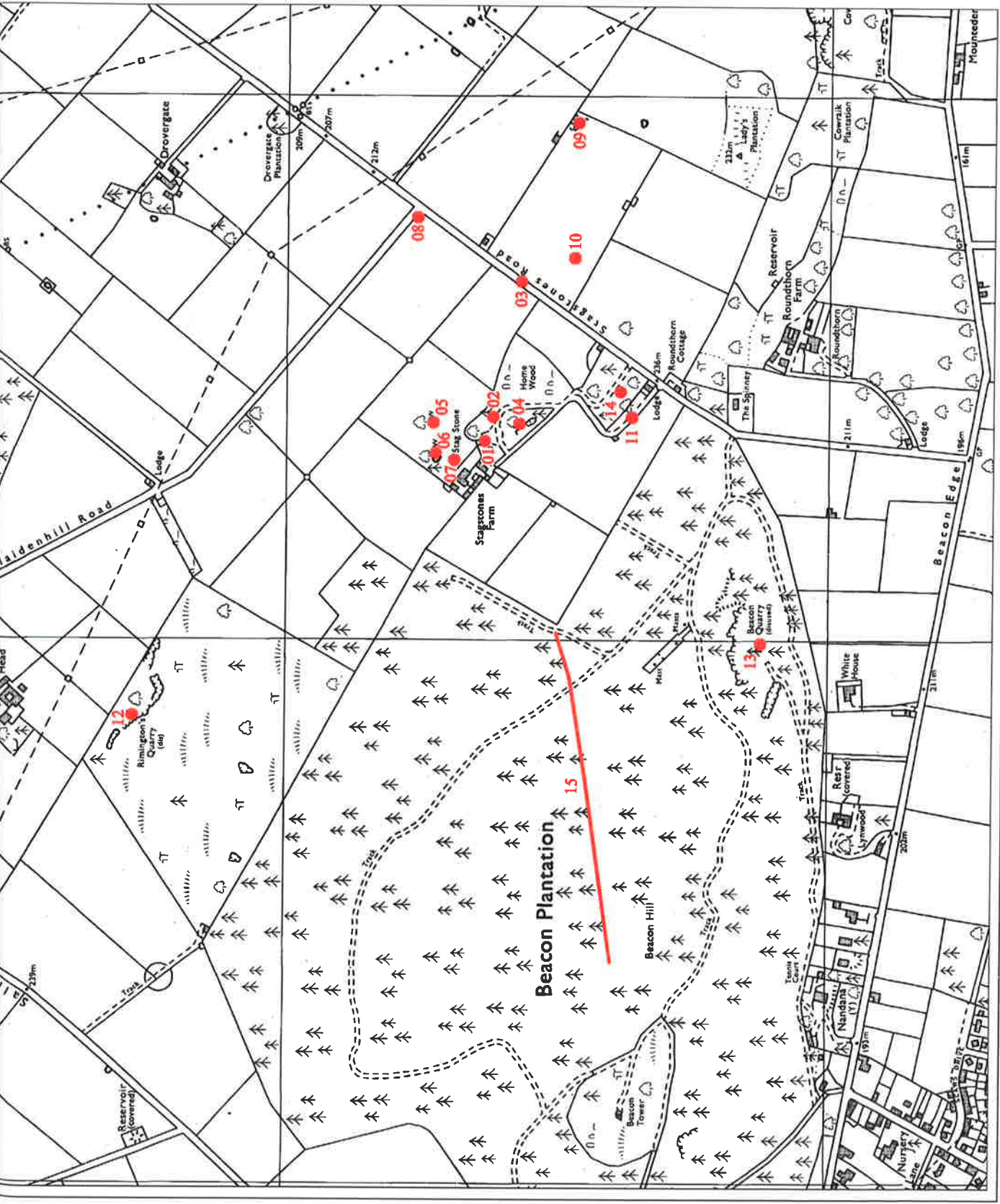
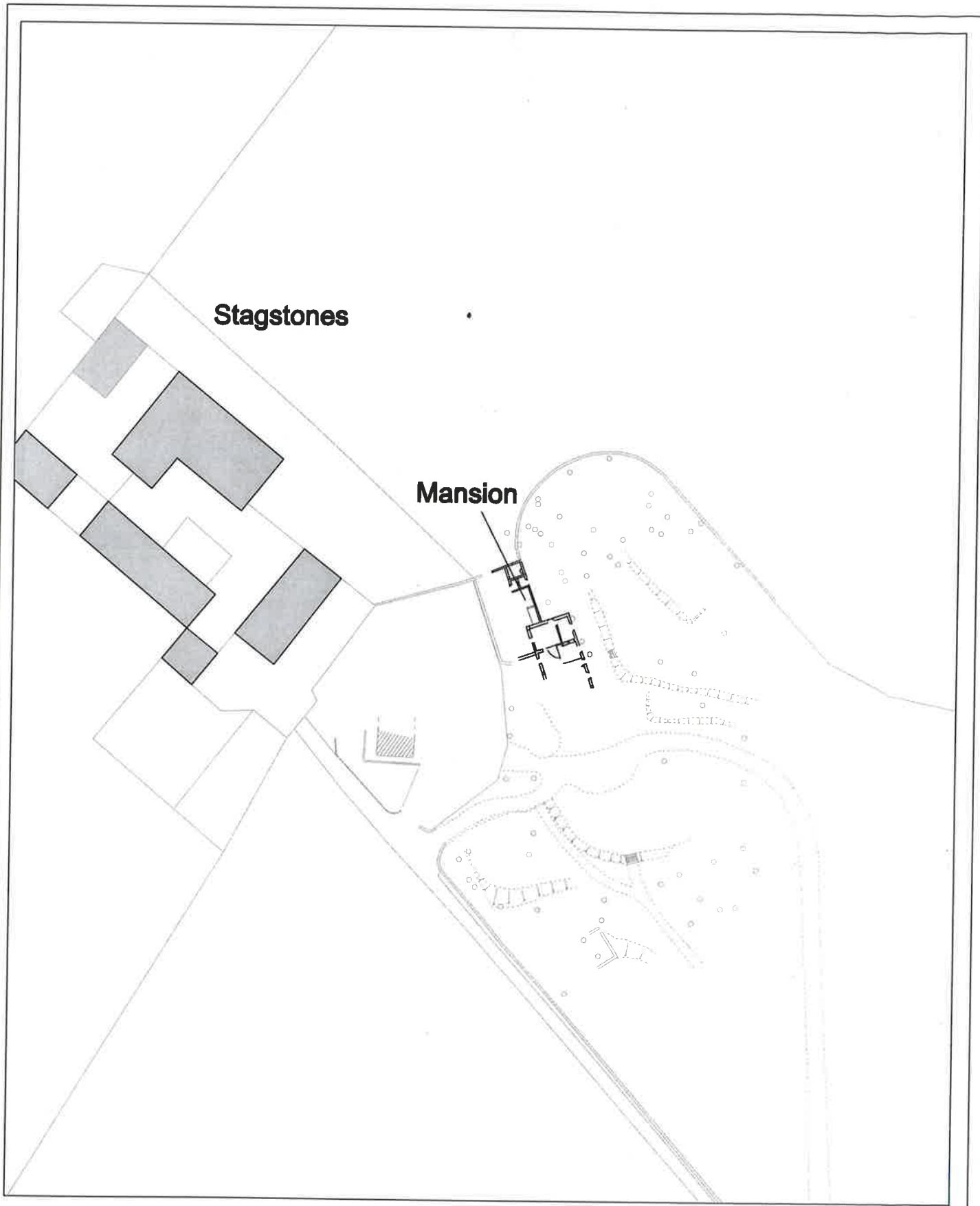


Figure 7: Gazetteer Sites



Oxford Archaeology North  
 Storey Institute  
 Meeting House Lane  
 Lancaster  
 LA1 1TF

Tel 01524 848006  
 Fax 01524 848006

**PROJECT:** Former Mansion, Stagstones  
**DRAWING No:** 3  
**SCALE:** 1:1000  
**TITLE:** Location of buildings  
**CLIENT:** Manning Elliot  
**DRAWN BY:** AJP  
**DATE:** November 2008

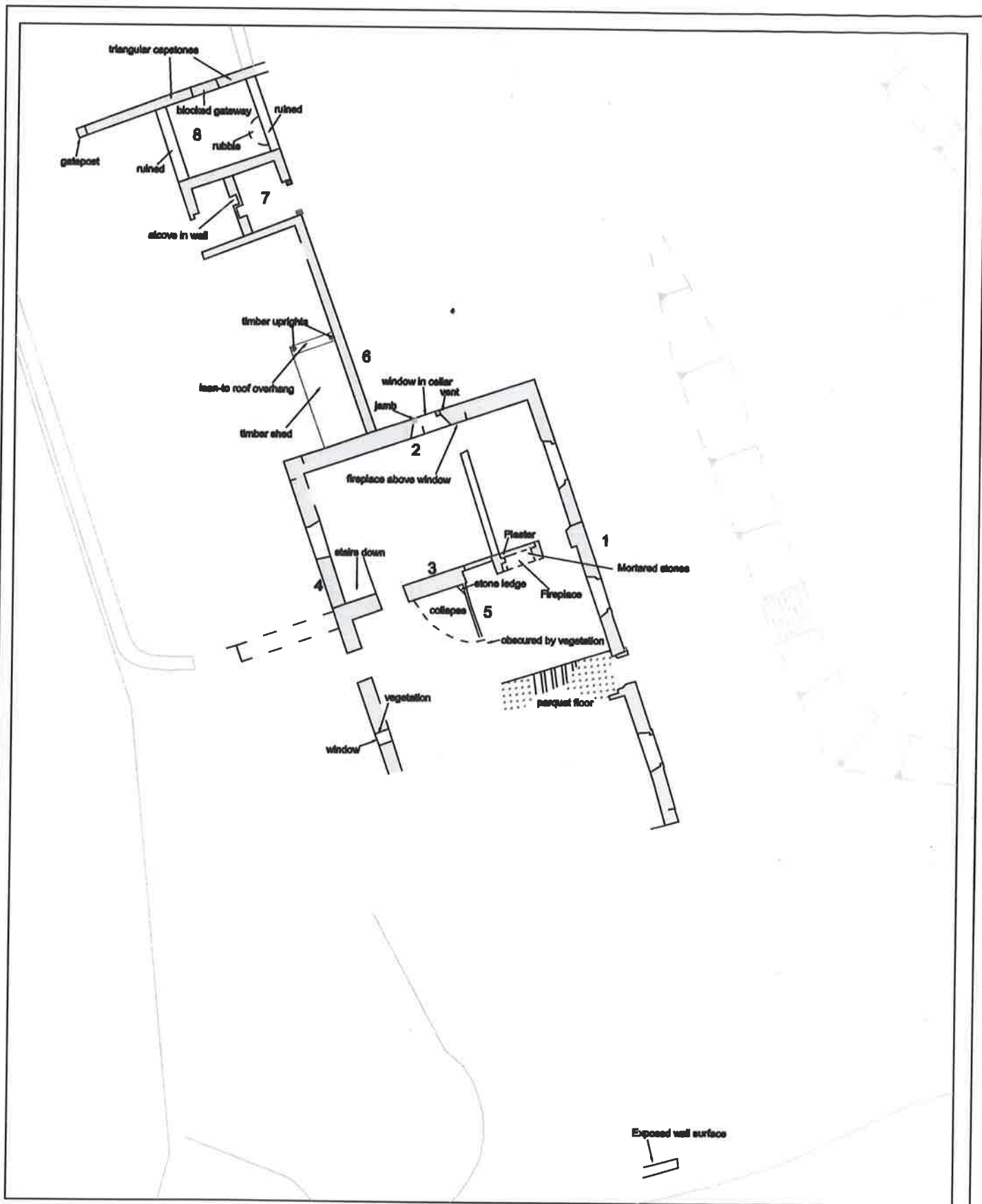
**LOCATION:**



**Scale**




Figure 8: Location of buildings



  
**Oxford Archaeology North**  
 Stowry Institute  
 Meeting House Lane  
 Lancaster  
 LA1 1TF  
 Tel 01524 848666  
 Fax 01524 848008

**PROJECT:** Former Mansion, Stagstones  
**DRAWING No:** 9  
**SCALE:** 1:200  
**TITLE:** Plan of Former Mansion  
**CLIENT:** Manning Elliot  
**DRAWN BY:** AJP  
**DATE:** November 2003

**LOCATION:**  



**Scale**  


Figure 9: Plan of former mansion



Oxford Archaeology North  
Stoney Institute  
Meadow House Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1TF  
Tel 01524 848808  
Fax 01524 848806

PROJECT:  
**Former Mansion, Stagstones**

DRAWING No: **10**

Scale 1:100  
0 2.5m

DRAWN BY: AJP  
DATE: October 2003

LOCATION:

KEY  
 obscured by vegetation

TITLE  
**Elevation of east facing wall**

COMMISSIONED BY:  
**Manning Elliot**

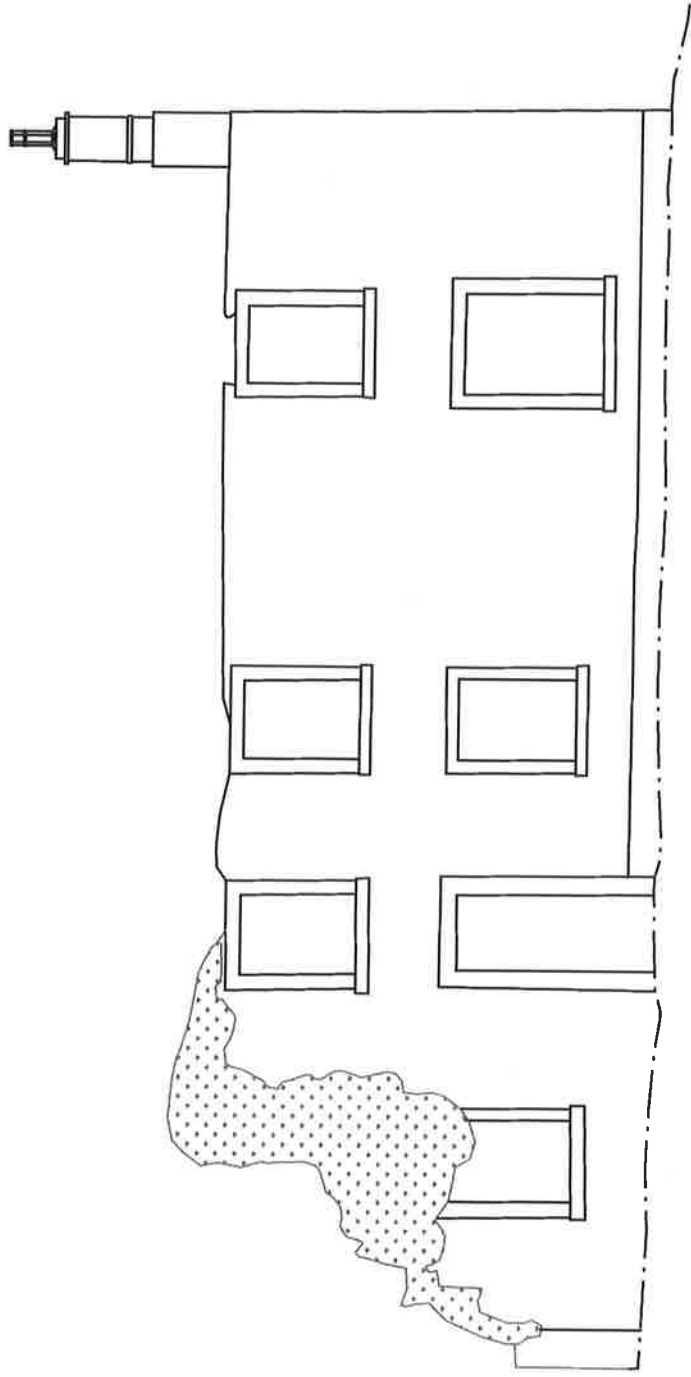


Figure 10: Elevation of east-facing wall



Oxford Archaeology North  
Storey Institute  
Meeting House Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1TF  
Tel 01524 848886  
Fax 01524 848806

PROJECT:

Former Mansion, Stagstones

DRAWING No:

11

0



2m

DRAWN BY: A.P

DATE: October 2003

LOCATION:

KEY



obscured by vegetation



plaster

TITLE

Elevation of south east facing  
internal wall

COMMISSIONED BY:

Manning Elliot

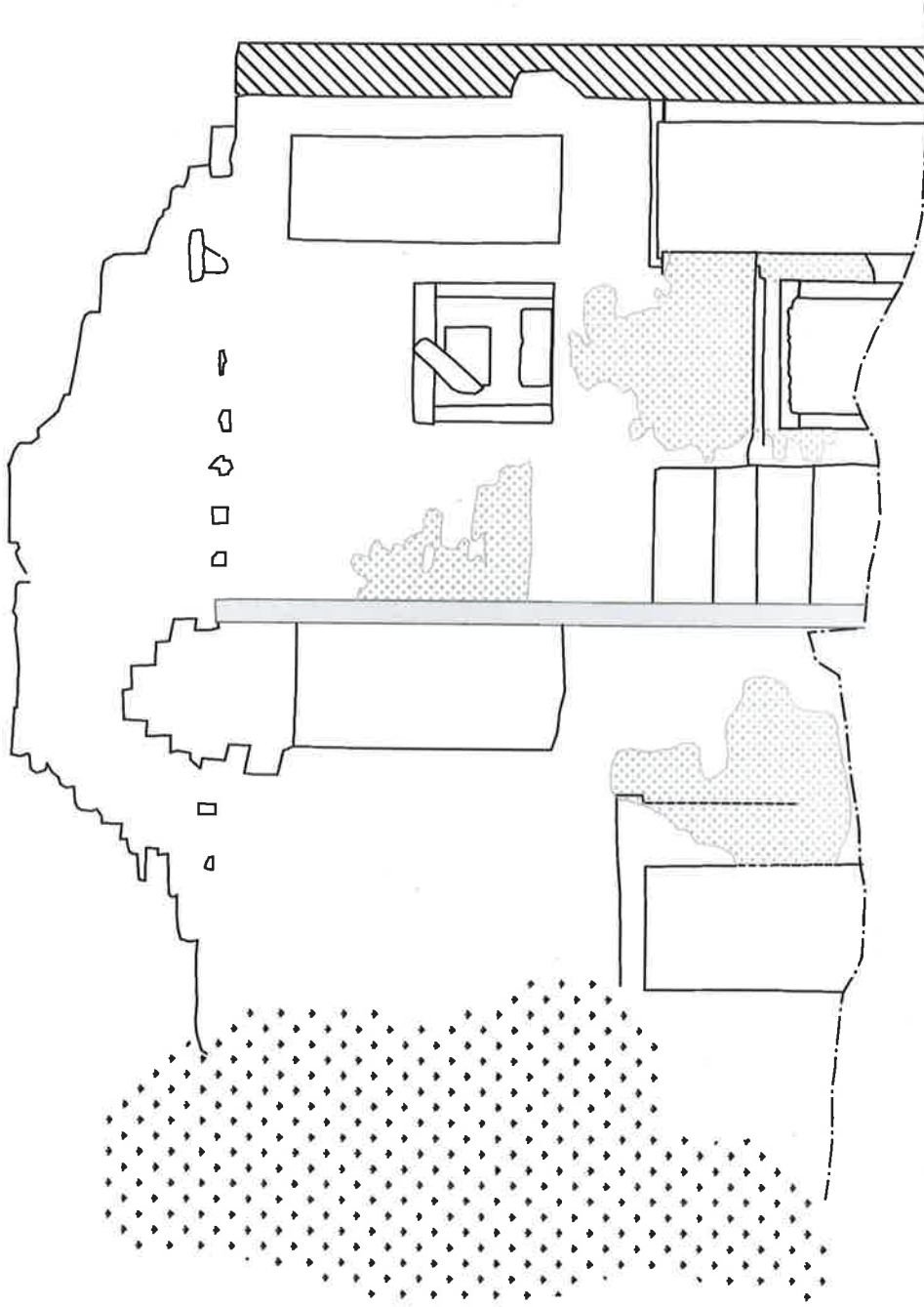


Figure 11: Elevation of south-east-facing interior wall





Plate 1: Eastern facade [1] of the mansion looking west



Plate 2: Internal cross wall [3] following selective removal of the ivy



Plate 3: First floor fire place on the North Wall [2]



Plate 4: Northern face of the internal cross wall [3]



Plate 5: General view of the mansion looking north-east



Plate 6: Phase 2 extension of the mansion looking east