



Northumbria University Architecture Portfolios

# **GIBSIDE INTERVENTIONS**

## GIBSIDE PLEASURE GROUNDS

## THE NATIONAL TRUST

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[www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research](http://www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research)

*Front cover*

*Fig. 01 \_ Re-Imagining Gibside  
Hall | exterior view of an  
experiential intervention  
proposition for the ruin*

# 1. Project Details

Principal Researcher	<b>Paul Ring</b>
Research Collaborator	<b>Andrea Couture</b>
Title	<b>Gibside Interventions</b>
Output type	<b>Design Proposition</b>
Venue	<b>Gibside Hall, Gateshead   The Truman, London</b>
Curator	<b>Paul Ring   Andrea Couture   The National Trust</b>
Function	<b>Heritage Buildings and Historic Environments</b>
Location	<b>Gateshead, North East England</b>
Client	<b>The National Trust</b>
Practical completion	<b>2014 - 2020</b>
Funding source	<b>Natural England   The National Trust   Northumbria University</b>
Budget	<b>£55,000 - £7.6m</b>
Area	<b>Gibside Hall and the wider Estate</b>
Collaborators	<b>The National Trust</b>
Co-exhibitors	<b>Andrea Couture</b>
Support/acknowledgements	<b>Mick Wilkes; General Manager Gibside Estate</b>
URL	<b><a href="http://www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research">www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research</a></b>



*Fig. 02\_ Gibside Hall | north  
elevation photometric survey  
Courtesy of the National Trust*

## 2. Summary

Set within the historic Georgian Pleasure Grounds of Gibside Estate, Gibside Hall is located along the Derwent River, approximately 10 miles from Newcastle. Managed by the National Trust, the estate boasts a compendium of engineered landscape features in the pursuit of the picturesque as well as a number of outstanding examples of architectural heritage. Most significant of these is Gibside Hall which is the principal building upon the estate, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Grade II\* listed building and the former residence of the Bowes-Lyons.

**Gibside Interventions** is a body of work that centres upon Gibside Hall through engaged research praxis on the architectural intervention as a significant methodology for the sustained protection of heritage assets; adaptation as continuity (Fig 01).

The research was crafted and curated by Paul Ring and co-author Andrea Couture, through the establishment of a *Design Research Partnership* with the National Trust as a vehicle for enhancing the appreciated value of the heritage assets within Gibside estate. Declaring the hall as an epicentre of such heritage on the estate (Fig 02 & 03), the work provokes alternative uses for the hall as a means to provide access and to fortify its future as a Monument of outstanding cultural significance. Commencing with a Conservation Management Plan, this work stimulated a £55K Natural England Capital Works fund to survey the hall and assess the extent of disrepair as a pathway to determining suitable uses for Gibside's Grade II\* listed hall, which had fallen into a state of dilapidation. In 2007, Historic England placed the hall on its Building at Risk register and its architectural and social significance is as much national as it is regional. Without a use and investment there was substantiated fear that the building would ultimately collapse and be lost forever. New, radical uses were

explored through several design interventions, each presented to the National Trust, the Gateshead Metropolitan Authority and to the public; via a £10K exhibition pavilion designed by the research authors; a traveling exhibition; and a publication to display the design work to a broader national audience. This important and timely work resulted in the creation of a design strategy for the estate and an approved *Spatial Plan* (Southern Green Landscape Architects that has become known within the National Trust as **the Gibside model**, which challenges the dogma of restorative conservation as a preferred methodology. This research work is; **"innovative through its use and presentation of end use strategies at the initial funding application phase"** (Mick Wilkes, Gibside Estate Manager, National Trust).

A £55k seed, rising to £7.6m National Trust Funding has been awarded to undertake an estate wide redevelopment programme, as stimulated by this work, with funding from this secured to provide a fixed interpretation pavilion (£50K), to make the hall safe- so that the public can access it- and further funding to respond to the design research directly to fabricate an architectural intervention within the walls of the hall.

Known within the National Trust as **the Gibside Model** and described by Ingrid Samuel, the National Trusts Historic Environment Director, as **the defining heritage asset that will set the national principles for how the National Trust manages ruins**, this work has become an exemplar, stimulating further institution wide Creative Partnership between Northumbria University and the National Trust at Seton Delaval Hall (£7.8m; £3.6m NLHF plus National Trust matched funding) and with the National Museum of the Royal Navy at Hartlepool for speculative redevelopment of the museum (with potential for funding up to £30m).

▣



Fig. 03\_ Gibside Hall |  
aerial survey of the ruin  
Courtesy of the National Trust

### 3. Statement of Originality



*Fig. 04\_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | plan view of a speculative intervention proposition to reoccupy the ruin*

Underpinned by a longstanding building adaptation and rehabilitation enquiry, this research moves within the heritage territory, challenging typical approaches to the conservation of heritage asset. Building conservation is primarily concerned with the preservation of the heritage asset and the prevention of any continued decay or demise. Often, the visitor experience and heritage interpretation are then applied to the asset post-conservation works to include referential narrative of the conservation works and as an isolated event within a broader visitor experience. The conserved asset is deemed to be sufficient enough in itself to attract visitors, through a passive visitor experience to read the asset as static and dormant, within a manicured fictional landscape.

By reframing the heritage asset as a viable spatial environment and beyond monument, the research places the asset at the centre of the stakeholder's heritage framework as a catalyst for estate master-planning and development. Options analysis tests the validity of radical propositions that in turn stimulate cultural and economic change for the stakeholder by reimagining the heritage asset as a valid architecture to be occupied, used and experienced. The research challenges dogma by applying adaptation and creative reuse methodologies to the heritage asset through speculative and actual adaptations which redefined stakeholder attitudes towards heritage and the visitor. ■

## 4. Statement of Rigour



*Fig. 05\_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | section of a speculative experiential intervention proposition for the ruin*

The Research practice included the design of site specific, poetic and sensitive, permanent and non-permanent, facilities that enhance the visitor experience and sustain interest, stimulating repeat visits to the boarder estate whilst redefining the estates masterplan from the room/adaptation out.

A mix-method approach was employed to unlock the potential of the site, including historical research (secondary analysis of literature, scoping archives) facilitating an in-depth exploration of the unique characteristics of each asset, and their contribution to local and national socio-political fabric. The employment of a multiple design-based methodologies (including stakeholder interviews, co-/participatory design, praxis and practice-related activities, drawing analysis, making, phenomenological studies and options analysis) developed research that was novel in its approach to the restoration of the asset; how speculative propositions redefined the stakeholders views on the asset; their understanding of its significance to the wider estate; redefined their master-planning and conservation management strategies; stimulated capital funding to undertake works; improved financial stability though increased visitor numbers and revenue streams; and provided project related employment opportunities. ▣

## 5. Statement of Significance



*Fig. 06\_ Re-Imagining  
Gibside Hall | interior view  
of a speculative experiential  
intervention proposition for the  
ruin, depicting the low definition  
disturbance created by the  
installation*

The research contributed to the successful attainment of a £7.6m capital fund to develop new facilities that enrich the asset whilst allying its inherent commemorative and historic values with renewed user and utility values as a complement to the asset.\*

To ensure the new facilities proposed were sensitive to the historical context of the site, the research employed mix methods to establish perceptions of historic environments, affirm end-user requirements and develop site specific concepts leading to sensitive and poetic new facilities within the estate that redefine how the National Trust considered its approach to heritage and the redevelopment of its estates. The research work stimulated place-making, revenue-generation, and educational opportunities, to enthuse the public and funders about the history of these sites and their potential for the future.

The research also established a methodology for the National Trust that can be applied nationally, it has provoked attitude change and it provides a model for other heritage estates to follow. ■

\* Alois Reigl (1903) *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origin* defined a value based evaluative methodology for preservation and conservation, determining an approach that offsets inherent and implied values to determine a conservational approach.



## 6. Historic Context



*Fig 07\_ Gibside Hall | the Land Army girls at the north elevation and main entrance (1916)  
Courtesy of the National Trust*



*Fig. 08\_ Gibside Hall | Conservative Divisional Rally at the north elevation (c1930)  
Beamish Museum  
Courtesy of the National Trust*

Gibside Estate and Hall have been recorded in connection with the Bowes family lineage as far back as the 1400s, with the marriage of Mary Eleanor Bowes to John Lyon, the 9th Earl of Strathmore, in 1760s as a pivotal moment in their mutual family history. This merging of major families brought a spotlight upon the estate as it became increasingly central to the Strathmore's identity as continuous residents until the early 1800s, as the Bowes-Lyons.

It is during the 1700s when Gibside underwent the greatest development, but it was also a time of sorrow. As chronicled in Wendy Moore's historical novel, *Wedlock: How Georgian Britain's Worst Husband Met His Match* (2009), Mary Eleanor Bowes married Andrew Robinson Stoney, a former Irish Lieutenant, by succumbing to his deceit and quickly became a prisoner in her own home whilst he enjoyed the family's wealth. Escape and recapture eventually led to divorce after years of maltreatment, all of which brought scandal to the family. Previously known as Blakiston Hall, it underwent significant extension by George Bowes in the 1770s and early 1800s (by the 10th Earl). John Dobson, a celebrated architect from the region, designed unrealised alterations to the hall in 1814 and it is to this period that we can attribute the name and its current architectural articulation.

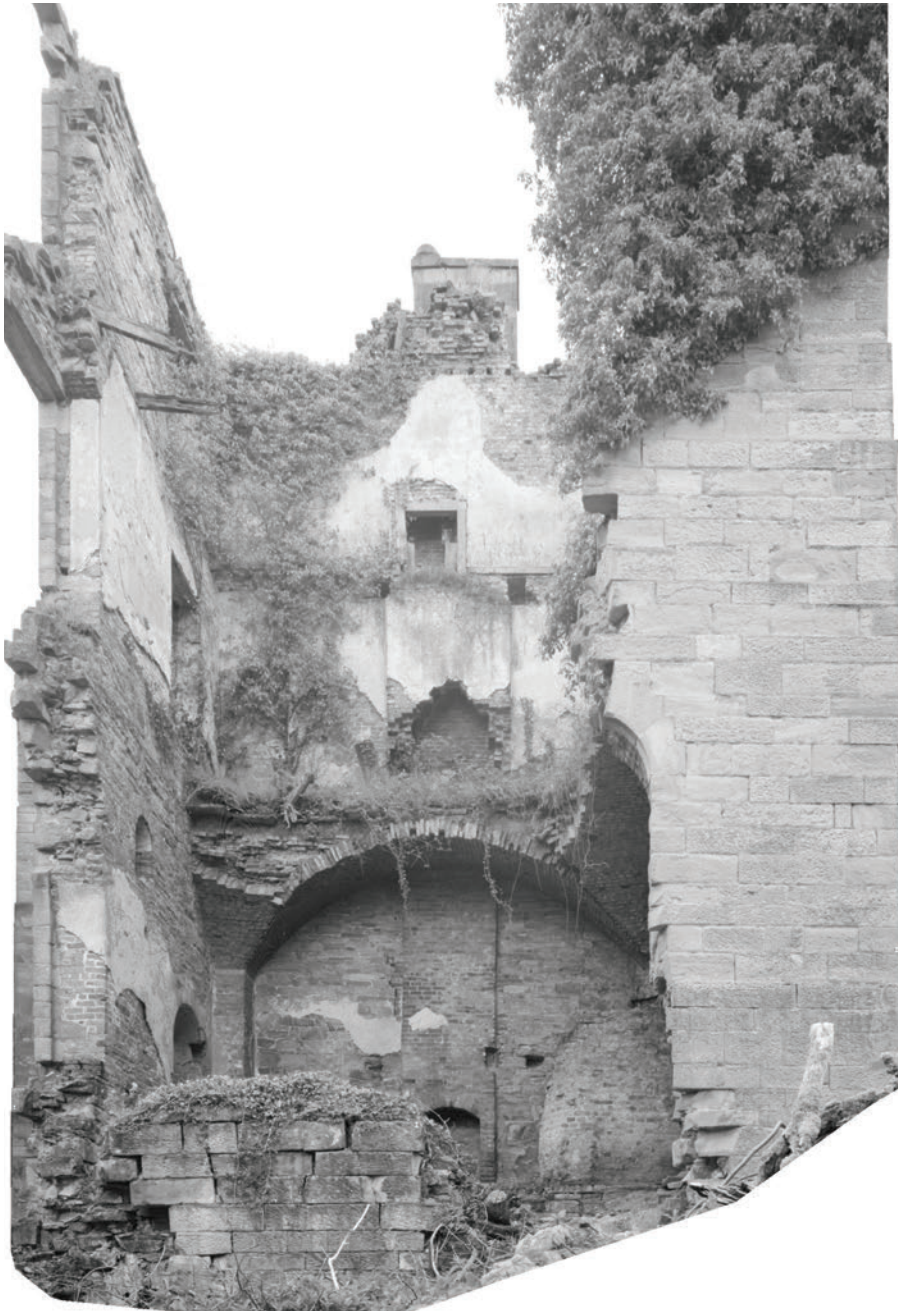
The family reached their greatest influence and wealth during the 1800s and were influential in the industrialization of the region; thus, maintaining a position of influence within society of aristocratic land owners of Britain. The Queen Mother, Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyons, often summered at Gibside as a child. Through the lack of sustained occupation and is eventual abandonment, the Hall became ruinous between 1930-50 and was Grade II\* listed in 1950, with the roof and floors removed. The Queen Mother handed the estate over to the National

Trust in 1966, who manage the wildlife, agriculture and heritage assets of the whole estate.

Now a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Historic England; list entry 1017224), this Grade II\* listed building is situated within Grade I designated land (Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest), is an exemplar of a Georgian adaptation to a high Jacobean dwelling and has high evidential value. It was constructed in phases, from 17th - 19th Century and has been unoccupied for well over 100 years, with exception to its requisition by the Land Army during the First World War (Fig 04). Some damage to the building has been anecdotally attributed to this period, along with general abandonment and neglect. Its significance to the region meant that it was often the backdrop to significant socio-political events, including political rallies (Fig 05).

Currently on the 'Buildings at Risk' register (updated; 2018) Gibside Hall stands as a significant monument within the region and the social history of the nation. The commissioned Conservation Plan concluded it to be *of outstanding cultural significance* (Simpson & Brown). ■

## 7. Natural Context



Within the grandeur of a Georgian Pleasure ground, Gibside Hall is a principal visual node within the manufactured landscape of the estate. Considered as an early exemplar of *ferme ornée* (an ornamental farm; part aesthetic, part agriculture), the estate holds a significant position within our national heritage of landscape design and speaks to an international learned audience.

Gibside Hall sits adjacent to a Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), observed within the Gibsides Conservation Management Plan (Simpson & Brown) to ... *support one of the most important reptile and amphibian assemblages in North East England, which includes all three native species of Newt ... with a nationally significant number of waxcap [fungi] species.*

The Hall is home to a number of European Protected Species of bats, including Long Eared species, Natterers and the Common and Soprano Pipistrelles. Since the reintroduction of the Red Kite to the Derwent Valley in 2007, many pairs are known to nest within Gibside Estate. The hall has become a natural habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna during its sustained period of inoccupation (Fig 06). ■

left

Fig. 09\_ Gibside Hall | interior elevation photometric survey  
Courtesy of the National Trust

## 8. Research Questions

**1.**

How can a building adaptation approach to extant heritage convey site-specific historical narratives about the estate and its former inhabitants (the Bowes-Lyon family) to society through designed propositions.

**2.**

Can the creative reuse of heritage buildings unlock the potential of the estate, improve the quality of place and improve its public realm, while preserving its identity and uniqueness.

**3.**

How can design speculations and exhibitions engage the public and stakeholders in decision making on the design of built interventions within the ruins of Gibside Hall.



## 9. Research Context



*Fig. 10 \_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | interior view of the ruin with a thermotherapy intervention proposition*

The conservation and preservation of historical buildings are important investments in our cultural and historical heritage. Our built heritage connects people with the past, provides a sense of national and regional identity, and promotes the continuation of local traditions and regional and national cultural values. Heritage buildings also benefit the economy through increased tourism, the creation of new jobs and investment in associated cultural amenities. In addition, reinvestment into historic buildings has environmental benefits as embodied energy is preserved and the physical energy required to demolish is avoided.

This design research promotes new approaches to how heritage assets can be utilized as a place-making and educational device and how non-text based

design interventions, such as art installations and exhibitions, can help reveal embedded narratives to the public and the contexts that led to the building of the heritage asset, its adaptation and its future use.

Organizations such as the National Trust and Historic England welcome collaborations with academia who challenge normative methods of developing their estates whilst stimulating debate through design first speculations that build upon distinct research contribution.

This research explores and reconceives the potential of heritage assets, developing them for contemporary requirements, while conserving the asset's identity and character in a manner that is both biographical of the host asset and auto-biographical of the intervention. The production of speculative propositions and alternative uses for the heritage asset, such as spaces for therapy (Fig. 07) or narrative based experiences (Fig. 08-12) promote awareness of its significance and of alternative use as an innovative preservation method. This method preserves the extant heritage whilst fabricating future heritage through the addition of spatial layers and narratives.

Primary and secondary research has been undertaken from historic sources, archaeological and topographical sources and literary works to derive poetic, narrative based and meaningful design assemblages as architectural interventions. They are sited within, and adjacent to, the heritage assets and test the research enquiry that a heritage estate can be master planned from the room, or heritage asset outward. ■



*Fig. 11 \_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | interior view of the cafe anteroom from an experiential intervention proposition for the ruin*

## 10. Research Methods

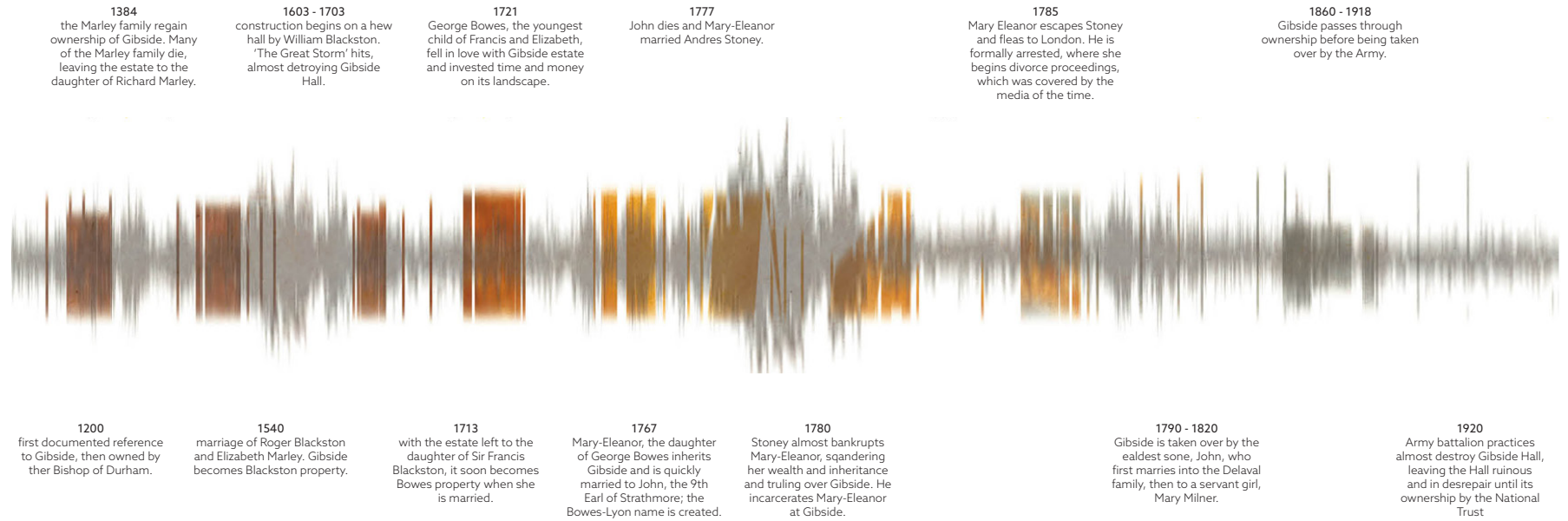
Qualitative and participatory research has been undertaken with the public and other stakeholders, to consider how to develop new facilities to enhance the heritage asset. This has included public consultation using focus groups, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and exhibitions of design work (including drawings models, both physical and virtual). The research methods employed include:

- Inscriptive methods: including site analysis and surveys (both digital and analogue) to establish boundaries and threshold, site pathology, conditions and constraints, access, circulation and views (interior, anterior, exterior) of the asset to establish an appropriate mass, form and location for the intervention.
- Analogue and digital drawing and modelling to test the intervention and its spatio-architectonic relationship to the existing asset and as a narrator of the conditions set within the research enquiry (Fig. 09 & 10).
- Secondary analysis of papers, reports, literature, surveys (building pathology, topography) archaeology, exhibitions and building precedents on topics related to the research questions.
- Phenomenological research through interviewing visitors about their lived experience and their perceptions of historic environments as beholders of architectural, cultural and social value.
- Generative or exploratory research through interviews and contextual enquiry to affirm the intervention and end user requirements.
- Evaluative research through visitor and stakeholder feedback on the design research process (formative) and the designed outcome (summative).

- Action research was employed in collaboration with the National Trust to evaluate their practice around heritage assets with the intent to propose an innovative change in approach. ▣

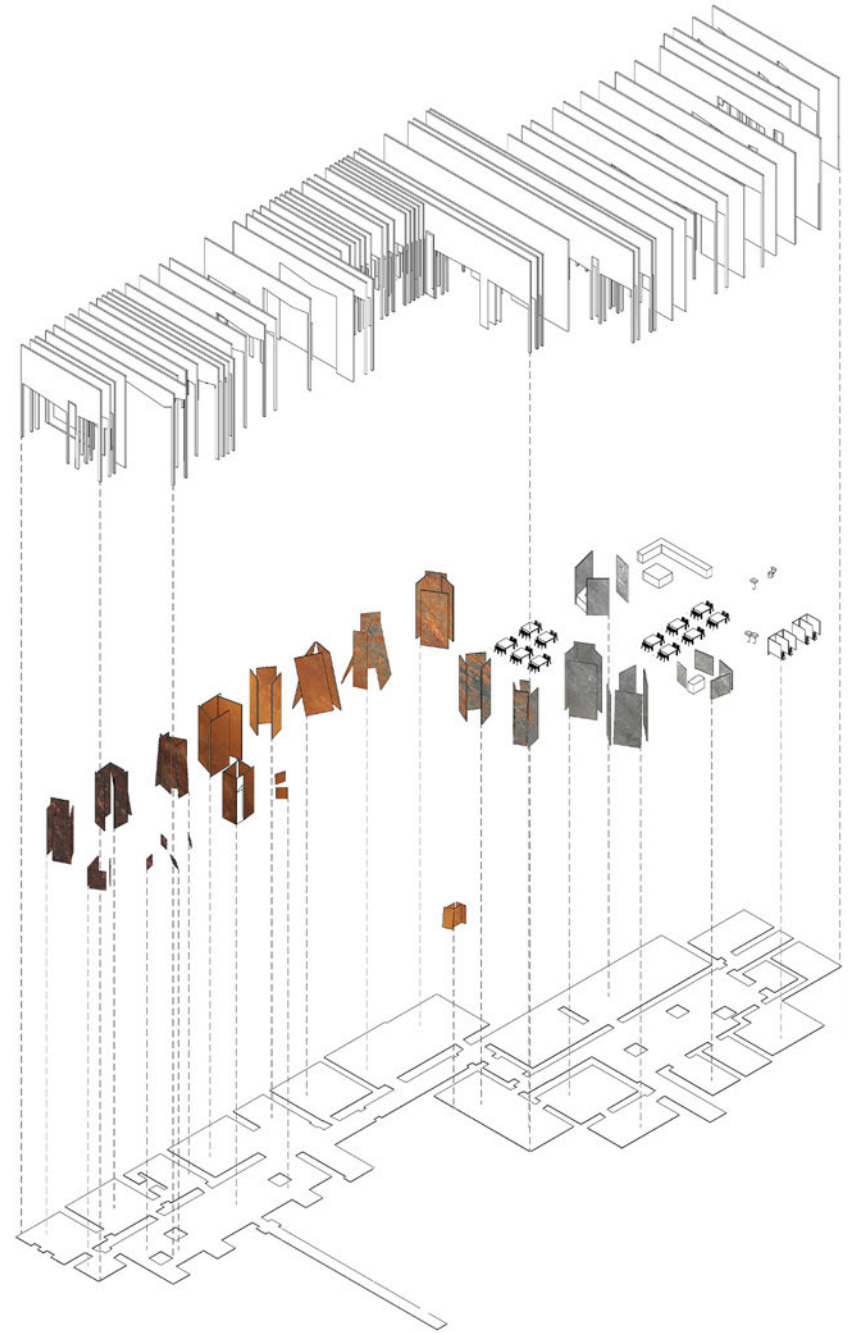
### Taxonomy

- Conceptual design iterations
- Drawing
- Model-making
- Construction methods
- Spatial analysis
- Participatory activities
- Text-based research
- Phenomenology
- Theoretical research
- Fieldwork
- Photography
- Topographic survey
- Design research
- Trial and error experimental design processes
- Design-led research
- Historical research
- Typology research
- User experience
- Diagramming
- Interviews/user consultation
- Scale modelling
- Digital fabrication methods
- Site analysis/study
- Visiting similar building types



above

Fig. 12 \_ Re-imagining Gibside Hall | concept diagram; an abstraction of the Bowes-Lyon lineage as a histogram to form and set out an intervention array



right

Fig. 13 \_ Re-imagining Gibside Hall | axonometric diagram locating an applied intervention array as a depiction of Mary Eleanor's incarceration



## 11. Research Outcomes



Fig. 14\_ Re-imagining Gibside Hall | simulating experiencing the proposed intervention array as a physical metaphor of the Bowes-Lyon lineage, moving towards Mary Eleanor's incarceration

The research has developed design concepts, narratives and interventions within the heritage asset that derive from; site-specific historical research on the formation of the estate; the Bowes-Lyon family and their relevance to a national framework of social and industrial heritage; and archaeological and building pathology studies of the Hall to inform the design of new facilities.

The research outcomes illustrate the significance of the Hall and the act of building adaptation through well-conceived spatial interventions that juxtapose contemporary architectural language and materiality against the ruinous, historic fabric of the Hall. Interventions respond to the spatial character of that which is extant and that which is absent to conjure memory of past spaces. Through a deliberate avoidance of simulation and conjectural representation, the interventions draw from the essence of the Halls previous spaces through a reading of its architectural history and establishes new forms that are both independent and orthodox.

The design research uses the Hall as a catalyst to unlock the potential of the wider estate by providing an estate-wide design strategy that is innovative in that it emerges from the room/intervention outward. The received success of the work has instigated a design masterplan that reorders the estates choreography, redistributes back of house activity and places the Hall at the centre of the visitor offer. This improves the quality of place through the rediscovery of the intended site lines, vistas and manufactured landscapes as a journey toward the Hall and toward the intervention, whilst providing revenue opportunities for regional practice. The National Trust now internally refer to the method used as *the Gibside model* with Ingrid Samuel (National Trust Historic Environment Director

attested that; *"Gibside will set the national principles for how the National Trust manages ruins"*.

Thus, this research has altered the way in which the National Trust develops its estate planning and how it considers development plans for other estates henceforth. The raised profile of Gibside Hall, through this work, has resulted in the National Trusts Heritage Futures work centring on Gibside Hall (Heritage Futures is a National Trust programme to consider innovative approaches to the management of historic ruins). Gibside Hall has been selected as the National Trusts focus for this national initiative, resulting in national policy and guidance being shaped directly from the operational experience at Gibside, as a grass roots approach. A key aspect of this relates to the conservation principles around 'value' with a specific focus being 'community value' as drawn out of this research work.

Visitor numbers to Gibside have increased from 180,000 per year (2013-14) to 300,000 per year (2018-19) during the partnership timeframe bringing an increased revenue of more than £1.5m (£1.2m entry plus £360k spend) with the initial speculative Gibside Interventions work stimulating an immediate rise of 40,000 visitors (2014-15) with a real-time revenue increase of £160k (£40k entry plus £120K spend). It is envisaged that this number will increase significantly with the realisation of works within and instigated by this research and the accumulated £7.6m funding from National Trust Capital Investment secured on the back of this.

Mick Wilkes, General Manager at Gibside attributes the increased demand to the creation and presentation of the design interventions produced and their impact upon the estate and estate development planning.

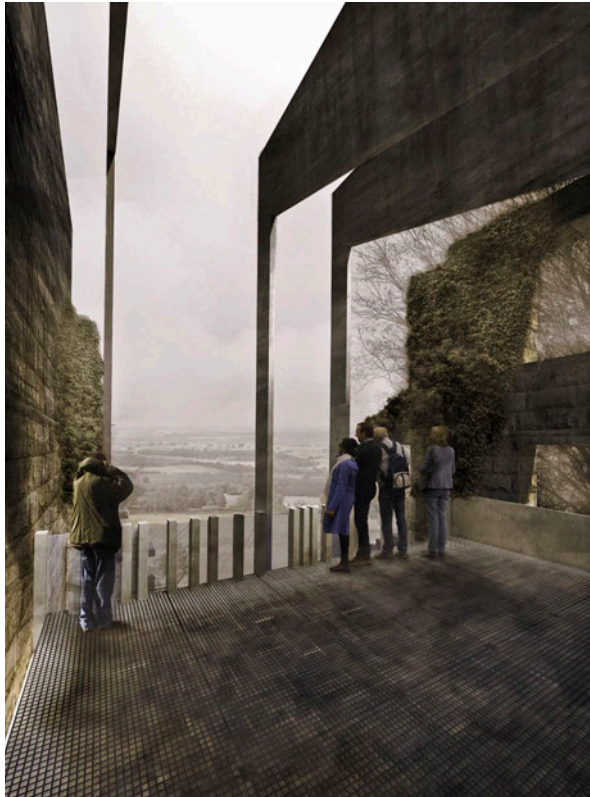


Fig. 15\_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | simulation of Mary Eleanor's liberty view from the belvedere as an endpoint to the intervention array

This work has thus instigated further design research project for the authors at both Gibside and at other National Trust properties. An immediate impact has been a reconsideration of the estates Walled Garden and Garden Cottage within a designed masterplan which has attracted further funding successes, a designed pavilion, by Northumbria University in collaboration with JardineCouture, and the commissioning of Diarmuid Gavin, a landscape architect, to reinvent the walled garden paradigm.

The National Trusts recognition of this works significance extends to the planned redevelopment of Seaton Delaval Hall, acquired by the Trust in 2009 and the formation of an institutional partnership between Northumbria University and the National Trust. With the author as a Project Lead and Principal Investigator within that partnership, £150k from a £7.8m funded project (£3.6m NLHF plus National Trust matched funding) has been approved and awarded to Northumbria University research projects as part of a community engagement and experience focused redevelopment of the estate (*Ring, P. (2019) Rising Stars: a Creative Partnership. Newcastle: Northumbria University*).

The work reflects upon the theoretic and phenomenological research that embeds it, making design interventions that consider Descartes ideas on Essence, Deluzian Immanence and Baudrillard's Simulacrum to fabric authentic architectural space that belongs within but does not belong to the Hall. It is an amalgam of its woven narratives and spatial aura and avoids false representation through its manifestation as a constituent part of the Halls present condition. In doing so, the intervention speaks of its place in time, within the lineage of the Hall, and of the multitude of historic significances that preceded it. Speculative works draw upon the

trauma of Mary Eleanor Bowes incarceration at the Hall by Andrew Robinson Stoney (Stoney-Bowes)\*\* through installations. One proposition creates aural and spatial disturbances through an arrayed installation that charts the fortunes and misfortunes of the family's lineage as a physical navigation through the hall towards the location of Mary Eleanor's Room (Fig.09 - 11) as a Horologium of experiences. Liberty is later experienced through the belvedere (Fig. 12) as the installation deconstructs to reveal the painterly view of the Derwent, as captured by Turner in his 1817 work, *Gibside, County Durham the Seat of the Earl of Strathmore*.\*\*\* □

\*\* The story of Mary Eleanor Bowes and Andrew Robinson Stoney-Bowes was fictionalised in *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* (1844) by William Makepeace Thackeray and adapted in Stanley Kubrick's film, *Barry Lyndon* (1975).

## 12. Dissemination

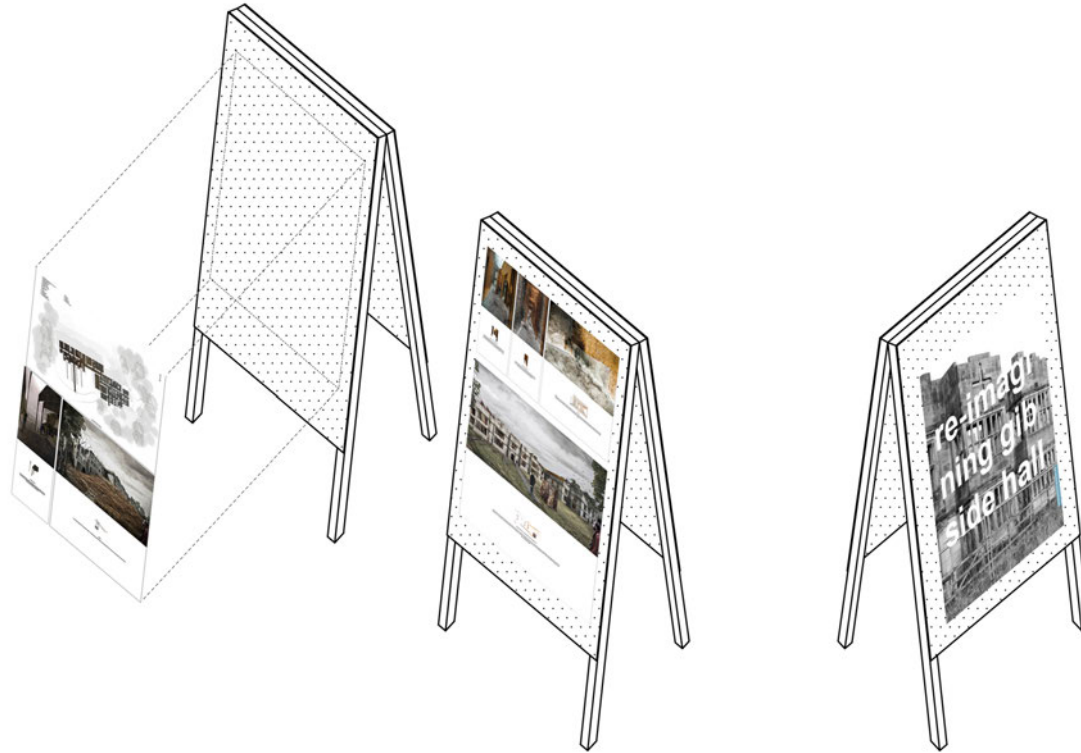


Fig. 16\_ Re-imagining Gibside Hall | Exhibition diagram

Gibside Interventions was exhibited at Gibside through a purpose built lightweight temporary exhibition and was seen by visitors to the Estate; Gibside is *“one of England’s best surviving Georgian landscapes”* (Funnel, R. 2016) and it is the most visited National Trust property in the North of England, now with in excess of 300 000 visitors per year (National Trust figures).

The exhibition was opened by the Mayor of Gateshead and was part of the Gateshead Metropolitan Authority’s Annual Conference, held at Gibside in 2014, to promote the research work to the wider political community and to support funding applications for capital works.

This exhibition allowed the visiting public to view and respond to the intervention proposals and allowed the local authority to appreciate the significance of the ruin and its plight. The work was also been showcased on local television and in newspaper articles. Through the associated boogazine *Reimagining Gibside Hall* (Ring & Couture, 2014) (fig 15), the research has been shared nationally, including the National Trust Executive, and has been shared with General Managers from many other National Trust properties as a paradigm for heritage asset development.

An exhibition of work and its speculative provocations on the restoration and adaptation of Gibside Hall was held at the Old Truman Brewery, London, (Fig. 13 & 14) to broadcast its significance to a national audience and to one beyond the North East region. Supported by the associated publication (Ring & Couture (2014) *Reimagining Gibside Hall*), this exhibition raised the profile of the Hall and the wider Gibside Estate. The exhibition proclaimed Gibside’s significant contribution to a national heritage framework of Georgian landscapes and to the significance of heritage assets as vessels of cultural memory.

More broadly, the work contributes to a national and international discourse on heritage assets and conservational practices and is contributory to the contemporaneous practices being explored by national groups, such as Heritage Futures. ■

## 13. Economic and Societal Impact

The economic impact is twofold; it has ignited response through direct funding and increased visitor numbers and it has motivated further development and funding activity.

Firstly, it has activated critical funding to act upon the research work, to secure the future of the Hall and to the broadened design masterplan that the research has impacted across the estate to join up restoration and development opportunity. The extent of this funding is a total of £7.6m through three phases:

### Phase 1:

Speculative design proposition for Gibside Hall (Grade II\* listed, Scheduled Ancient Monument) to raise profile regionally and nationally, with the ultimate aim being its removal from Historic England's 'Buildings at Risk' register via a phased project of pathology, remedy, interpretation and occupation.

Impact: Natural England Capital Works fund (£55,000) to survey (and repair parts) of the Hall and a Northumbria University Public Engagement and Impact Activities Fund (£2184) for publication and exhibition.

### Phase 2a:

Design and development of interpretative works, principally through architectural structure and exhibition content, to activate visitor appreciation of the Hall, its history, present plight and future occupation and use.

Impact: NT funding (£7.6m in total) with £50,000 committed to the development of phase 2a.

### Phase 2b:

Design and development of a walled Garden masterplan, capital works and an initial interpretative pavilion to convey the importance of the Walled Garden visitors (Northumbria University and JardineCouture).

Impact: NT funding (£7.6m in total) with £5m committed to the development of phase 2b.

### Phase 3:

2020 - 2022 with the aim of providing architectural intervention that permits public and visitor occupation of the Hall.

Impact: evident in NT's declaration of the significance of the Hall to the national consciousness and its attitude to heritage assets, with future funding applications at the development stage.



Fig.17\_ Re-imagining Gibside Hall | Exhibition at the Truman, London



*Fig.18\_ Gibside Hall | site visit  
and survey*

Secondly, income to the estate has increased in excess of £1.5m from entry ticket sales and spend (Gift Shop, café and restaurant) through increased visitor numbers. Visitor numbers increased from 180,000 to over 240,000 in the year of the dissemination of this research work and have risen to beyond 300,000 through associated Phased projects. Mick Wilkes, Gibside Estate General Manager, has estimated that the estate could see a doubling of this revenue and visitor number on completion of the full works outlined.

This additional investment in the estate, through research informed projects, promotes the value of the estate and the research to the local and wider society and to the educational value embedded within. Gibside is used by local schools as a site for national curriculum projects and offers work placement to local scholars.

The research has impacted the development of work undertaken within the university too, bringing situated research and education opportunities through the context rich location at Gibside. The instigation of placements, volunteering and venue for design work has elevated the educational offer and expanded the Trusts enrichment profile. ■

## 14. Significance

As a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Historic England; list entry 1017224), a Grade II\* listed building and being situated within Grade I designated land (Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest), any work that fundamentally retains the existence of Gibside Hall as a preserved monument would be significant. This research work elevates the significance beyond this, interpreting occupation and use of the Hall through intervention and narrative based works that affirm regional and national awareness.

The research has facilitated the attainment of funding, in phases, to save the Hall from further decline (£150,000 Phase 1) through photometry and structural surveys, and latterly (£50,000 phase 2a) to provide public with interpretative access to the Hall through intervention and interpretation. Future works (Phase 3) to allow full and continual access and use are now within the framework for the National Trust, who have recognised the significance of this research, known within the National Trust as the '*Gibside model*' which demonstrates "*innovative through its use and presentation of end use strategies at the initial funding application phase*" (Mick Wilkes, Gibside Estate Manager, National Trust). On Gibside and through this work, Ingrid Samuel, the National Trusts Historic Environment Director, has defined it as *the heritage asset that will set the national principles for how the National Trust manages ruins*.

Gibside Hall, as home to the Strathmore's and the Bowes-Lyons, has connections to the Queen mother, is centrifugal to the industrial age through its implicit coal, lead and mercantile heritage, is an important reference point to the woman's equality movement at the time and has national and international significance to the socio-history of Britain and the common wealth. Thus, this work has protected and provided longevity to this Scheduled Ancient Monument that stands as a

significant monument within the region and the nation as one of outstanding cultural significance.

Awards, such as the National Trust Creative Reuse Project of the Year 2014 and the Interior Educators Interiorist of the Year 2014-15 (a national award) indicate the reach and impact of the research work and evidence the authority of its paradigm shift approach to estate development through speculative design research as a front-end activity within the process. ■

## 15. Related Publications



*Fig.19\_ Re-Imagining Gibside Hall | publication (2014)*

Couture, A & Ring, P (2014) Re-Imagining Gibside Hall Newcastle: Northumbria University

Couture, A & Ring, P. (2014). Northumbria interiorarchitecture 2014. [online] Issuu. Available at: [https://issuu.com/unninteriorarchitecture/docs/northumbria\\_interiorarchitecture\\_20](https://issuu.com/unninteriorarchitecture/docs/northumbria_interiorarchitecture_20) [Accessed 25 Nov. 2019].

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## 17. Illustrations

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Fig. 02 \_ Photoarc Surveys (2014) *Gibside Hall: North Elevation*, photometric survey, Harrogate. Courtesy of the National Trust

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Fig. 05 \_ McLellan, A. (2014) *Section of Intervention Proposition*, digital image, Northumbria University, Newcastle

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