

Historic Building Record
Former Cottage and attached Barn
Boundary Farm, Newburgh, Lancashire
NGR SD 4881 1029

Prepared by
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1.0 SUMMARY

Situated on the northern side of Ash Brow near its junction with Higher Lane, the farmstead of Boundary Farm, Newburgh comprises a collection of buildings of varying age and type. Principal among these are a detached early C18th stone built farmhouse (grade II listed) and an adjacent C18th range (also grade II listed and dated 1733) that once housed a cottage, stable and shippon. Having lain vacant for some time and fallen into a state of serious disrepair, the cottage range, which might have originally been solely an agricultural building, has recently been sold by the owner of the farmstead and, subsequently, plans have been submitted to West Lancashire District Council for repair and conversion of the building into a single dwelling house. Owing to the historic significance of the site, it has been made a condition of planning approval that the building is recorded prior to the commencement of works so as to secure a permanent account of its pre-converted state. This document represents ‘the record’, offering written, photographic and drawn depictions of the building alongside interpretative commentary on the historical development of the site.

June 2008

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose and Format

This record has been prepared in response to conditions attached to the planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion of the subject building, as issued by West Lancashire District Council under planning application refs:

2007/0089 & 0090

The format of the record follows guidance contained in the English Heritage Publication 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practise' (February 2006) and in accordance with the methods of recording required by Lancashire County Council's Environment Directorate.

2.02 The Author

Chris O'Flaherty, the author, is a Chartered Building Surveyor and professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS). With a background in the surveying and repair of historic buildings, the author is a senior lecturer in architectural conservation at the University of Central Lancashire and holds a Masters Degree in Building Heritage and Conservation.

2.03 Methods of Investigation and Recording

Visual inspections of the property, carried out in June 2008, were completed with the aid of existing layout plans provided by the owners. Check dimensions were taken to verify the accuracy of these drawings and photographs were taken as a desktop source of reference. Digital photographs and drawings are provided within the record for reference purposes: the photographs are mainly contained in section 4 and a full set of record drawings are contained in appendix 'A'. A plan indicating the location of each photograph is given at the start of section 4. The digital images correspond to matching traditional black and white photographs (and negatives) that form part of the archive deposition (see below).

2.04 Archiving: Index of Archive

A copy of the printed Record forms part of an archive deposition held at Lancashire Record Office, Bow Lane, Preston. The full contents of this archive are indexed below:

- A4 paper, colour printed version of the written record with associate photographic (digital) and drawn records
- Black and white photographs and negatives, matching those digital images contained with the printed record

3.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

3.1 Site Location

The site is located at National Grid Reference SD 4881 1029 and is situated on the northern side of Ash Brow to the east of Newburgh, just east of the roundabout and the intersection with Higher Lane.

3.2 Site Description

Access on to the site is via a track road that leads off the northern side of Ash Brow immediately to the west of the subject building. This track widens to form a yard to the rear of the building: to north of the yard there is a collection of framed agricultural structures and to the south east there is the detached farmhouse which sits to the east of the cottage/barn. To the rear of the farmhouse there is a small former labourer's cottage. Gardens front the subject building and adjacent house to the south (road side) of the site. A site plan is given in figure 1 below.

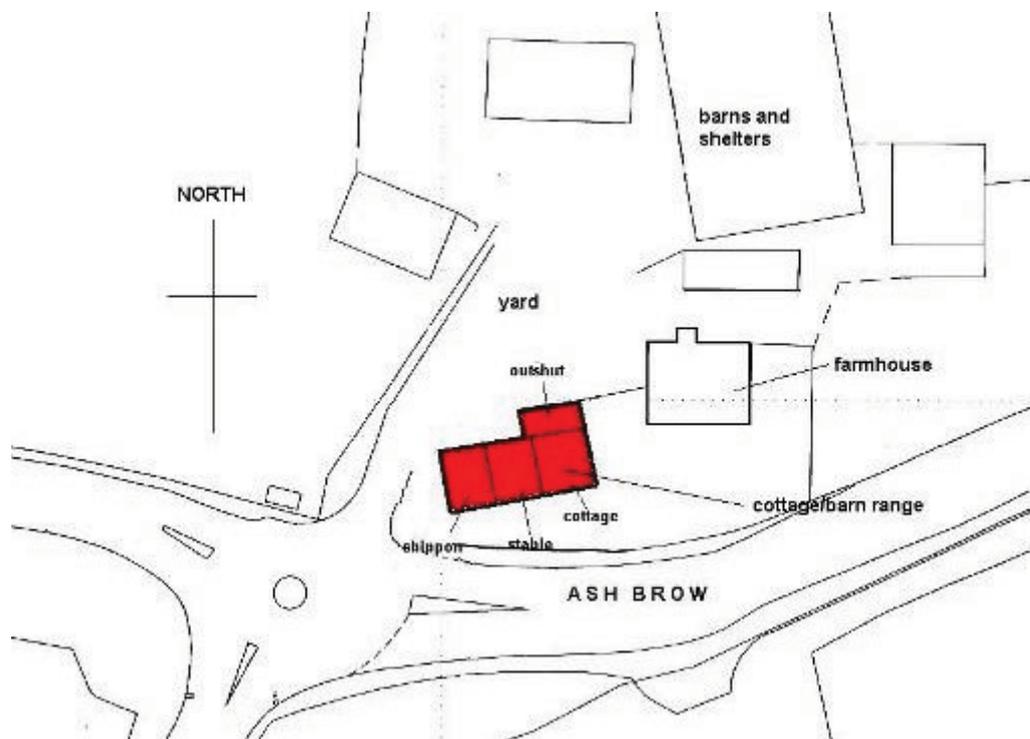


Figure 1. Site Plan.

3.3 Topography

The farmstead sits in the Douglas Valley, midway between the villages of Parbold and Newburgh. The River Douglas is a hundred yards to the east and the Leeds Liverpool canal is approximately two hundred yards to the north. Rolling rural fields surround the north of the site.

4.0 BUILDING RECORD

4.1 Orientation

The 'front elevation' as described throughout the record is the wall that faces south towards Ash Brow. Other reference to orientation should be read on this basis. For clarification see figure 1.

4.2 Overview - Building Plan and Materials

The building comprises three bays orientated along an east west axis with an outshut addition to rear of the eastern bay: together these form an 'L' shaped footprint. Each bay has ground and loft levels and is a single room in depth. The last function of the bays is described as follows:

- Western bay – shippin with storage loft above
- Central bay – stable with loft above
- Eastern bay (with outshut) – cottage with a ground and a first floor room, the latter accessible via a short stair leading up from the single storey outshut.

The perimeter and bay division walls are primarily of solid clay brickwork, one brick thick, laid in a Flemish bond to the 'original' parts and in English garden wall bond elsewhere (rebuilt or extended areas). The outshut is of coursed stone which bears similarity to the walling of the farmhouse, hence may have been built at the same time (early C.18th). The roof over the three parts is a continuous gable with front and rear slopes supported by wooden purlins and rafters. To the central and eastern bays the roof is covered by pegged stone slates on wooden battens: the western bay has a replacement corrugated sheet covering. Inside the ground floors include cobbles to the central stable bay, concrete in the cottage bay and brick edged concrete with drainage channel to the shippin (western bay). The loft floors are suspended timber and of variable design.

4.3 Listing Descriptions

Listing descriptions for the subject building and adjacent farmhouse follow:

Building Details:

Building Name: FARM BUILDING TO
WEST OF BOUNDARY FARMHOUSE
Parish: NEWBURGH
District: WEST LANCASHIRE
County: LANCASHIRE
Postcode: WN8 7NG

Details:

LBS Number: 386325
Grade: II
Date Listed: 11/08/1972
Date Delisted:
NGR: SD4880710295

Listing Text:

NEWBURGH

SD4810 ASH BROW
663-1/6/87 (North side)
11/08/72 Farm building to west of Boundary
Farmhouse

GV II

Farm building (probably stables etc.), now store. Dated 1739 above door; altered. Handmade red brick in Flemish bond, and some sandstone rubble, stone slate roof (except left end which is slate). Three structural bays, with a partition between the 2nd and 3rd, and a small rear wing. The front has a wide segmental-headed doorway to the 2nd bay and a narrower one to the 3rd, a datestone above this inscribed: T M 1739, a segmental-headed window between the doors with wooden louvres, and a segmental-headed 3-light sliding sashed window to the right. The left gable wall has a doorway and a window at ground floor and a loading door above, all segmental-headed, and the upper part of has been rebuilt in common brick. The rear of the 3rd bay has a small gabled wing of sandstone rubble, and the rest of the rear has been rebuilt.

Listing NGR: SD4880710295

Building Details:

Building Name: BOUNDARY
FARMHOUSE
Parish: NEWBURGH
District: WEST LANCASHIRE
County: LANCASHIRE
Postcode: WN8 7NG

Details:

LBS Number: 386324
Grade: II
Date Listed: 11/08/1972
Date Delisted:
NGR: SD4882210300

Listing Text:

NEWBURGH

SD4810 ASH BROW
663-1/6/86 (North side)
11/08/72 Boundary Farmhouse

GV II

Farmhouse. c.1700-30, altered. Coursed thin sandstone rubble, stone slate roof, brick chimneys. Transitional double-depth 2-unit plan (with shallow rear service rooms under catslide roof). Two low storeys, 2 windows, almost symmetrical; with a 2-course band, the doorway offset slightly left of centre with plain surround and 4-panel door under a pitched stone slab canopy on wooden brackets supported by iron struts, and 2 double-chamfered stone mullion windows on each floor, those at ground floor of 5 lights with hoodmoulds and those above of 3 lights. Gable chimneys, that to the left rebuilt in glazed brick. Rear: single-storey under catslide roof.

Listing NGR: SD4882210300

4.4 Photographic Record

There follows a photographic record of the building with supporting captions describing elements of significance and interest. The location and direction of each photo is shown on figure 3 below.

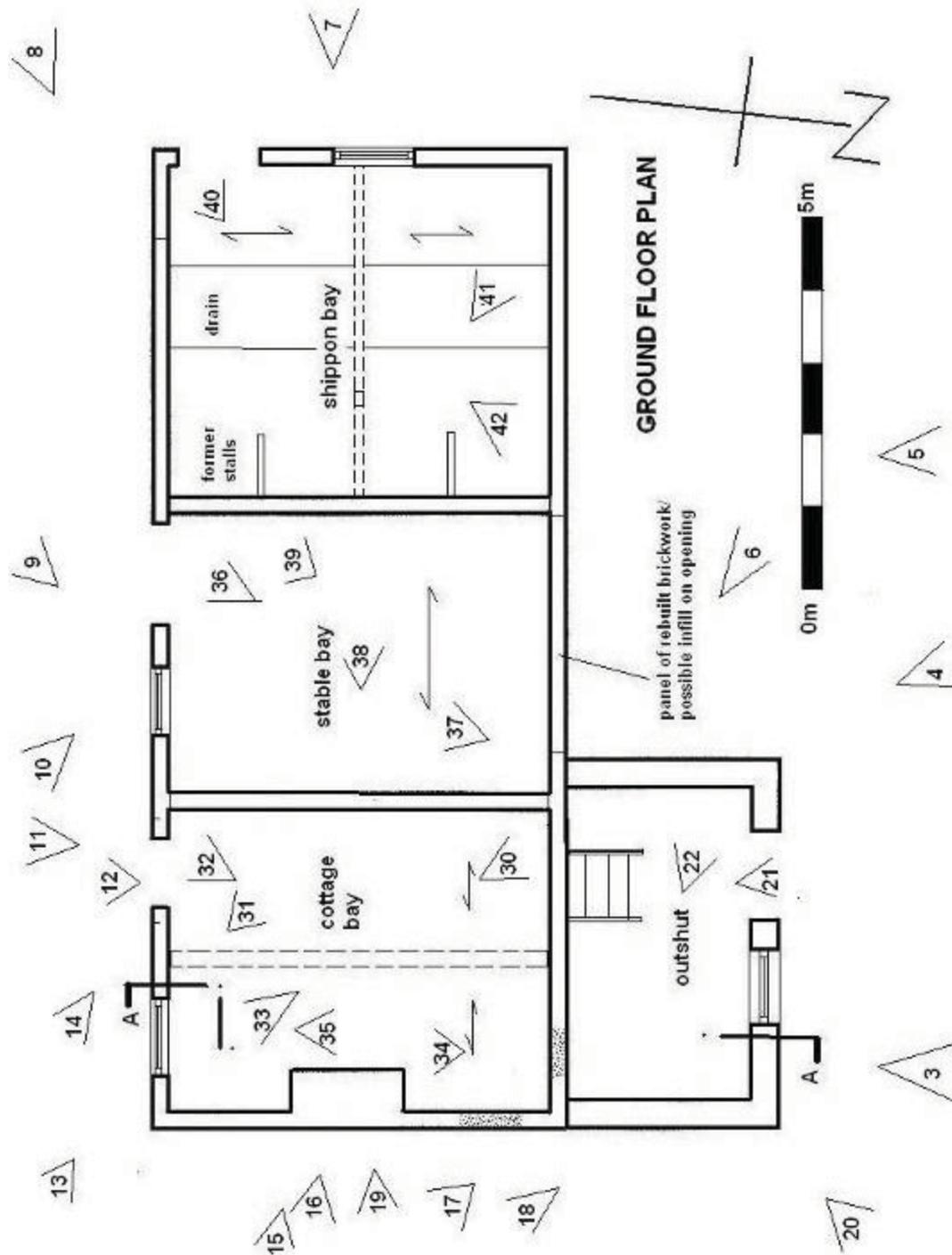


Figure 3a. Plan of photographs (ground floor)

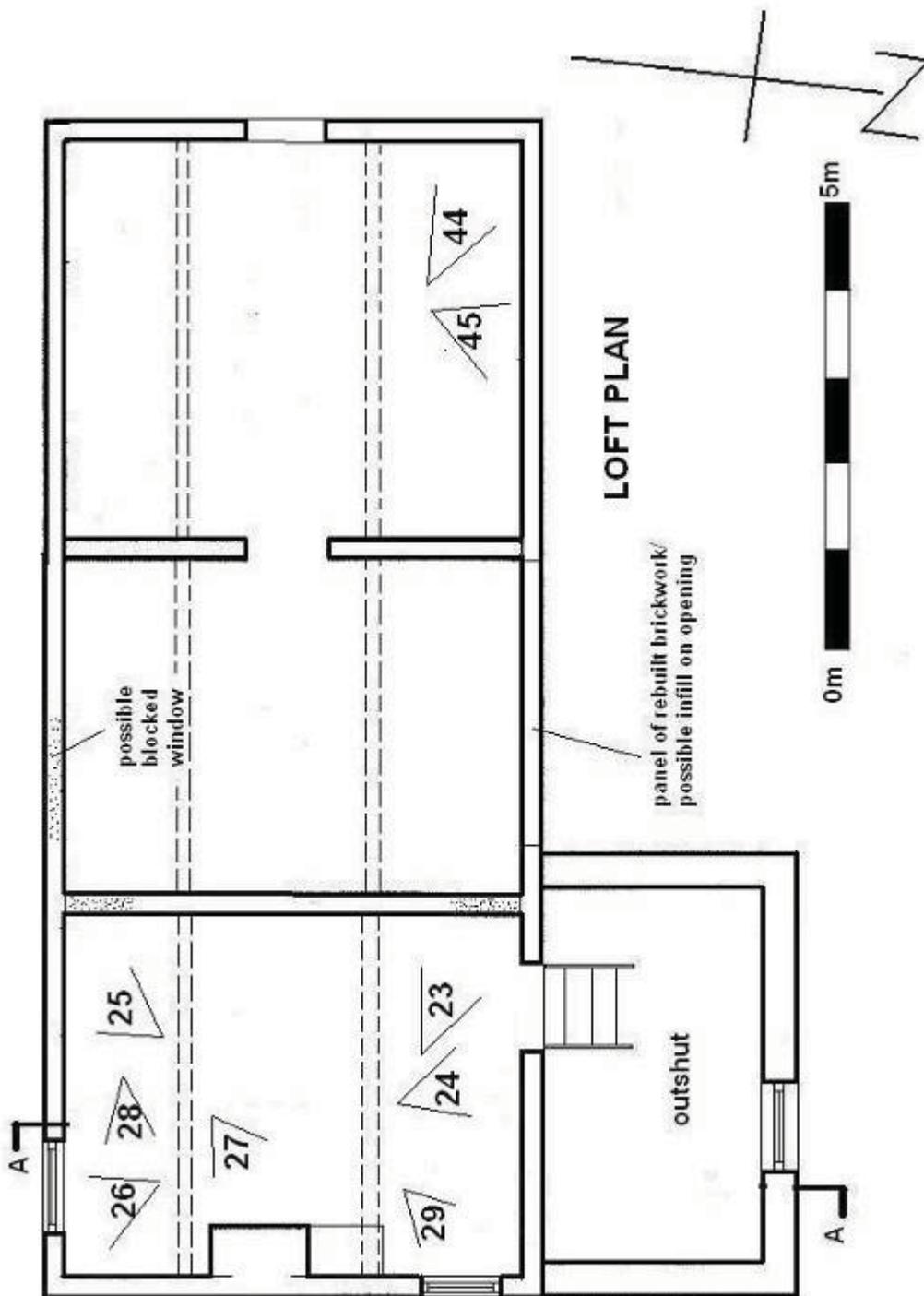


Figure 3b. Plan of photos (loft level)



Figure 3. Rear elevation with stone outshut to the left foreground and three bay building behind. The stone slate roof covers the central and eastern bays. The brick wall to the central bay appears to have been either rebuilt or perhaps this was once a full height cart entry door



4. Rear elevation, alternative view



5. Central and western bays (stable and shippon), rear elevation



6. Western return wall of outshut showing possible former lintel at low level. This suggests that the ground against the building may have been banked up and that the outshut, as is the case at the front of the building, was formerly two storey in height



7. Western gable with shippon door to the right and loft pitching door above. Note the segmental arches to the openings. The hoarding conceals vehicle damage (a truck recently hit the building). This elevation of the building appears to be an extension



8. The front elevation viewed from the west. This shows the shippon bay in the foreground with the outline of a smaller, lower building evident (see also fig 10)



9. Front elevation, central bay, showing stable door in the foreground with louvered framing to window. The cottage bay is to the right/distant.



10. Western (shippon) bay with central stable door to the right. This shot shows the probable raising and lengthening of the shippon part where Flemish bond changes to garden wall bond



11. Central bay: evidence of alteration at higher level where former window(s) may have been blocked



12. Datestone over the cottage bay door: the carving reads 'TM 1739' (as recorded on listing description – deterioration of the stone makes the numbers difficult to decipher)



13. Cottage bay, front elevation.



14. Detail of door to cottage bay showing vertical brick joints either side of the opening. These suggests the door may have been made narrower or was formerly flanked by decorative stone framing.



15. The eastern gable. This elevation bears evidence of either past alteration or rebuilding, particularly to the left side where the brickwork appears of a different age and also has a vertical joint where it meets the chimney flue. The window appears to have been inserted and at low level there is a segmental arch to the back of the interior fireplace: the purpose of the arch is unclear



16. Detailed view of eastern gable: note that the brickwork to the left of the vertical joint is of garden wall bond rather than Flemish (this again suggests partial rebuilding)



17. Eastern elevation looking to the stone outshut



18. As 17.



19. Detail of segmental head to base of eastern gable



20. Outshut viewed from the east



21. View into the outshut from rear door showing small stair into first floor of cottage bay



22. View into the outshut showing brick cottage bay to the right



23. First floor of cottage bay looking to blocked fireplace. The chimney above has partially collapsed revealing that the chimney structure is not tied into the gable



24. View to front wall of cottage bay, first floor



25. Alternative view of first floor chimney in cottage bay



26. View back to door into first floor of cottage bay from outshut: note blocked former door to the left wall which is the brick division wall to the central bay



27. Blocked door in first floor cottage bay to front part of division wall with centre bay (i.e. same wall as shown in figure 26). Note also the partially exposed lintel over the door, similar to that present to the opposing end of the wall (26) and possibly the ends of a former truss tie beam (the central section of which may have been reused as shown in figure 37). See also figure 28 below



28. Lintel over door shown in figure 27. Note tapered end which suggests this might have been a former truss tie



29. Rafter and purlin roof structure in cottage bay



30. ground floor room in cottage bay showing central chamfered beam with corbel and blocked fireplace



31. Detail of corbel to beam in cottage, ground floor



32. Opposing end of beam shown in 29 and 30. Note possible blocked former window/door to rear wall just right of the beam corbel



33. View to rear left corner of cottage ground floor room showing butting of division brick wall (left) to rear wall. This suggests the division was inserted.



34. Possible blocked former window to rear wall as shown in figure 31. Note also trimmer supporting hearth to first floor above.



35. Window to front wall of ground floor cottage bay. Partial run-out stop to chamfer here also evident above corbel.



36. View into ground floor central (stable) bay. Note the bottom of the blocked former door to the division wall (right) as shown in figure 26. The level of the door threshold suggests that the stable loft floor was formerly at a much lower level. The loft floor has therefore been raised and the timbers are of more recent



37. Outline of former hayrack visible on rear wall (stable bay)



38. Stable bay: division wall with cottage showing central horizontal piece of timber which may be the cut out tie beam as referred to earlier in figure 27. The outline of the former door to the front end of the division wall (27) can also be seen upper right



39. Cobble floor in stable bay



40. Shippon, ground floor, looking to division wall with stable showing low dividers and mid support post



41. Shippon – dividers and support post detail



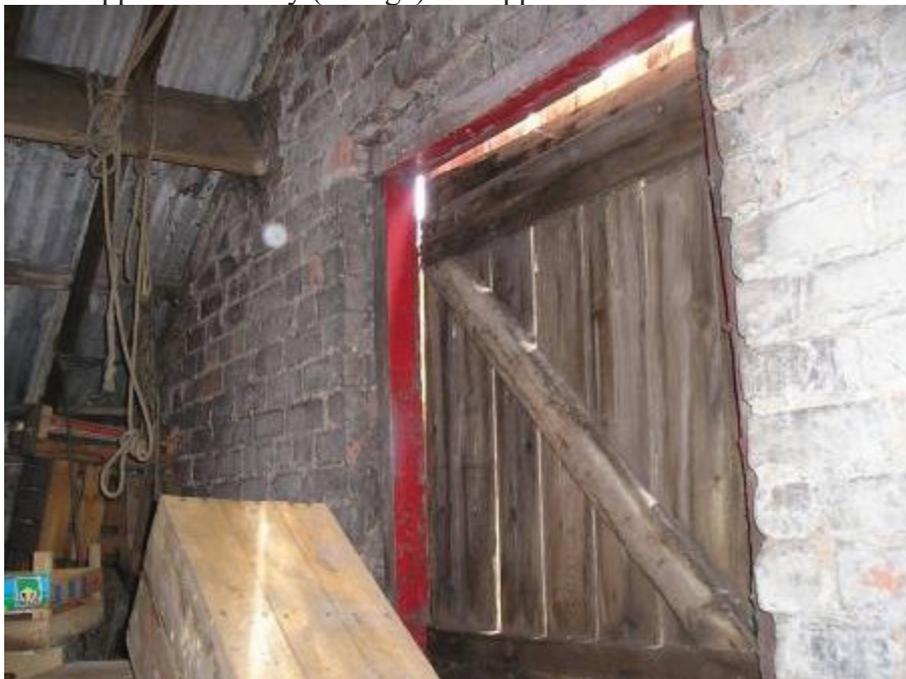
42. Shippon: looking to gable entry showing drain passage



43. Loft floor over shippon



44. Loft over shippon looking to doorway through to loft over stable. Access to this part was not possible due to hazardous condition of floor. Note purlin and rafter roof with replacement sheet covering. The roof timbers here are clearly newer than those to the opposite end bay (cottage) and appear newer also than those to the stable bay.



45. Pitching hole door to shippon loft gable



46. Front elevation of the farmhouse

5.0 INTERPRETATION

As illustrated through the photographic record and building descriptions, the function of each of the subject building's three bays are readily interpretable. The shippon has the remnants of stall dividers and central drain passage; the stable has a cobbled floor, wide access door, louvred window vent and the remains of wall mounted hayracks; the cottage has fireplaces at ground and first floor level. This evidence is sufficient to establish the last usage of each space: it does not, however, tell the whole story of a building that has clearly witnessed many changes through its life.

The datestone over the cottage entrance is of course good evidence as to the age of the building. There can, however, be no certainty that the date of 1739 relates to initial construction since the incorporation of a date stone could in theory commemorate the date of some significant alteration work. In this instance such alteration might relate to the conversion of the cottage bay into a dwelling having formerly been merely the end bay of a barn or other such non-domestic structure. Conversely, the cottage might in fact be a reduction in the original domestic footprint, the stable having occupied what was formerly part of a larger house. Unfortunately the physical evidence that remains on site paints a rather confusing picture as to past changes and, whilst it is clear that significant alterations/repairs have been carried out, the sequence and purpose of these is difficult to determine.

Historic map evidence offers no real clues as to the exact nature of past function. The six-inch scale first edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1845, albeit of too small a scale to permit clear recognition of building footprints, labels the site with the word 'Masons' – making no mention of Boundary House or Farm – and this most likely shows a former name of the farm/site. Of course herein there is no proof that the site was indeed a farm, and since census returns from 1841-1881 fail to list clearly addressed entries (e.g. for either Masons or Boundary) an element of doubt must remain. By 1891, however, the name 'Boundary House' is listed in the census (reference RG 12/3043) and the head of the householder, Thomas Cartmel, is described as a farmer. The 1891 census entry immediately prior to Boundary House, which could relate to the subject building, lists a labourer in a stone quarry (name 'Ashcroft') as the head of a household of 3 (including wife and daughter). It would seem that these were the occupiers of either the subject cottage or, perhaps more likely, the small single storey cottage located directly behind the farmhouse. The entry

two places before that of Boundary House would then, in this instance, most likely relate to the subject cottage; and that this entry describes a farmer (Wilson?) aged 70 with a family of three, it could well be the case that the cottage, stable and shippon were rented out (with land) by Cartmel as a small holding.

The oldest map of any real detail from 1894 (first edition Ordnance Survey map, twenty five inch scale) labels the site with the name 'Boundary House' (no mention of Masons is made). An extract of this map is given in figure 47 below: this shows that the plan footprint of the building has changed since the 1890's. The outshut to the rear of the cottage appears almost detached from the main building, whilst the northern and western building lines are staggered. This tends to prove that the shippon bay is largely an addition, whilst to the rear what now appears as a wide panel of 'rebuilt' brickwork may in fact denote where a former outshut has been removed and the opening to it bricked up. Of course this does nothing to clarify the function of those altered parts. The line of division between what is now the stable and cottage, though, is shown on the map; hence the presence of the one bay cottage in the 1890's appears relatively certain.

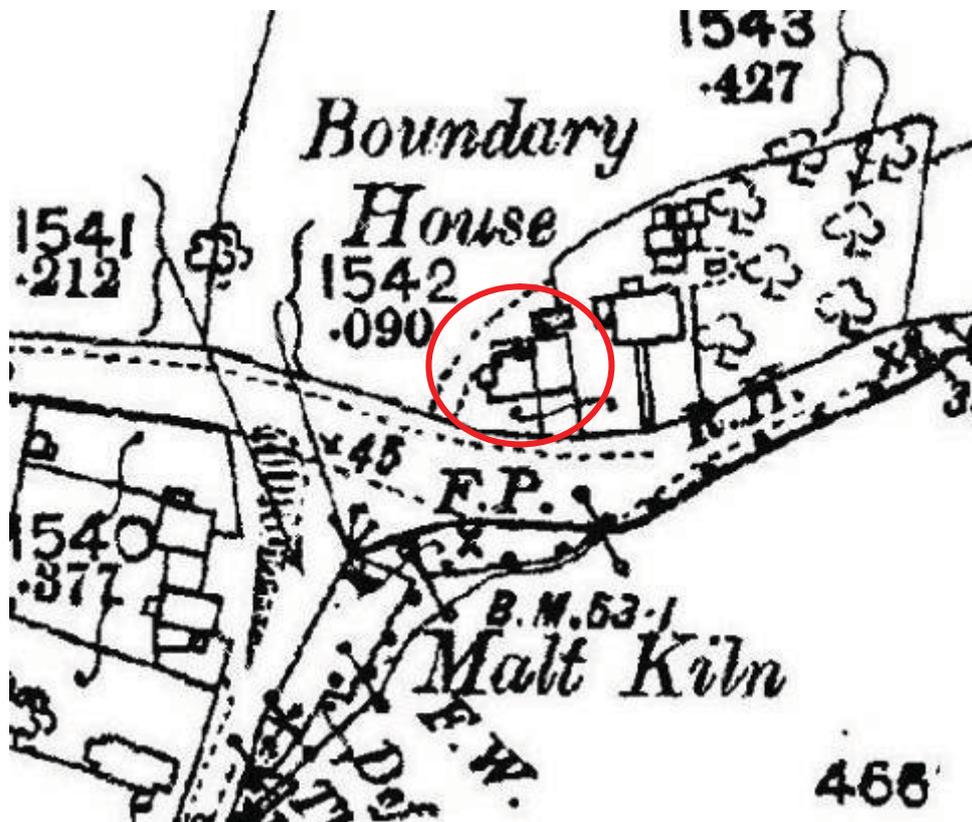
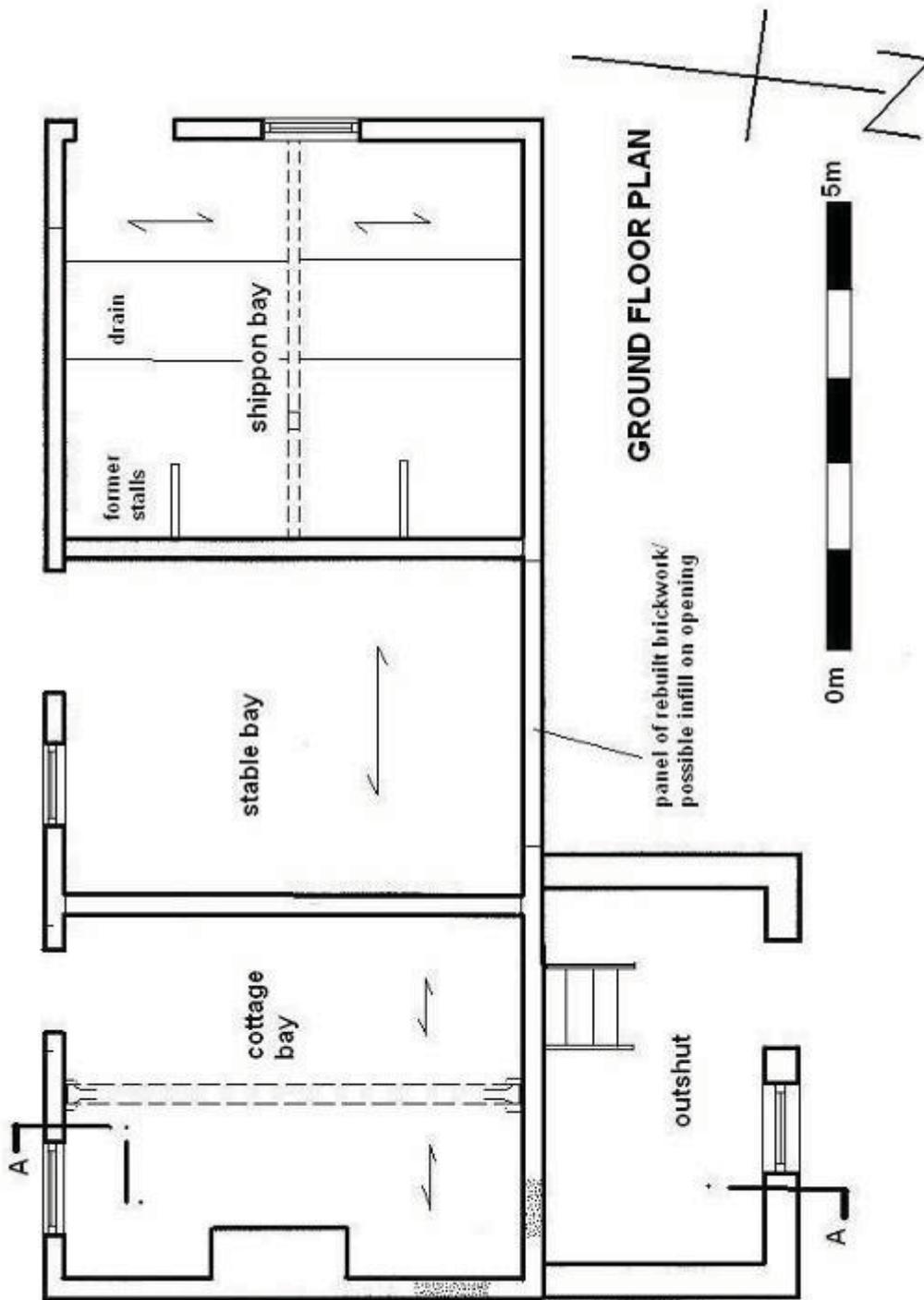


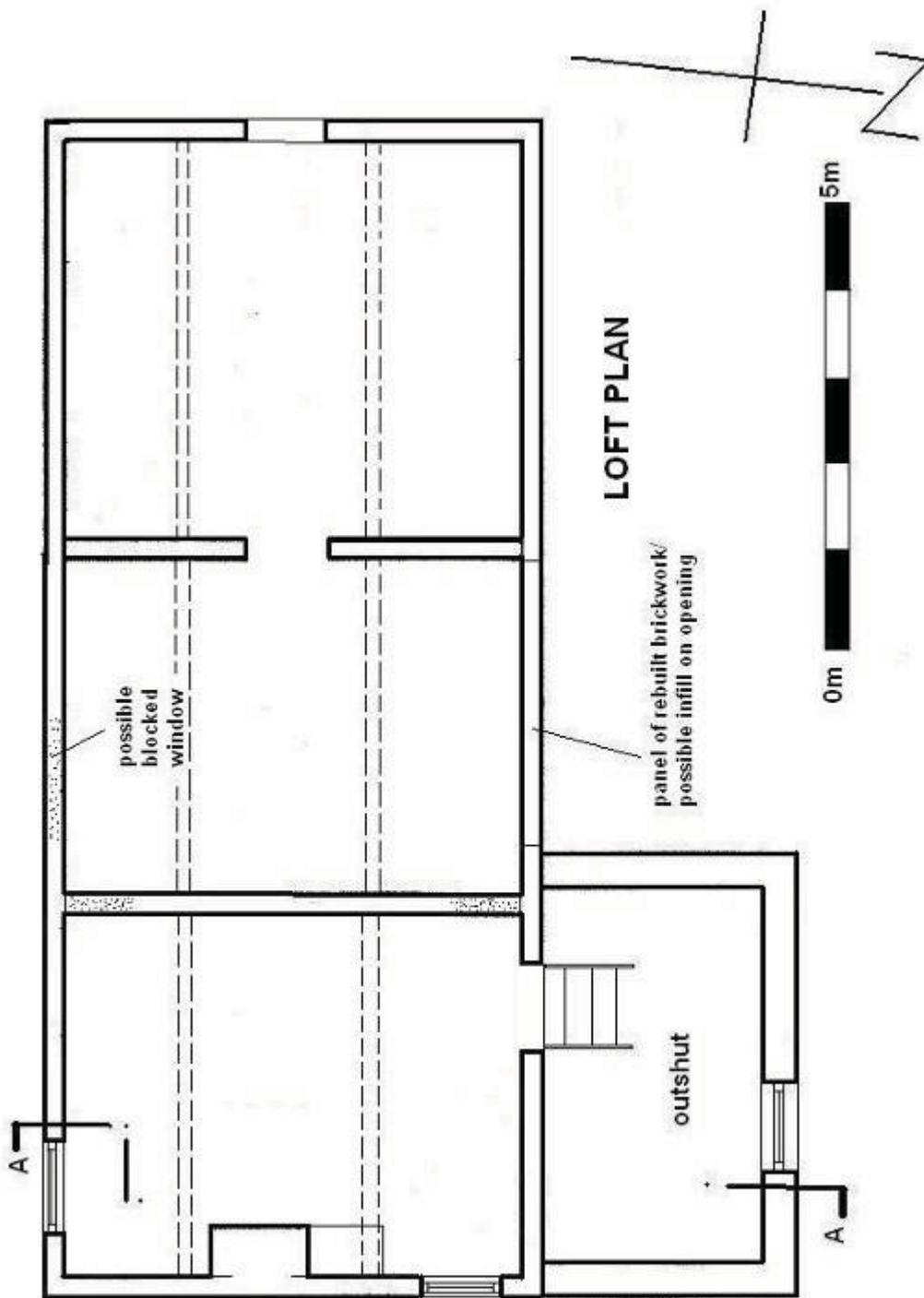
Figure 47. Extract of 1890's OS map. The building is circled.

Listing descriptions for both the farmhouse and the subject building suggest that the buildings are of similar age (e.g. early C18th). As such, and presuming that the house was the abode of the farming family, speculation as to the exact origins of the cottage building must again come to the fore (as mentioned earlier). The two most likely explanations for this are that a) the building was originally for purely agricultural purposes, or b) it was in fact built as dwelling with attached agricultural use in line with long held tradition. In terms of the second suggestion, the apparent lack of any other significant agricultural buildings on the site (as indicated on the map of c.1845) then becomes an issue since it is difficult to see how the farm could operate with such minimal covered space. However, if the first suggestion was in fact the reality it must be the case that much of those features that display domesticity on the cottage are in fact alterations. In terms of the fireplace, which appears simply abutted to the gable wall, insertion seems a distinct possibility, as does the formation of corbelling to carry the large first floor central beam. On reflection and taking into account all the various strands of evidence, conversion of the original building's eastern bay into a simple labourers/smallholder's cottage (with the outshut addition to the rear) appears the most likely sequence of conversion, mindful that this could well have occurred as long ago as 1739 (e.g. as indicated on the datestone and as suggested by interior features such as the fireplace and chamfered beam).

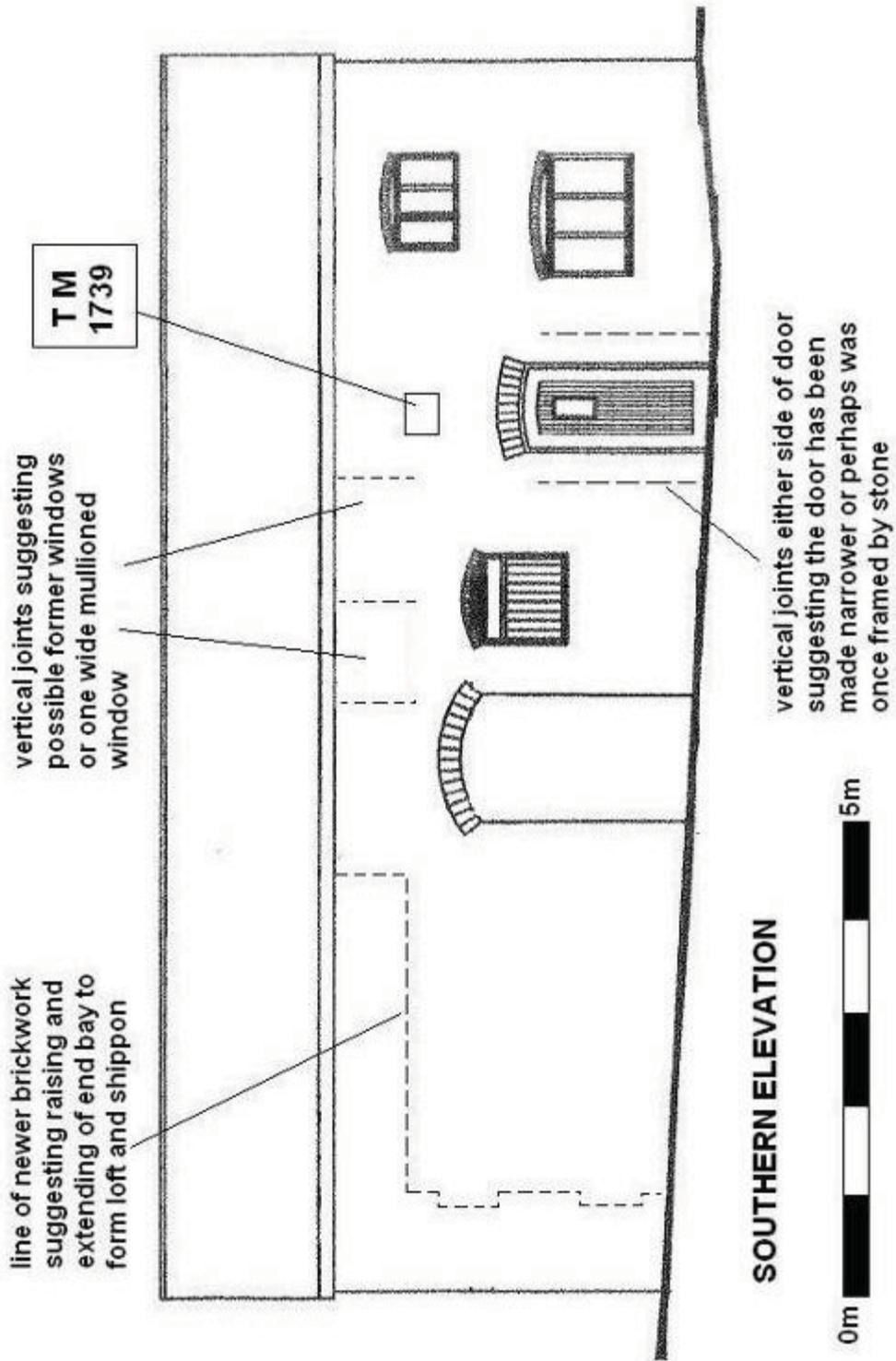
APPENDIX 'A' – DRAWN RECORD



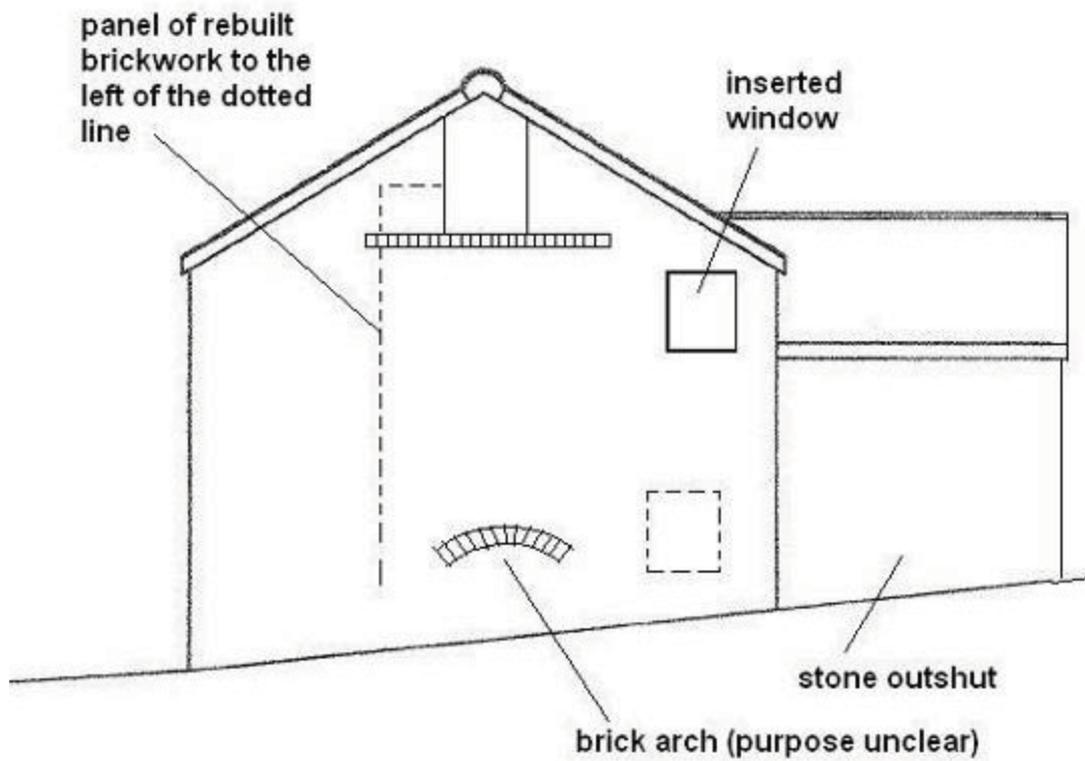
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



LOFT PLAN

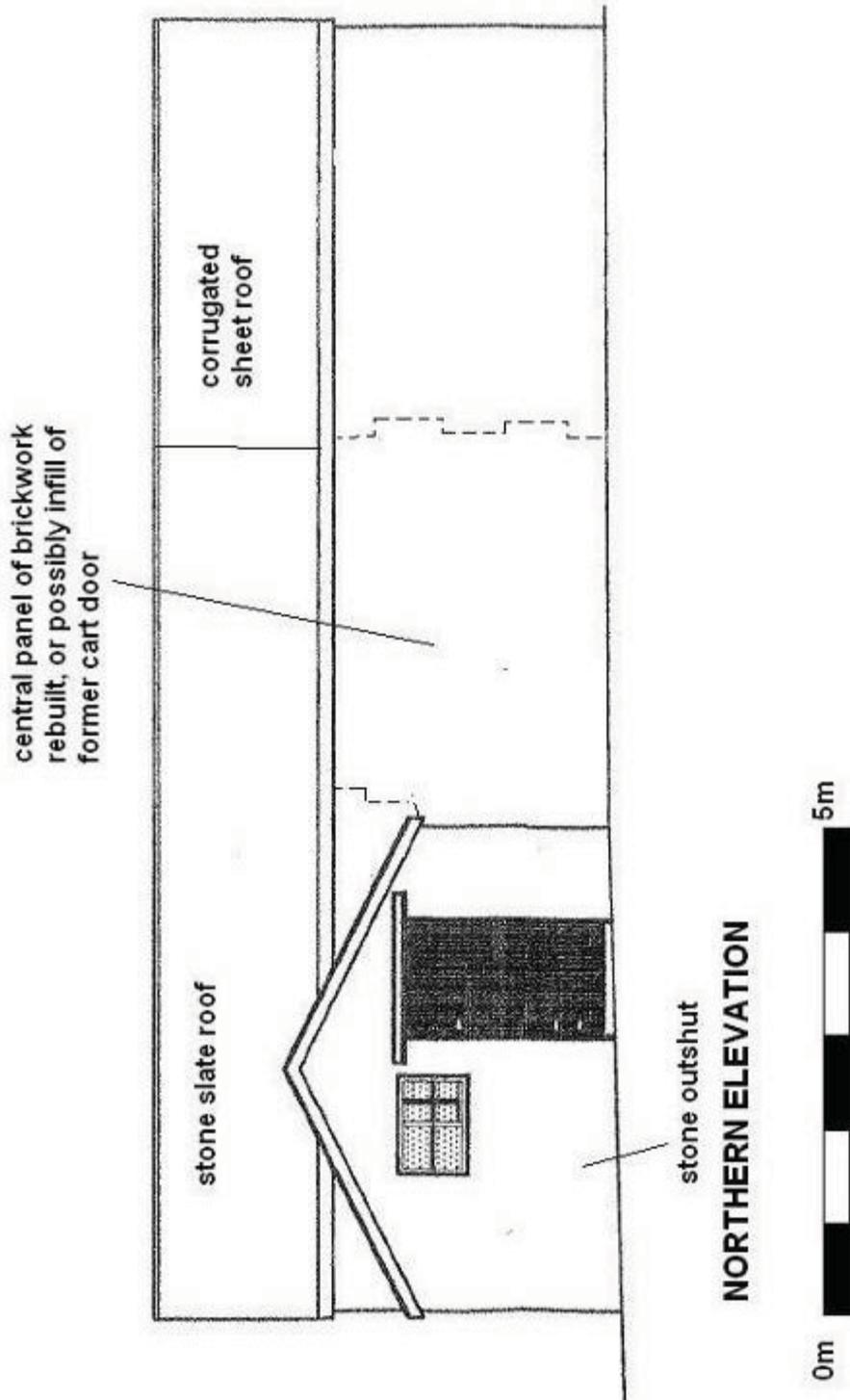


FRONT ELEVATION

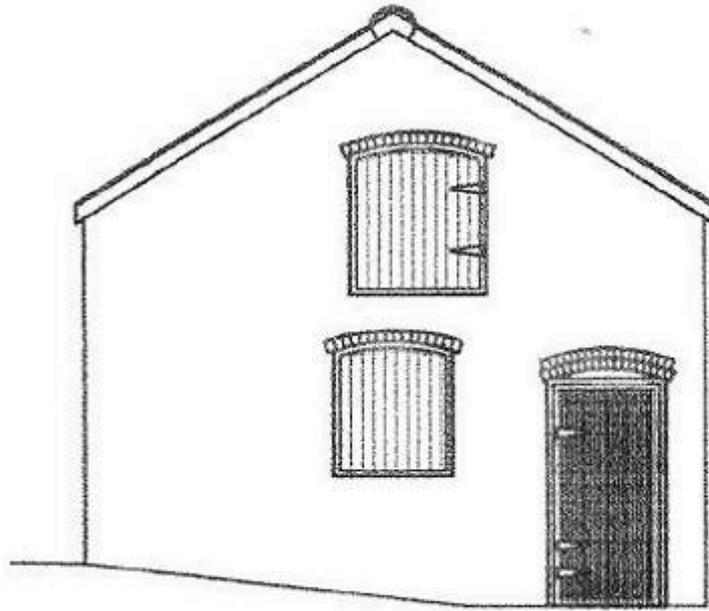


EASTERN ELEVATION

0m  5m

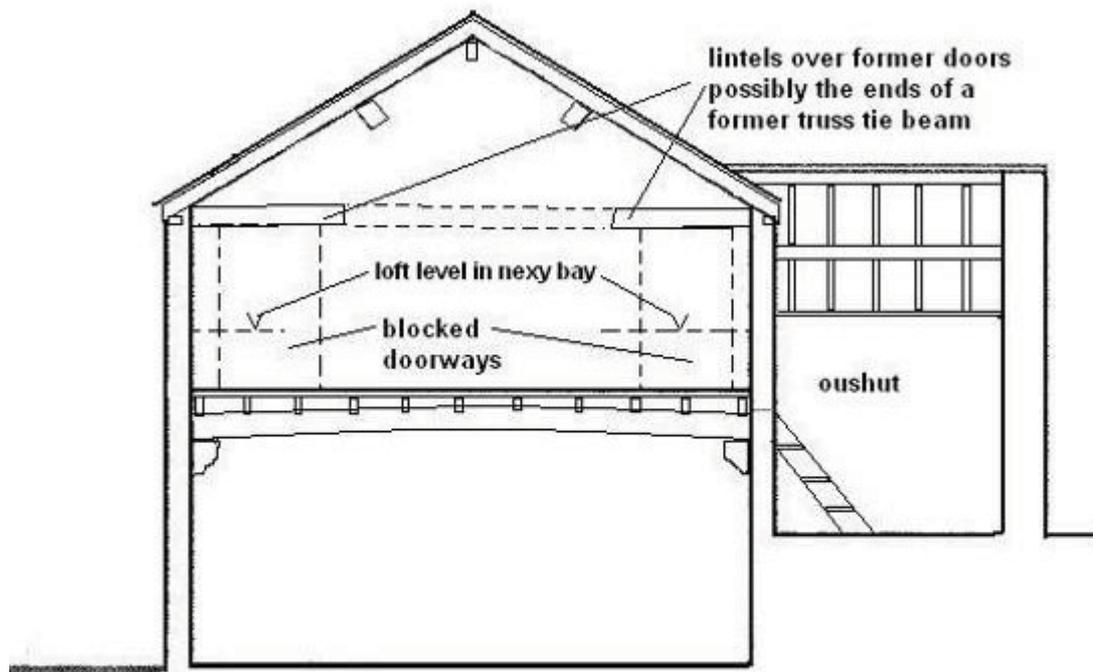


REAR ELEVATION



WESTERN ELEVATION





SECTION A-A

