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SUMMARY

The study building probably served as a threshing barn built during the early to mid 19th century when farm improvements and rising agricultural incomes were developing in Cumbria.

The fabric of the barn has subsequently deteriorated with brick repairs within a later lean-to and the partial loss of the slate roof also above the lean-to.

Although a fine example of a utilitarian barn, the study building has no architectural embellishments, possessing the customary air vents, wide double doors and rear door associated with a threshing barn.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project origins

Cumbria County Council's County Historic Environment Service was consulted by Allerdale Borough Council regarding a planning application for the conversion of a barn at Home Farm Cottage, Deanscales, near Cockermouth; Planning Application No. 2/10/0821.

The study building was located at NY 09315 26555.

The scheme has the potential to affect the character and appearance of a building of special architectural and historic interest. The proposal will affect the character and appearance of the building and, as a result, a condition has been placed on planning consent requiring a programme of archaeological building recording to be undertaken prior to the development taking place

In order to ascertain the historical and archaeological merits affected by this development, the brief issued by the curatorial authority requires investigation of known historical records through a rapid desk-based assessment and the survival of extant buildings via a programme of building recording equivalent to Level 2 as described by English Heritage *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice, 2006*.

The desk-based assessment included visits to Carlisle Library and The Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle. The objective of this exercise was to collate sufficient detail to identify the issues and potential for academic research, provide a series of questions for targeted archaeological enquiry and outline, if any, possible mitigation response.

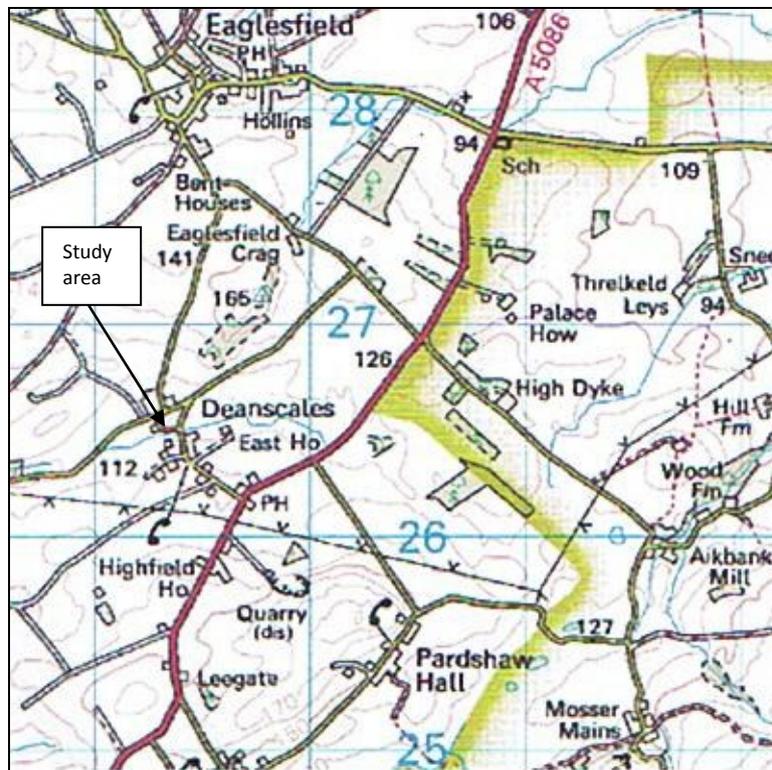


Figure 1. Location of survey. (OS copyright licence no. 100044205).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Project Design

In response to a request by Cumbria County Council's County Historic Environment Service, Gerry Martin Associates Ltd submitted a project design (Written Scheme of Investigation) for the archaeological recording of an extant barn. This document outlined the contractors' professional suitability, a brief historical summary of the study area, general objectives required of the project, the methodology and the resources needed for the successful implementation of this work.

The project design on being accepted by the curatorial body, Gerry Martin Associates Ltd was commissioned to undertake the desk-based assessment and the archaeological survey by the client Mrs Julie Bannard.

The following report has been assembled to the relevant standards and protocols of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, combined with accepted best practice and in accordance with the brief prepared by the curatorial authority.

Fieldwork took place on February 9th 2011.

2.2 Desk-based assessment

In accordance with the Design Brief, the desk-based assessment investigated primary and secondary historical sources, maps and other literature in order to set the survey results into their past cultural, historical and topographic context.

The desk-based assessment comprised a search of three archival repositories.

Carlisle Library provided sources for published works including newspaper articles, archaeological and antiquarian reports, photographs and journals.

Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle was sought for details of landowners, occupiers and cartographic evidence.

The Historic Environment Record, online, provided the Sites and Monuments Record describing previous archaeological observations and electronic media showing the spatial distribution of these findings.

2.3 Archive

The archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design and the guidelines set out by English Heritage (1991) and the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, 2007 and 2008).

The archive will be deposited with an appropriate repository and three copies of the report donated to the County Sites and Monuments Record, as requested by the curatorial authority.

2.4 Walk-over survey

A walkover of the study area on February 9th 2011 did not suggest any upstanding monuments such as derelict buildings, walls or tofts existed.

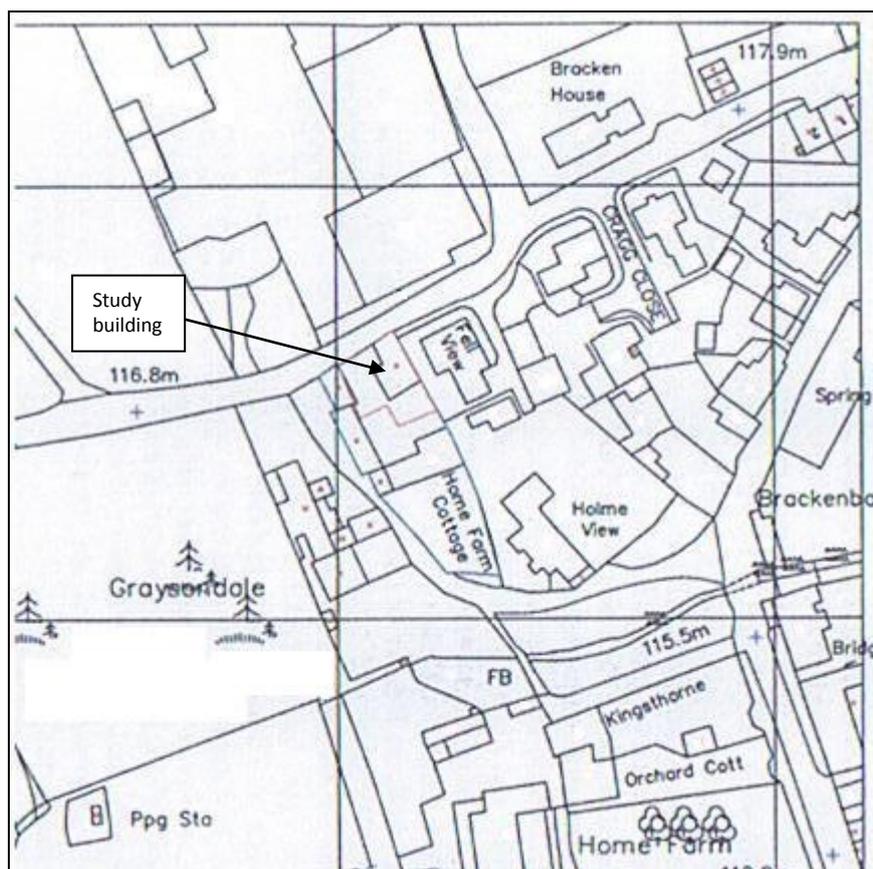


Figure 2. Location of study building

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location, topography and geology

The study area lies in a hamlet within the parish of Dean. Reference to the geological map of the area indicates that the underlying geology of the area comprises Permian and Triassic sandstones, overlain by boulder clay and moraine drift deposits.

4 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

4.1 Historical background

The site is occupied by Home Farm Cottage built in 1671 and is a Grade II listed building. The house and adjoining barns are described as:

Farmhouse and barns. Late C18. Painted rendered walls, under graduated greenslate roof with roughcast chimney stacks. 2 storeys, 4 bays, with left barn under common roof and right-angled right barn adjoining of similar height. Panelled door and overlight in painted quoined surround. Double-sash and casement windows with glazing bars in broad painted stone surrounds. Left barn has large double plank doors in segmental painted stone arch. Right barn has blank front walls.

The study building is shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867 (figure 3) and probably served as a threshing barn.

No archaeological monument or find spot was listed in the Historic Environment Record within a radius of 500 metres.

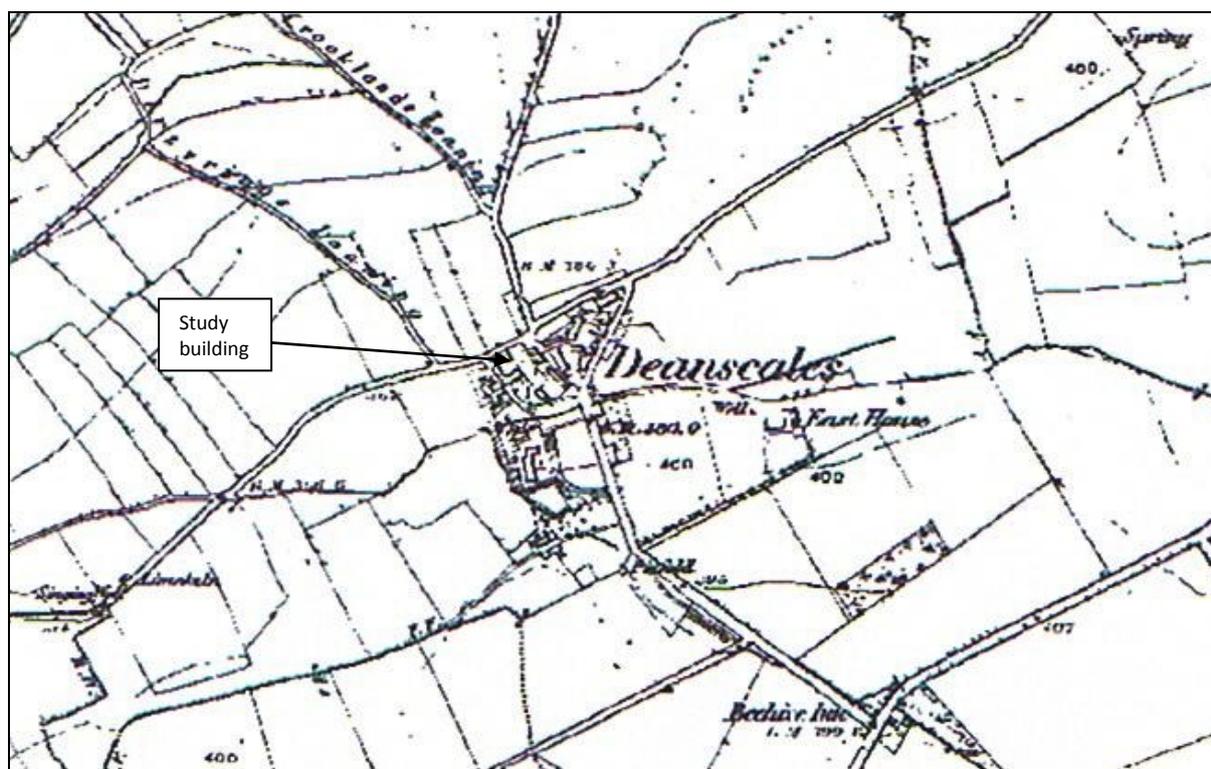


Figure 3. Ordnance Survey First Edition map of 1867

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Academic merit

Past cultural settlement in Cumbria has been predominantly rural, where agriculture has been the main economic driver and product. Increasingly, those features associated with past farming technique have been lost or converted for domestic use or for local tourism.

A challenge to historians, archaeologists and other researchers is to compile a record of those rural buildings that indicate past agricultural practice and social conditions before their industrial, agricultural and historic context is lost.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Methodology

The buildings in the study area were surveyed on February 9th 2011 by Richard Woolley assisted by Carl Savage using a Disto measuring device and hand-held GPS equipment.

The buildings were fully accessible, although natural light was restricted within the study buildings, requiring flash photography.

The survey comprised of scaled photographic recording of the interiors and elevations of all the buildings, with detailed photography of any worthy architectural elements.

Using the architectural plans, notations were undertaken regarding the characteristics of these farm buildings, including metrical data, thresholds, materials and building techniques employed.

The corpus of the following report is formed from these notes and photographs. The following report describes each room within the study building (figure 4).

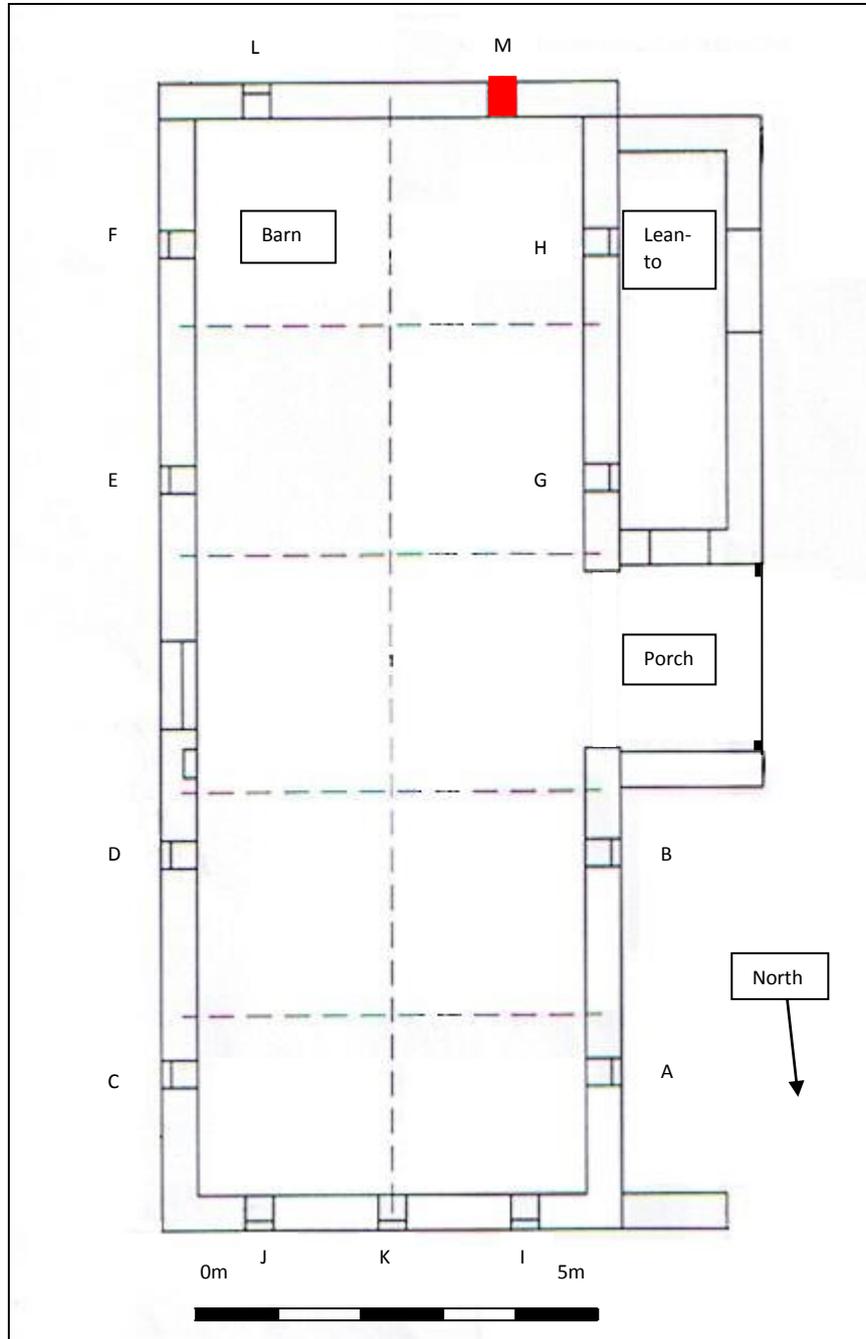


Figure 4. Ground plan of the barn

6.2 Survey results; the barn (interior)

The principal building is a single room store barn measuring 13.62m x 4.98m comprising randomly coursed rubble stone walls with rounded boulders measuring 0.50m in thickness and that have been lime-washed throughout the interior in order to improve waterproofing and the stability of the building fabric.

The apex of the roof stands at a height of 5.79m with the walls standing to a height of 4.77m. The slate roof is supported by four roof trusses forming an A-frame from possible re-used timbers. The roof slats appeared to have been plastered (figure 5).



Figure 5. Roof trusses



Figure 6. Flagstone floor

The carpentry appears to have been jointed with no evidence of iron nails or wooden pegs. However, numerous repairs have been undertaken in order to strengthen and maintain the building fabric.

The floor comprised square stone flags measuring 0.75m x 0.75m and 0.07m in thickness (figure 6).

A number of architectural features were observable within the interior. These included:

- A niche on the eastern elevation 0.40m north of the eastern door, 1.30m above the ground and measuring 0.40m x 0.40m with a depth of 0.30m (figure 7).
- A timber planked door measuring 1.88m x 1.06m was located on the eastern elevation (figure 8) that probably assisted the draught for winnowing whilst threshing grain.
- On the eastern elevation were four extant air vents (C-F) measuring approximately 0.20m x 0.50m (figure 13).
- The southern gable had a single air vent (L) measuring approximately 0.20m x 0.50m, the presumed remaining air vents (M in red outline figure 4) were probably blocked (figure 9).
- On the northern gable end, three air vents (I-K) measuring approximately 0.20m x 0.50m were still extant (figure 10).
- A blocked door at the south end of the western wall. An arch rose to a height of 2.30m comprising of rough hewn voussoirs. The doorway was filled by rough hewn stone with a timber lintel 0.08m in thickness introduced at a height of 2.00m. Further examination was impeded by immovable obstructions (figure 12).
- On the western elevation were four original air vents (A-D) measuring approximately 0.20m x 0.50m. The three air vents have been retained whilst the southernmost vent following the construction of the lean-to was blocked (figure 14).

Level II Building Survey Home Farm Cottages, Deanscales, Cockermouth

- On the west side, was the main entrance comprising a 3.30m high arch formed from coarse, rough hewn voussoirs and measuring 2.25m in width (figure 11), allowing carts to enter and providing a sufficient draught to assist winnowing whilst threshing.



Figure 7. Niche, east elevation



Figure 8. Wooden door, east elevation



Figure 9. Interior showing southern gable end

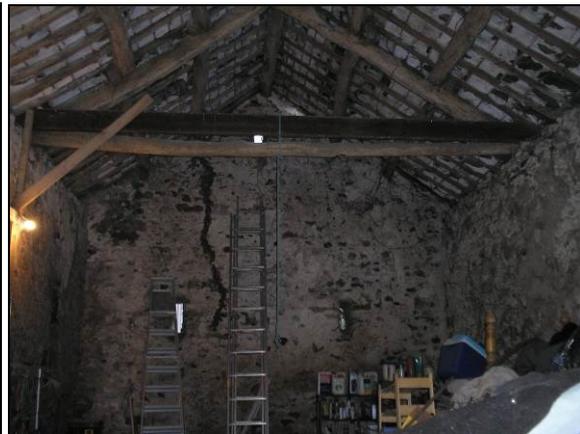


Figure 10. Interior showing northern gable end



Figure 11. Western entrance



Figure 12. Blocked doorway, western elevation



Figure 13. Air vent, east elevation Figure 14. Set of northern air vents on western elevation

6.3 Survey results; the barn (exterior)

The western elevation illustrated two air vents (A-B), measured 14.70m in length and stood to a height of 6.40m and illustrated a structural development (figure 15) described below.

A southern doorway (figure 12) was blocked and a lean-to added, measuring 1.70m in width and 6.00m in length. The additional structure was constructed from rough hewn stone forming randomly coursed, rubble stone walls. Brick repairs were later introduced above the lean-to door (figures 15 and 18).

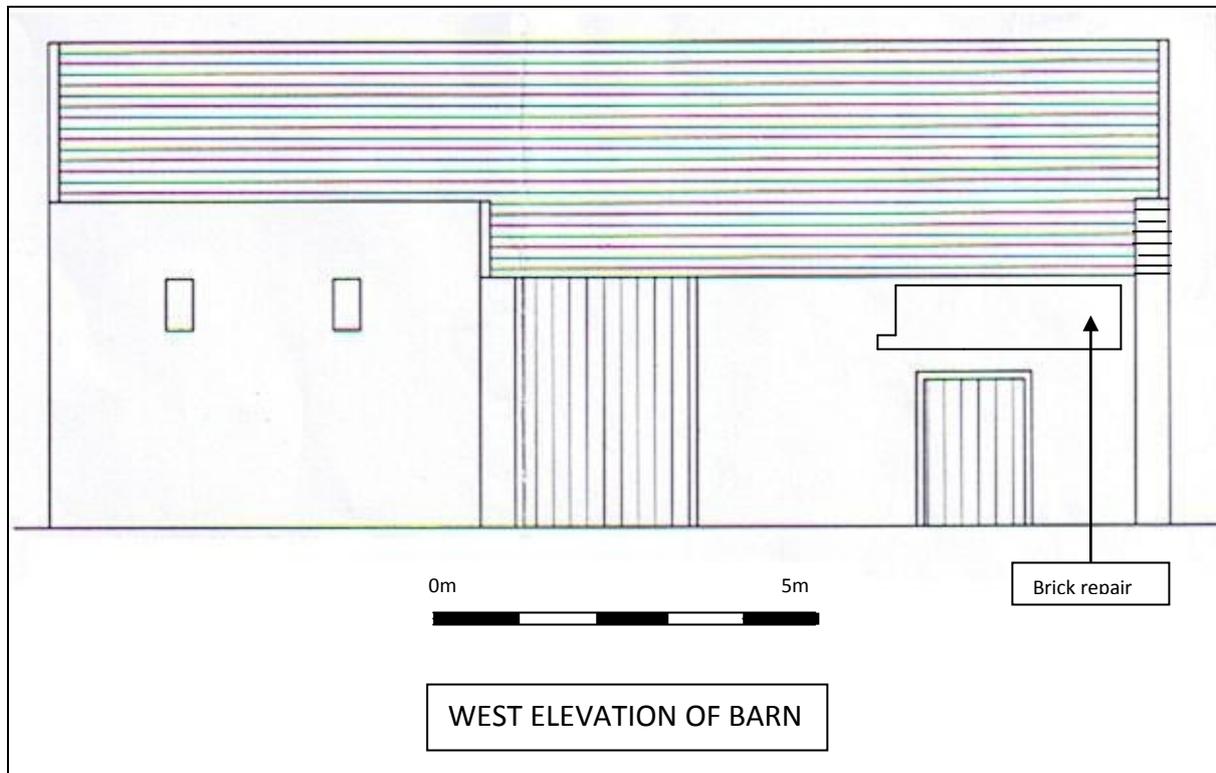


Figure 15. West elevation of the barn

The lean-to was accessed by a hatch door from the southern part of the barn (figure 16).

The interior of the lean-to was whitewashed (figure 17) and had been used as a stable or cowshed as a former trough was present.

Beneath a decayed timber lintel, a single timber planked door (figure 18) measuring 2.20m x 1.30m entered the lean-to from the west.

A porch with a timber planked door measuring 3.30m x 2.40m adjoined the lean-to (figure 19). This was aligned with the lean-to, forming a straight face.

The roof for both the lean-to and porch were clad in slate whilst the roof above the lean-to was in a state of collapse.



Figure 16. Hatch leading to the lean-to



Figure 17. Internal view of the lean-to



Figure 18. West elevation with lean-to and porch



Figure 19. Porch door

The eastern elevation also measured 14.60m in length and stood 6.40m in height. It illustrated four extant air vents (C-F) with a central back door (figures 20 and 21) and had been left in its original rough hewn state.

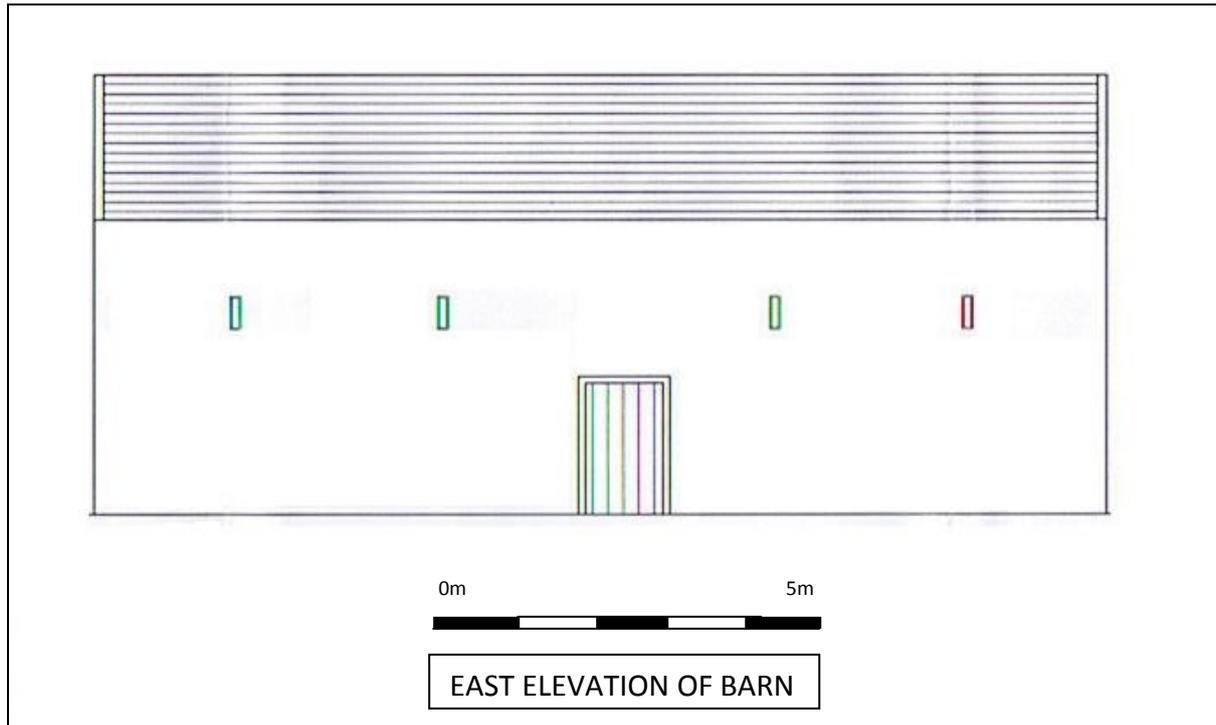


Figure 20. Eastern elevation of barn



Figure 21. Exterior view of eastern elevation



Figure 22. Exterior view of northern elevation



Figure 23. Air vent in northern gable



Figure 24. Exterior view of southern gable end

The northern elevation measuring 7.60m in length and 6.40m in height had also been left in a rough hewn finish (figure 22) and displayed three rectangular air vents (I-K, figures 23 and 25.)

The southern gable end measuring 7.60m in length and 6.40m in height (figure 24) was heavily obscured by ivy but was clearly finished in rough hewn stone. The air vents (L-M) were not visible (figure 26).

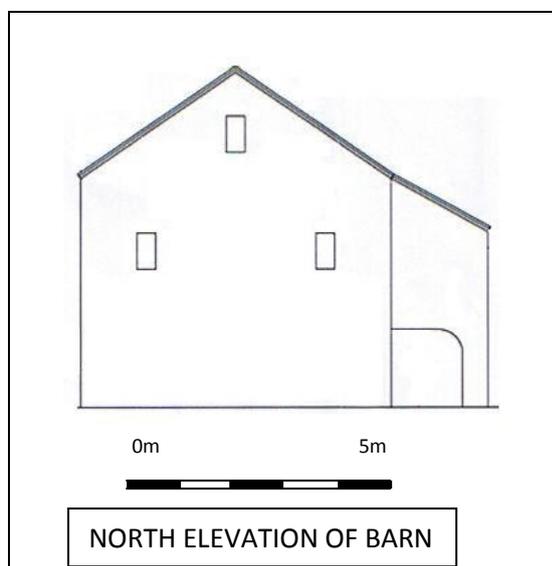


Figure 25. Northern gable end

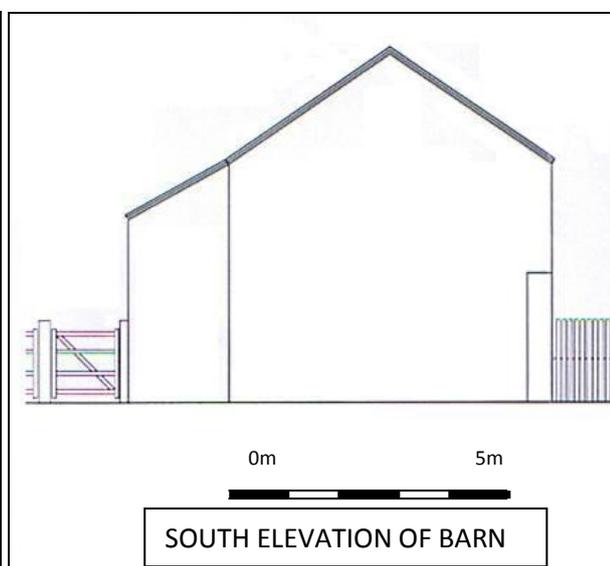


Figure 26. Southern gable end

6.4 Discussion

The study building had little architectural embellishment and was designed purely for agricultural purpose probably serving as a threshing barn.

Moreover, there was no evidence for an upper floor or a significant attempt to convert its use whilst functioning as an agricultural building.

The barn was designed for the storage and conversion of grain. The crop was first stored and during the winter winnowed, the threshed grain then transported to a mill or fed to cattle. The process required a tall open space, outward-opening doors for light and access and a porch for protection against the rain. Storage as with silage was best undertaken in a tall building with limited ventilation through narrow air vents or slits (Brunskill 2002, 96).

The study building appears to belong to a period of investment in farm buildings initiated during the later 18th Century that lasted to about 1880. This period reflected three distinct phases:

- The second half of the 18th Century when demand increased from industrialising communities and transport improvements facilitated long distance trade
- The Napoleonic War 1793-1815, when there was nationally, a large rise in agricultural production and where protectionism maintained high prices
- 1815-1880 when increased mechanisation and scientific methods increased the efficiency of the Cumbrian farm (Brunskill 2002, 27-28)

Development was enhanced by the effects of enclosure that rationalised farm holdings and scientific improvements in farming that lead to greater productivity and efficiency. This evolution was reflected in the farm buildings where basic forms developed into specialised structures, culminating

in designs of some ingenuity with architectural pretensions and at a considerable cost (Brunskill 2002, 95).

By the late 19th Century and during the 20th Century, Dutch barns, silage pits and on-site storage made specialised storage buildings superfluous.

The study barn at Home Farm probably belongs to the third phase of agricultural improvement (1815-1880) and would have been used for grain storage and for threshing. Most probably the barn was constructed during the early to mid 19th Century as it is featured on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

Subsequently, as agriculture declined in importance, the barn took on other uses, mainly for storage of non-agricultural items and for private use.

7 ARCHIVE

The archive for this project will be deposited with the appropriate archaeological curator, Tullie House, Carlisle. This archive has been assembled in accordance within the protocols of Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2).

8 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Mrs Julie Bannard for her assistance with the report and commissioning the work. I would also like to thank Jeremy Parsons for his help and guidance with the archaeological brief and reviewing my provisional draft of this report; the staff of Carlisle Library with my research into the local history of the area and the staff of Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle with the map regression and other documentary research.

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