

FORMER ROBINSONS WORKSHOP, GLENFIELD ROAD, DALTON-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: M & P Gadsden
Consulting Engineers Ltd

NGR: 322875 473998

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Non-Technical Summary

Following an application for Conservation Area Consent to demolish the former Robinsons Workshop, Glenfield Road, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria, a condition was placed requiring an archaeological building recording be carried out. Following the provision of a project design by Greenlane Archaeology the work on site was carried out in September 2011.

Early maps of the site indicate that a building was constructed to the north of the site in the later 19th century and by 1913 the present building had been built against its south side. The deeds suggest that it was originally a barn, and it is referred to as such in 1915, although it was latterly used as an auctioneer's store and joiner's workshop.

The building recording revealed that the present building was indeed set against a stone wall to the north, all that now remained of the earlier building, and that the original phase of building included a red brick 'extension' to the east. The king post trusses of roof are supported on the south side by a row of four large cast iron columns, which seem likely to have been re-used, perhaps from a steam saw mill that was formerly situated to the south-west where Glenfield Road now is. Some later modifications were also carried out but the building has otherwise remained largely unchanged.

Although not an especially historically significant building in terms of the wider history of the town, it is of interest, in particular through its connections to developments in the local topography. Both the presence of possibly re-used building materials from the nearby steam saw mill and its physical connection to the earlier building to the north are indicative of the way in which the area has changed from largely agricultural, to industrial, and finally residential.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Mark Gadsden of M & P Gadsden Consulting Engineers Ltd for commissioning the project. Additional thanks are due Mr and Mrs Allen for their help and enthusiasm on site.

The building recording was carried out by Dan Elsworth. The report was produced by Jo Dawson and Dan Elsworth, the illustrations by Tom Mace, and it was edited by Jo Dawson. Dan Elsworth managed the project.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 M & P Gadsden Consulting Engineers Ltd (hereafter 'the client') applied for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the Former Robinsons Workshop, Glenfield Road, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria (NGR 322875 473998). This Consent was granted by Barrow Borough Council, with one of the conditions being that a programme of archaeological building recording be carried out. This was placed as Condition 3 on the consent:

Prior to the demolition of the workshop hereby approved, a level 1 building recording exercise shall be carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidance (Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice). The resultant material from the survey should subsequently be submitted to the local planning authority and also be deposited on the county's Historic Environment Record (held by Cumbria County Council).

1.1.2 In response to this Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design for the work. The building recording was carried out in September 2011.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The former Robinsons Workshop is situated in a garden at the end of Glenfield Road, next to the Co-operative Food store car park (Figure 1). Glenfield Road lies to the south of Market Street, which runs downhill from the castle and original market place in Dalton. It is at approximately 32m above sea level (Cumbria County Council n.d.).

1.2.2 Dalton is situated within a large area of Carboniferous limestone, which dominates much of the local solid geology (Moseley 1978, plate 1). The overlying drift deposits comprise glacial material such as boulder clay, which forms undulating low fells and ridges (Countryside Commission 1998, 64-66). Locally, the site is situated on the south side of the centre of the main street running through the town.

1.3 Background History

1.3.1 As the requirement is for a Level 1 recording a background history has not been compiled, however some early maps of the site were examined and as the deeds to the building were made available information from these has been included.

1.3.2 **Early Maps:** the building is apparently not shown on Merryweather's 1825 plan of Dalton (reproduced in Walton (1984, 66)) or the Ordnance Survey map of 1850. It is also not shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1891 (Plate 1), although what is shown is a building immediately to the north of the present building, rather than the building itself, the south wall of which was incorporated into it (see Section 4.1.1). This map is also of interest in showing the wider environs of the site, in particular a large steam saw mill to the south-east, on the site of which Glenfield Road is now situated. The later Ordnance Survey map of 1913 shows that by this date the present building has been constructed, and the building to the north to which it was added, is still present. Again this shows the environs of the site, revealing that by this time several new streets had been constructed nearby, including Garden Terrace.

1.3.3 **Deeds:** a brief examination of the deeds provided information from 1895 onwards, and revealed that initially the property belonged to the Garden family (after whom the nearby Garden Terrace is named) and in 1915 it was conveyed from Mrs TE Garden to Mr R Holt. At this date it was described as '*The Meadow' with a barn erected thereon*', which indicates the use to which the land was put prior to the construction of the building. Mr Holt was an auctioneer, and he used the building for activities connected to his business (Mrs Allen pers comm.). In 1933 the deeds show that the building was conveyed from Mr and Mrs Holt to Mr C Robinson, who used it as a joiner's workshop, a use that continued throughout the 20th century (Mrs Allen pers comm.).

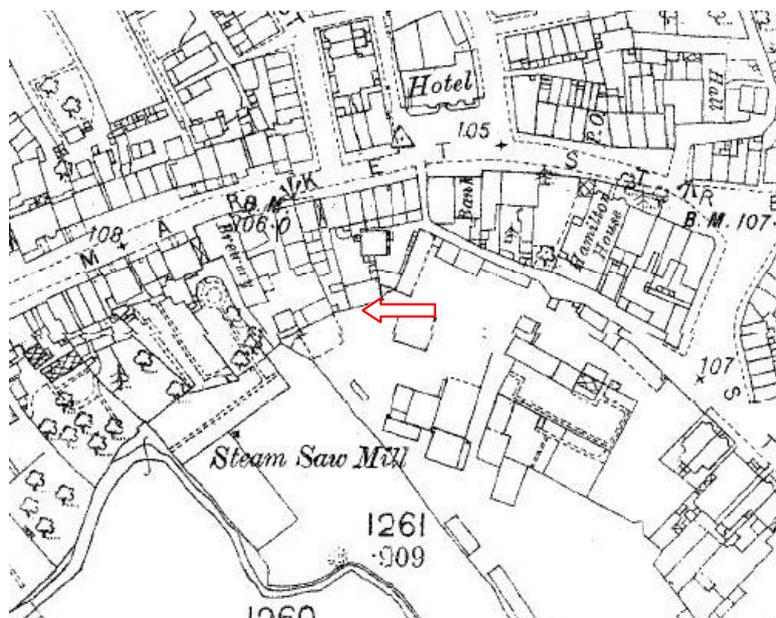


Plate 1: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1891, with site location marked

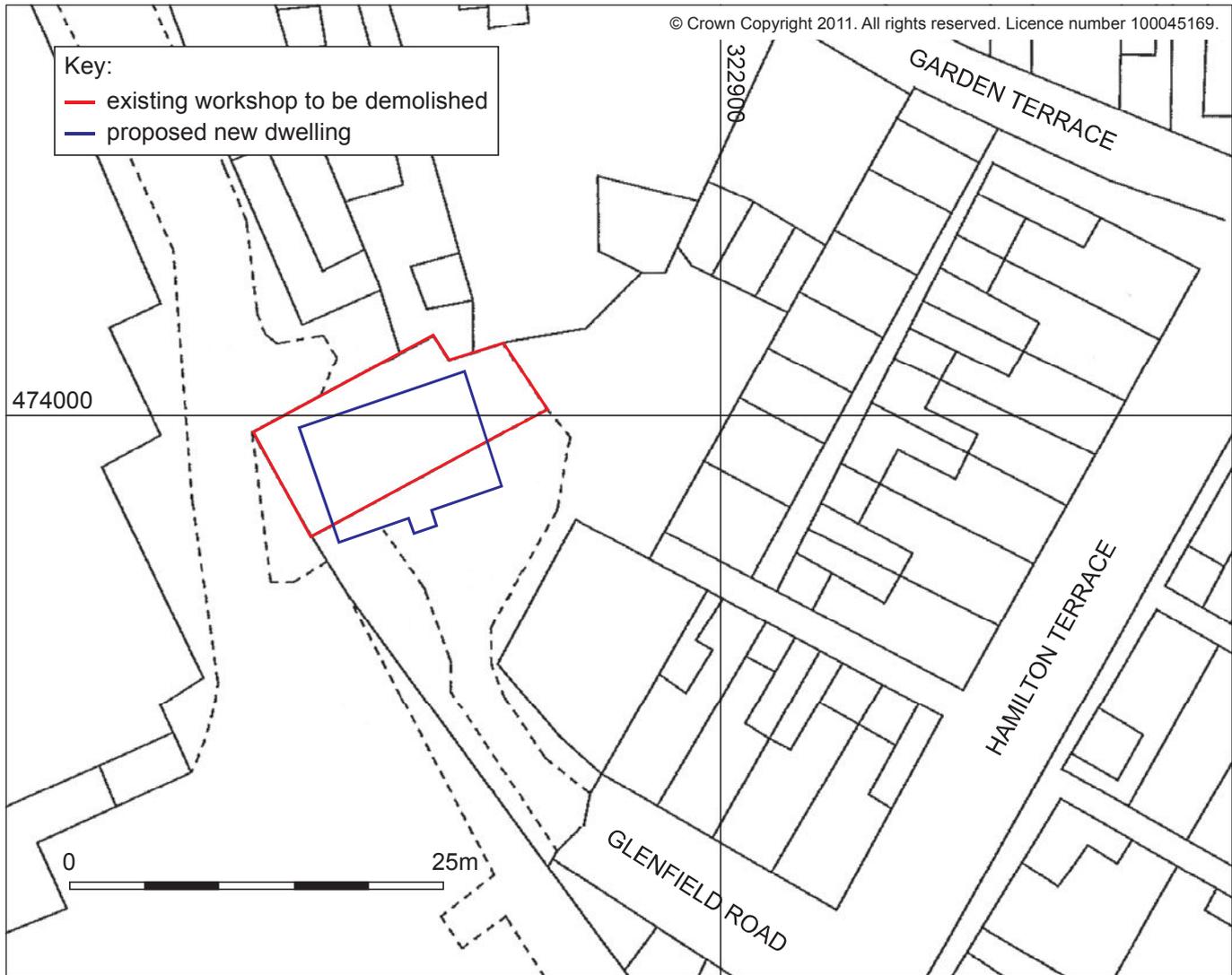
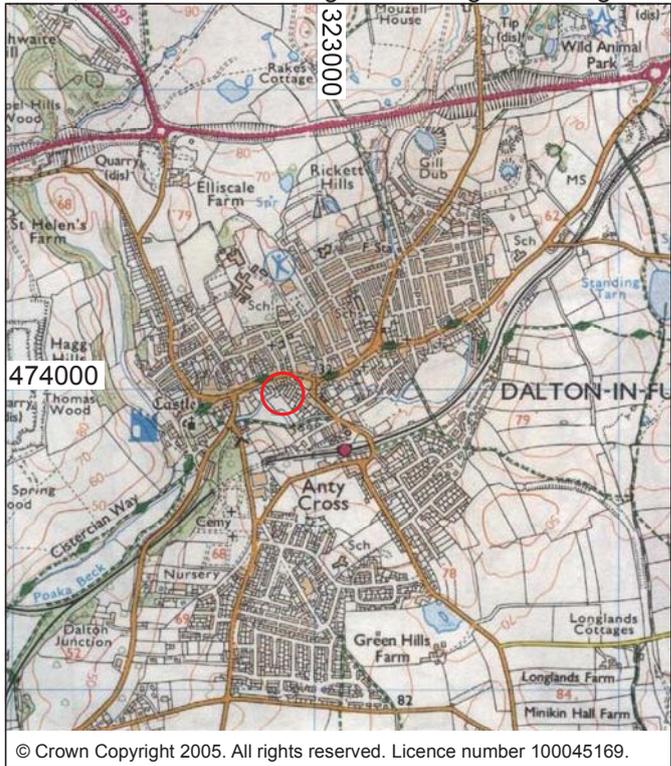
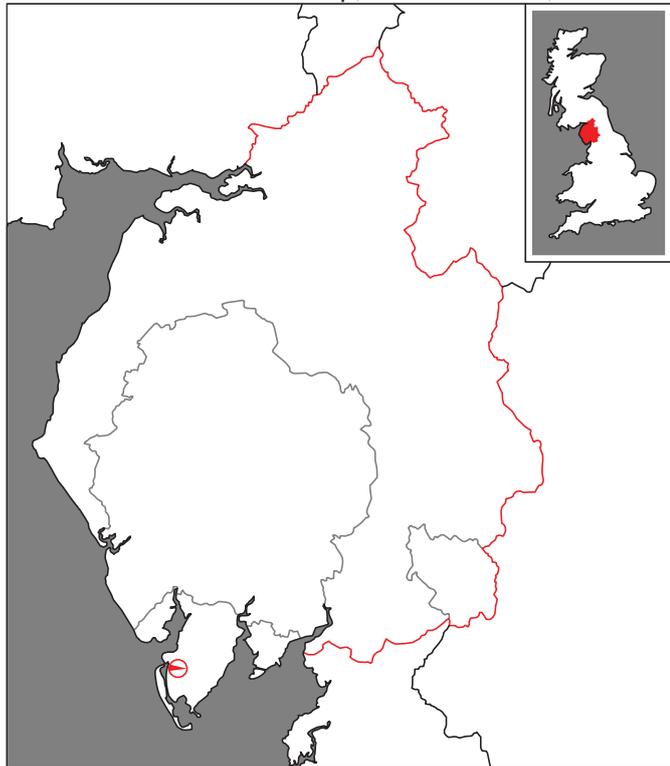


Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprised three separate elements intended to provide a suitable record of the structure, in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006) and the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008). A suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

2.2 Building Recording

2.2.1 The building recording was carried out to English Heritage Level-1 type standards (English Heritage 2006), which is a relatively brief form of investigation, intended to record the basic form and, where possible, function of the building. It comprised the following elements:

- **Written record:** brief descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs:** photographs in both 35mm colour print and colour digital format were taken of the main features of the building, its general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remaining photographs are in the project archive;
- **Drawings:** a plan showing the location of the building in relation to other nearby buildings, structures and landscape features was produced.

2.3 Archive

2.3.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design and current IfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness on completion of the project. One copy of this report will be provided for the Principal Planning Officer at Barrow Borough Council, one for the client, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a digital copy of the report will be provided to the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER) in Kendal and a digital record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

3. Building Recording

3.1 Arrangement and Fabric

3.1.1 The building comprises a tall main rectangular block with a lower red brick 'extension' to the east, and it is orientated essentially east/west, the north and west elevations facing onto to the car park for the adjoining Co-Op, and the south and east onto an adjoining garden. There is a vast mixture of materials. The lower part of the east end is constructed from red bricks, although these are different internally and externally. The south elevation of the building is finished with corrugated sheet metal supported on a timber frame and three upright iron columns. The west side has a modern concrete block base, with timber and corrugated metal on top, while the north is constructed from stone. The main part of the building has a grey slate roof with V-shaped stone ridge tiles, while the lower east end is finished with corrugated sheeting. The internal timber is largely machine-sawn.

3.2 External Detail

3.2.1 **North elevation:** this elevation is entirely finished with concrete render and has two timber trellises attached to it (Plate 2). It has plastic rainwater goods.

3.2.2 **West elevation:** the lower part of this elevation is rendered, whilst the upper part is clad with corrugated sheet metal on a timber frame (Plate 3). There is a tongue and groove plank and batten door in the lower part with a brass handle re-used from a chest of drawers or similar piece of furniture. There is a window in the upper part on the south side, with a six-light timber casement.



Plate 2 (left): North external elevation

Plate 3 (right): West external elevation

3.2.3 **South elevation:** this elevation is largely clad in corrugated sheet metal, over a timber structure, with a large four-light window in the centre, and a double tongue and groove plank and batten door on the east side of the main block (Plate 4). At the west end is a monopitch extension entirely clad in corrugated sheet metal.

3.2.4 **East elevation:** the lower part of this elevation is the brick the 'extension' (Plate 5). The bricks are machine-made, dark red, and laid in English garden wall bond in a ratio of four rows of stretchers to one row of headers. Typically the bricks measure 23cm x 7.5cm x 11.5cm. There is a central double door, of tongue and groove plank construction, with a single light in each half. There is a small window to the north, which is a four-light fixed casement, with a concrete sill. The upper part of the elevation, comprising the gable end of the main section above the brick 'extension', is clad with planks.



Plate 4 (left): South external elevation



Plate 5 (right): East external elevation

3.3 Internal Detail

3.3.1 **Introduction:** the interior of the building is one single space, extending through into the monopitch section to the east. It has a single concrete floor throughout, with a hatch or inspection pit (?) covered with timber boards in the north-west corner (Plate 6).



Plate 6: Possible hatch in floor

3.3.2 **Roof structure:** the roof is supported by four king post trusses with angled braces, with each also having an angled brace connecting each truss between the base of the king post and the top of the adjacent king post (Plate 7 and Plate 8). The easternmost truss is set against and forms part of the east wall. Its north end is set into the north elevation while its south end is supported on an iron column (see Section 3.3.6 below). The two central trusses are supported in the same way, while the eastern truss is supported on the brickwork of the 'extension' at its north end and the easternmost iron column at its south end (see Section 3.3.3 below). There are two purlins per pitch and a ridge board and the trusses are bolted between the beam and the base of the king post.



Plate 7 (left): Trusses in east end of building

Plate 8 (right): Trusses in west end of building

3.3.3 **North elevation:** the east side of this elevation is brick, which is hand-made, laid in English garden wall bond in a pattern of four rows of stretchers followed by one row of headers, the same as in the east elevation (see *Section 3.3.7* below; Plate 9). There are traces of whitewash, and the sawn-off remnants of a timber shelf or bench, with holes built into the brickwork. There is a concrete course at the base and a brick plinth projecting below this.

3.3.4 The brick section actually projects beyond the line of the stone wall to the west, and is not bonded to it (Plate 10). The gap is filled with rubbish and insulating foam, and the stone wall appears to be continued by the boundary wall running to the east. The stone wall appears to be built on top of this, with quoins extending above, which are reasonably well dressed. There is no evidence for a return of the stone wall to the south, suggesting this was originally an external wall for a building extending to the north. This wall in general is largely built of local limestone, with the occasional piece of slate and brick (Plate 11). There are lots of battens and modern electrical fittings attached and the remains of lime mortar, render, and whitewash are apparent. There are no obvious openings in the wall, but a possible small one 25cm x 35cm on the east side could be a winnowing slot (Plate 12). Also, there is a row of holes above this, presumably for joists. There are no obvious quoins on the west side but this is rendered externally. The top of the wall is very ragged and the roof on the west side has been replaced with felt underlay added on top of the battens.



Plate 9 (left): North internal elevation, east side

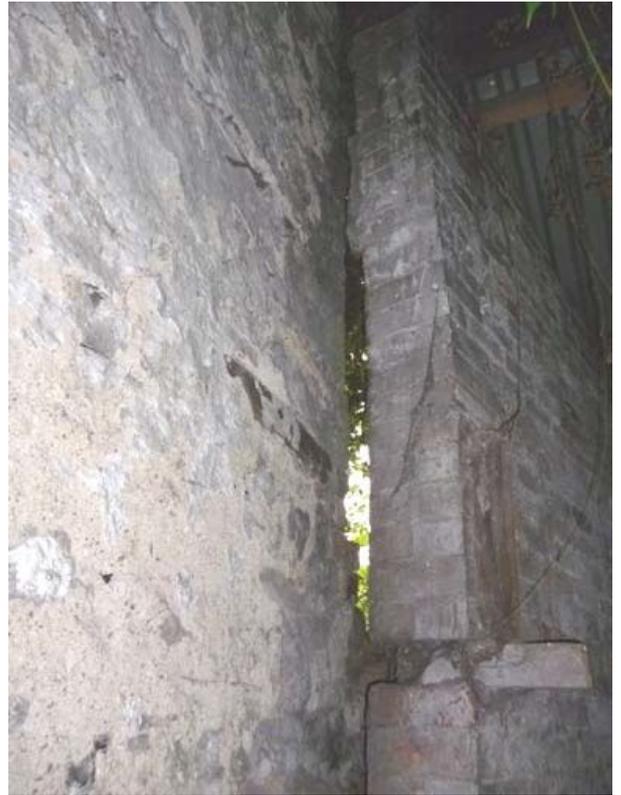


Plate 10 (right): Junction of walls in the north internal elevation



Plate 11 (left): North internal elevation, west side



Plate 12 (right): Blocked hole in north internal elevation

3.3.5 West elevation: the lower part of this elevation is constructed from concrete blocks, incorporating a single upright post in the centre, and topped with heavy timber beams, which support a lightweight timber and corrugated metal structure with a six-light casement window on the south side (Plate 13). There is a doorway to the north of the centre, with a tongue and groove plank and batten door, and a truss forming part of the upper part (see *Section 3.3.2* above). There is some brickwork filling the gap on the lower south side, which is very rough, and a mix of hand-made and machine-made frogged types, clad round the iron column supporting the truss, which effectively runs outside the east elevation and is covered externally on all sides (Plate 14).



Plate 13 (left): West internal elevation

Plate 14 (right): Truss against west internal elevation

3.3.6 South elevation: this is entirely constructed from a mix of timber framework and corrugated metal sheeting on a superstructure of four massive cast iron columns, including the one also incorporated into the west elevation, each of which has a flat plate on top with a rounded collar beneath (Plate 15). Each also has a bracket as part of the casting mid-way down with two bolt-holes passing right through (Plate 16), which now apparently serve no purpose and suggest that these columns are re-used from a larger industrial building (as might also be the trusses, timber and bricks; see *Section 4.1* below). The bases are set into the concrete floor. These support a series of massive timber beams, perhaps re-used, sleepers and the ends of the four trusses. The rest of the wall is a mix of timbers, including an old panelled door on the west side, with fairly plain moulding and round head (Plate 17). There is a large central four-light window between two of the columns (Plate 18) with a stub 'wall' below it, two courses high, built of hand-made brick. There is a double door on the east side of the main section, with a modern double door (Plate 19), while the east end is a more basic structure of corrugated sheeting and timber (Plate 19).



Plate 15 (left): South internal elevation, column top



Plate 16 (right): South internal elevation, column bracket



Plate 17: South internal elevation, showing re-used door on west side



Plate 18 (left): South internal elevation, west side, showing four-light window



Plate 19 (right): South internal elevation, east side, showing double/wagon doorway

3.3.7 **East elevation:** this is entirely brick-built, with hand-made brick (the exterior brickwork is presumably a skin), typically a dark orangey-red, hand-made, and measure 23cm x 7 cm x 11cm and laid in English garden wall bond at a ratio of four rows of stretchers to one row of headers (Plate 20). There is a timber wall plate on top. There is a central double plank and batten door, and a four-light window to the north side, and with a concrete sill.



Plate 20: East internal elevation

4. Discussion

4.1 Phasing

4.1.1 It is apparent from both the map evidence and the remains on site that the present building was constructed against the south external wall of an existing building to the north, perhaps a barn or other agricultural building, which was constructed in the late 19th century. A plan from 1913 indicates that the present building was constructed between 1891 and 1910; deeds refer to a 'barn' in 1915, which is what the building may have originally been constructed for. It is possible that it was originally open to the south, perhaps acting as a linhay or hay barn. The building appears to comprise a single phase of construction, incorporating the monopitch brick 'extension' to the east, although it has clearly seen some later modification. It is interesting to speculate that the cast iron columns, trusses and even bricks used in the building might have been re-used from the former steam saw mill that originally stood where Glenfield Road is now situated (compare Figure 1 and Plate 1; see *Section 3.3.6*). The earlier building to the north was subsequently demolished leaving what had originally been its south wall standing and acting as the north wall of the present building.

4.2 Conclusion

4.2.1 The investigation of the building revealed a remarkably complex history, originally closely linked to a building situated to the north but also including a number of alterations. The building's late date and somewhat *ad hoc* construction limit its historical significance, but the presence of apparently re-used material is also of interest. It is of interest too due to its reflection of the changing nature of the local topography, from largely agricultural, to industrial, to ultimately residential.

5. Bibliography

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