

BARN AT NATLAND HALL FARM, NATLAND, KENDAL, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Mr and Mrs Bennett
NGR SD 51937 89245

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July 2009



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Summary

Prior to the submission of a planning application to redevelop a barn at Natland Hall Farm, Natland, Kendal (NGR SD 51937 89245), to convert it to residential use, a request was made by South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) that an archaeological building recording be carried out prior to building work taking place. Following discussions with Rebecca Gibson at John Coward Architects and Fiona Clark, Planning Officer at SLDC, this was confirmed as a Level 3-type survey. The building recording was carried out by Greenlane Archaeology in June 2009.

The farmhouse at Natland Hall Farm is Grade II Listed, as is the barn; the hall is considered to be 17th century in origin with later additions, while the barn is thought to be 18th century with 19th century additions. A previous investigation of the stable block also revealed remains that may be associated with a chapel recorded as having existed at Natland Hall and documentary research suggested that the hall was likely to have been the site of the customary court of the manor of Natland since as early as c1246.

The building recording revealed five basic phases of additions and modifications to the original L-shaped threshing barn that probably dates from the 18th century. The map regression illustrated that some of these changes had occurred by the time of the 1836 corn rent map, and that at this time it is probable that a horse gin existed on the west side of the original buildings. By the end of the 19th century the original barn was obscured behind shippens on the north and west sides, and the usual regional transformation from largely arable to largely dairy farming had taken place to cope with increasing urban populations. A brief assessment of the significance of the different parts of the building is also presented.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Mr and Mrs Bennett for commissioning the project, and John Coward architects for supplying plans and elevations of the buildings. Additional thanks are due to Fiona Clark at South Lakeland District Council for specifying the work necessary, and the staff at Kendal Record Office for their assistance.

The desk-based assessment was carried out by Steve Clarke, the building recording, illustrations and report by Sam Whitehead and Tom Mace. The project was managed by Dan Elsworth, and the report was edited by Dan Elsworth, Tom Mace, and Jo Dawson.

1. Introduction

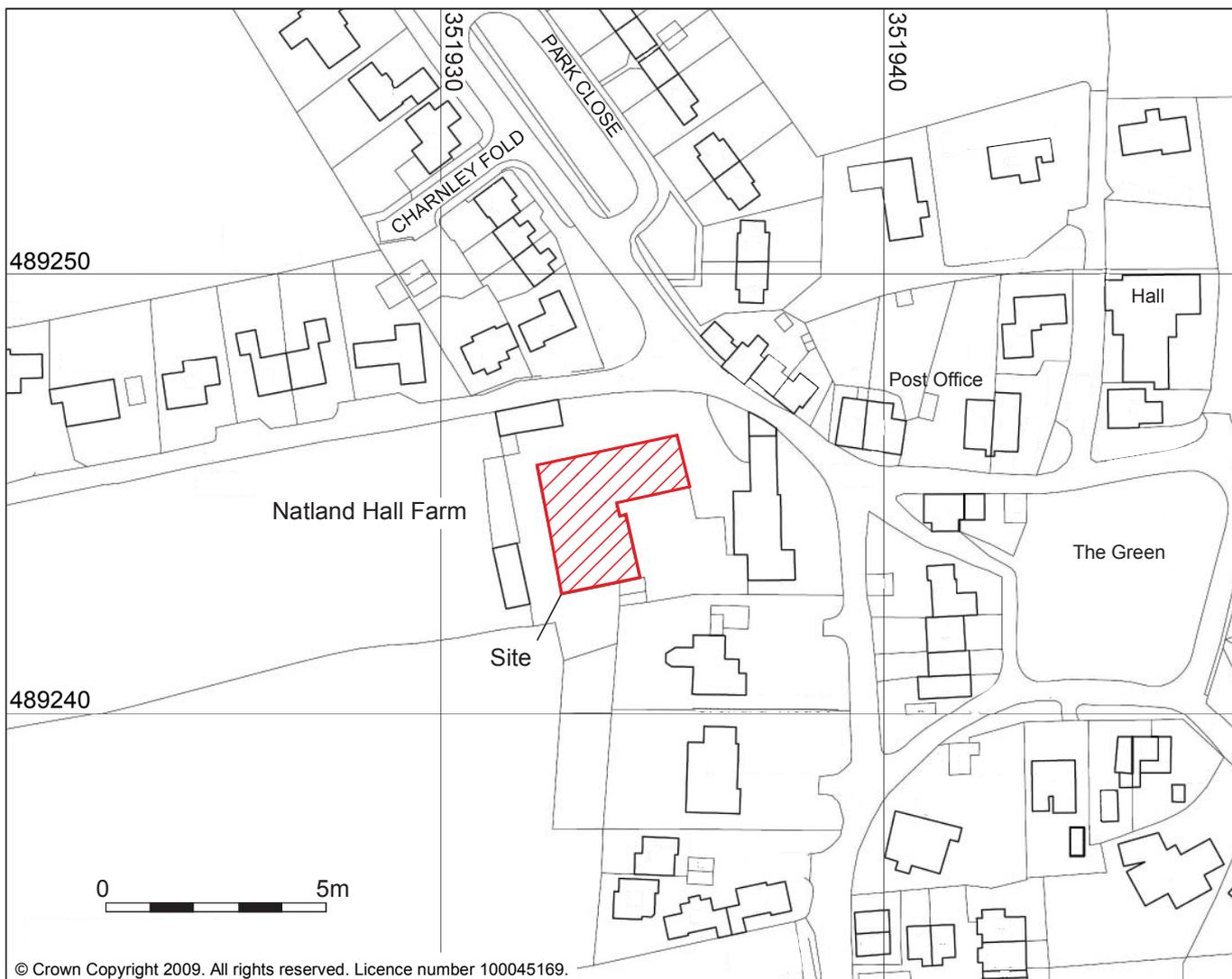
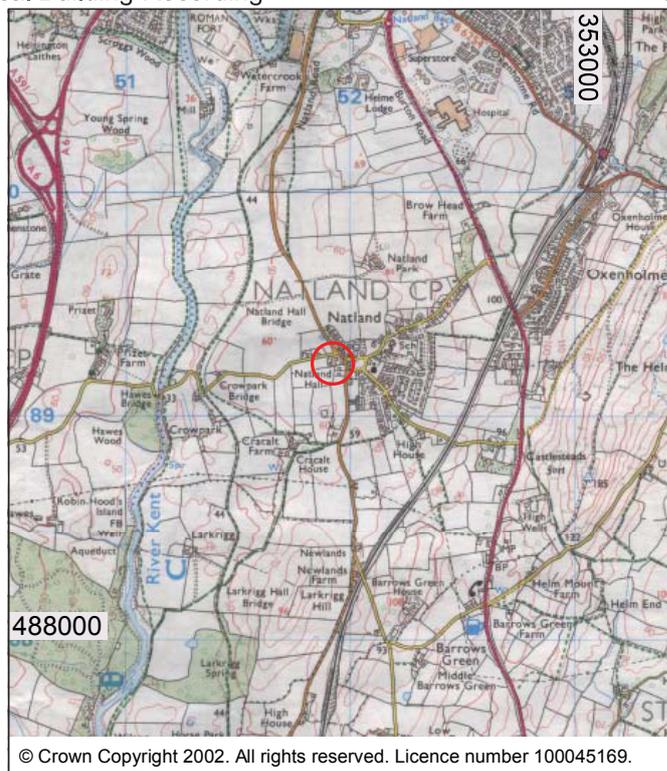
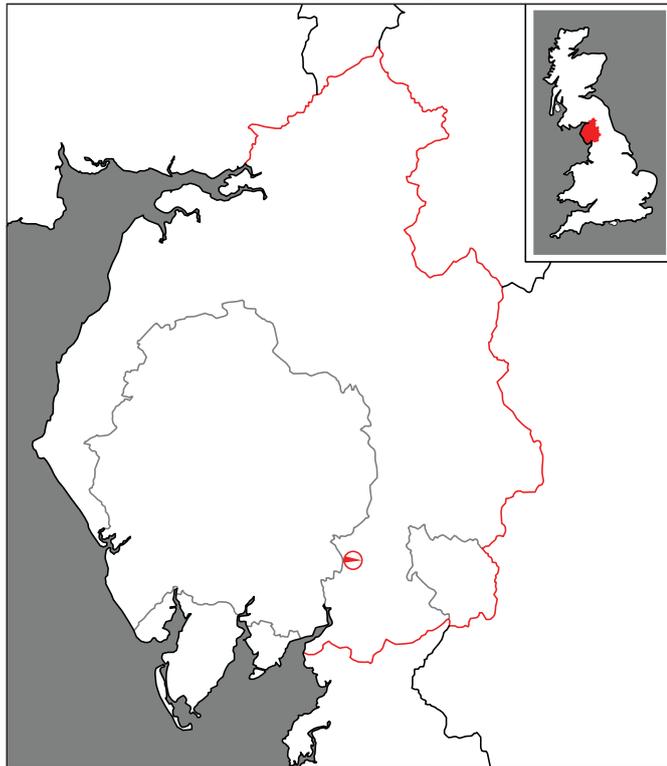
1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Prior to the submission of a planning application by Mr and Mrs Bennett for the conversion of a barn at Natland Hall, Natland, Cumbria, (NGR SD 51937 89245) a programme of archaeological work was required by South Lakeland District Council. After discussion it was agreed with Fiona Clark (Planning Officer SLDC) that this was to comprise a level 3 building type recording (English Heritage 2006) prior to any building work associated with the conversion of the barn to a dwelling.

1.1.2 Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design (Greenlane Archaeology 2009) and following the acceptance of this Greenlane Archaeology began the building recording on the 9th June 2009.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Natland Hall is situated on the northwest edge of the village of Natland, which is approximately 3km south of the centre of Kendal (Ordnance Survey 2002). The topography of the area is generally undulating pasture, dominated by the geology, which is predominantly carboniferous limestone. (Countryside Commission 1998, 70). This in turn is overlaid by glacially derived deposits of boulder clay (*op cit*, 72).



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Figure 1: Site Location

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The architectural 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 (formerly the Institute of Field Archaeologists; IFA 2001a). In addition a desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the project design (see accompanying CD) and the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA 2001b). A suitable archive was also compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 The desk-based assessment principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site, which could demonstrate the basic phasing and development of the building, as well as other documentary sources. A number of sources of information were utilised:

- **Cumbria County Record Office, Kendal (CRO(K))**: this was visited in order to examine early maps and plans of the site, and other original documents relating to it. A large amount of information had been collected as part of a previous investigation on the site (OA North 2005) and so it was only necessary to collect additional information specifically relevant to the barn;
- **Greenlane Archaeology Library**: additional secondary sources, used to provide information for the site background, were examined.

2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 The building recording was carried out to English Heritage Level-3 type standards (English Heritage 2006). This is a largely descriptive investigation, but with a more detailed level of interpretation of the phasing and use of the building, which incorporates evidence compiled during the desk-based assessment. The recording comprised several parts:

- **Written record**: descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs**: photographs in colour digital format and colour print 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 have been included in this report, and the remaining photographs are presented on the accompanying CD;
- **Drawings**: drawings were produced by hand-annotating 'as existing' illustrations of the building supplied by the client's architect in digital format at a scale of 1:1. These comprised:
 - i. 'as existing' ground and first floor plans, at 1:100;
 - ii. 'as existing' elevations of all external aspects, at 1:100;
 - iii. Two cross-sections through the main barn and outshuts were also produced at a scale of 1:50.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 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). Three copies of this report will be deposited with the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER), one with the client, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. A record of the project, together with a digital copy of the report, will be added to the *Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

3. Desk-Based Assessment Results

3.1 Background History

3.1.1 **Introduction:** the background history of the site is intended to place the building in its local context and this review has largely been taken from an earlier Archaeological Building Recording of the stables at Natland Hall Farm (OA North 2005) and other secondary sources. In addition, primary sources including documents and early maps were examined in order to identify specific details about the building, such as alterations and additions to the layout that may pertain to its changing functions. A large amount of information was available, particularly relating to the manorial history of Natland, to which Natland Hall was closely linked, and this provided a more detailed understanding of the site than might be expected.

3.1.2 **Early Medieval to Medieval:** the name of the village comes from the Norse for Nati's wood or sacred grove (Smith 1967, 112). The plan of the village, organised around a square green, suggests Anglo-Saxon origin (Hoskins 1960, 53). At the time of the Domesday Book the manor was held by Gilmichael, before being passed to Gervase de Ainecourt (Curwen 1923, 167). In the 13th century the manor was acquired by the Strickland family (*op cit*, 174). It is clear from later documents that Natland Hall was the seat of the customary court of Natland (see section 3.1.5). This would appear to connect it directly to the establishment of the first chapel in Natland which was granted by Henry III to Ralph de Eyncurt (Curwen 1923, 167).

3.1.3 **Post Medieval:** the Strickland family held the manor until the early 17th century when Sir Thomas Strickland sold much of the manor to the tenants (Nicolson and Burn 1777, 104), Natland Hall included. The earliest direct references to Natland Hall link it to Allan Prickett, recorder for Kendal, 1672/3 and 1677 (Nicholson 1861, 116; Bulmer 1885, 513).

3.1.4 In 1673-4 a non-conformist school was established by Richard Franklin (Nicholson and Axon 1915, 123) who apparently taught classes in the chapel. The school continued after Franklin was forced to leave the village in 1683 on account to his religious views (*op cit*). In 1715 the chapel was in a ruinous condition and was replaced by a new church in 1735 (Butler 1998, 120 and 210). This church was replaced in 1825 by a church built 100 yards away and a new school was built along side (Parson and White 1829, 652).

3.1.5 The earliest documentary source after the sell off is in the late 18th century, when the property is described as one of an unknown number of "*Capital messauges or chief mansion houses in Natland and Old Hutton... with all ye Barns, Byers, Stabels, Edifices, Gardens, Orchards, Backsides and Appertenances*" (CRO(K) WD/CW/Natland/Box 2/4 1719-1790). At this time the Hall is referred to as the 'customary court' for the Manor of Natland (CRO(K) WD/CW/Natland/Box 2/24 1733-1789). By the beginning of the 19th century local directories indicate that Natland Hall was tenanted by a succession of farmers working the land (OA North 2005). Sales particulars from 1938 list the outbuildings and barns, giving an insight into the farming practices of the day: '*The Farm buildings are excellent and comprise 4-stalled Stable, Drag Shippon for 28, another for 22 cattle, Loose Boxes, Calf Pens, Barn with 13 mowsteads, Pig Hulls, Dutch Barn, Implements Shed, Liquid Manure tank, and other useful places suitable for a good homestead*' (CRO(K) WDB/35/SP/115 1938).

3.2 Map Regression

3.2.1 **Introduction:** the barn, a large L-shaped building, formerly used as a cowhouse, henhouse and stable with hayloft (English Heritage 2007), is just to the east of Natland Hall.

3.2.2 **Corn rent map c1836** (Plate 1): this is the earliest map found depicting the barn at Natland Hall Farm, and it shows the basic L-shape of the original barn structure with small additions to the east and west of the south wing (CRO(K) WQ/R/C/12 c1836).



Plate 1: Corn rent map, c1836

3.2.3 **Ordnance Survey 1863:** this first edition Ordnance Survey (Plate 2) shows the building in good detail, the addition to the west side of the south wing appears to have been removed by this date. Adjacent to the south end is a smaller building that no longer exists.

3.2.4 **Ordnance Survey 1898:** this Ordnance Survey (Plate 3) shows that the barn has been widened on the east, west and north sides.

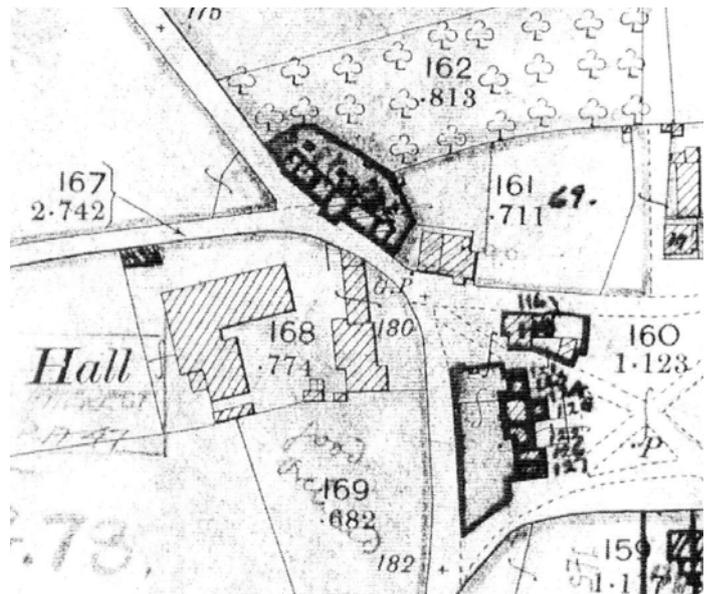
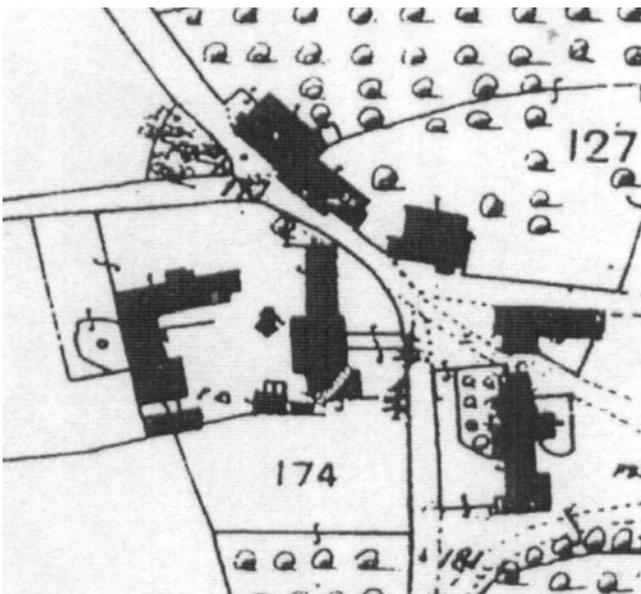


Plate 2: (left) Ordnance Survey map, 1863

Plate 3: (right) Ordnance Survey map, 1898

3.2.5 **Ordnance Survey 1912:** this map (Plate 4) shows that the barn has reached its current size and shape by this time; the steps leading to the hayloft at the east end are now visible for the first time. The small building south of the main barn is still evident at this time.

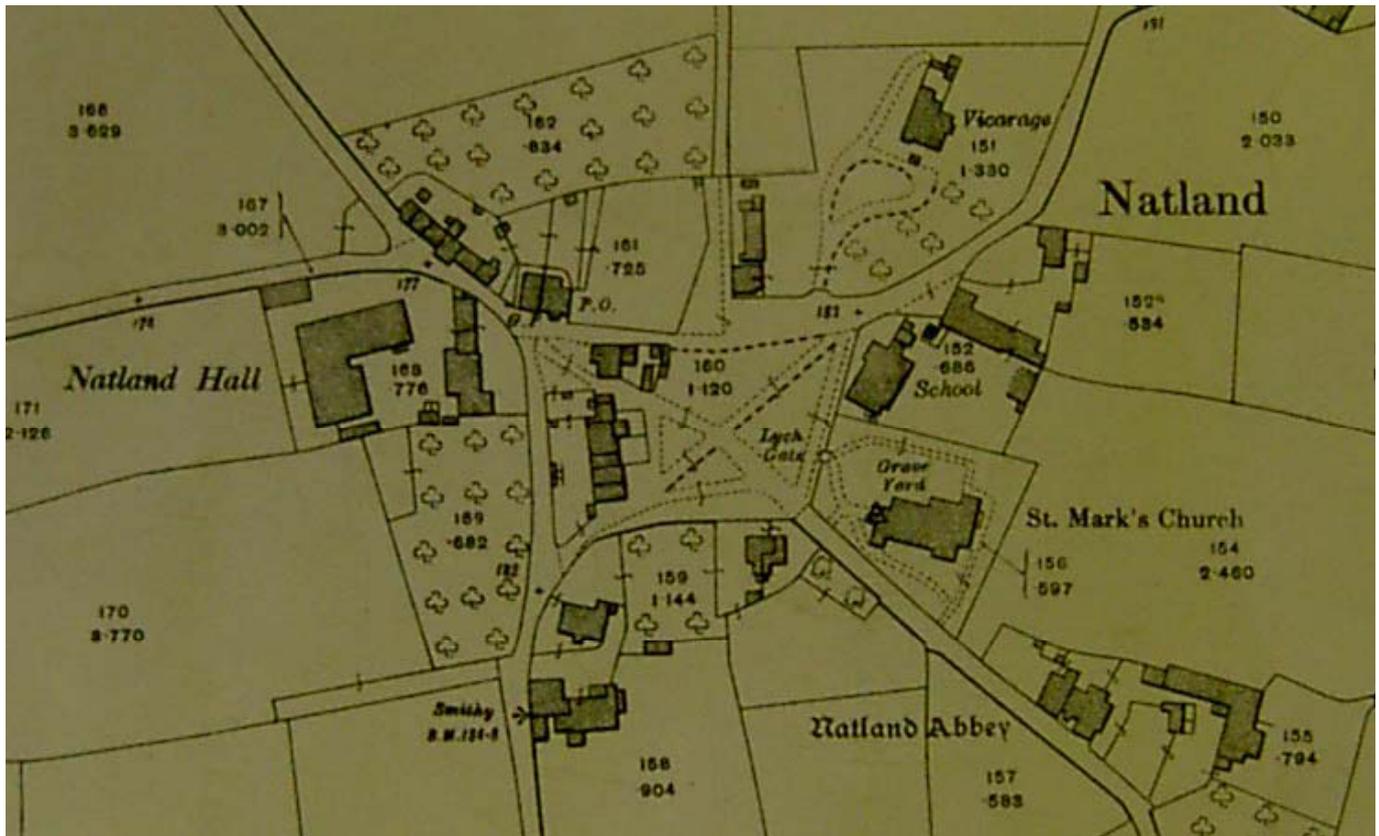


Plate 4: Ordnance Survey map 1912

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The documentary and cartographic sources show that Natland Hall dates from at least as far back as the 1670's (Nicholson 1861, 116; Bulmer 1885, 513), although the possible Saxon origins of the settlement of Natland (Hoskins 1960, 53) and the fact it was listed in the Domesday Book (Curwen 1923, 167) suggests a hall would have been present long before this. The listed building details (English Heritage, 2007) also suggest that the current farmhouse is 17th century, and that the earliest barn may also be of this date. The map regression shows that the barn gradually grew in size from the mid 19th century to the early 20th century.

4. Building Recording

4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 **Introduction:** the barn at Natland Hall comprised eight separate rooms, which formed an L-shape; one side was aligned east/west with a wing extending to the south from its western end. The original open plan L-shaped barn had been enlarged with the addition of outshuts on the north, east, and west sides which largely obscured the earlier structure. The extension to the east gable end of the original barn was the only part of the building that had an upper floor, and was probably the stable with hayloft described in the listed building details (English Heritage 2007). The northern, eastern and western extensions had most recently been used as cow sheds and contained metal and concrete stall partitions, which were also present in the north/south wing of the original barn. The smaller outshuts on the eastern elevation were in use as storerooms.

4.1.2 All the rooms of the building were constructed from a hard bluish-white un-rendered limestone, which was laid in rough courses. The quoins had been roughly fashioned from the same stone. The sills and lintels were generally sandstone or timber, although later additions in slate and concrete were also present. The majority of the roof was clad in slates that were laid in diminishing courses and capped with ceramic bonnet tiles, which had replaced the majority of the original sandstone ridge tiles. The roof of the outshut on the west side was covered by relatively modern corrugated concrete tiles. Internally all flooring was concrete except for the east west part of the original barn which appeared to have been cobbled. The roof timbers of the earlier barn were all oak while the later additions used softwoods.

4.2 External Detail

4.2.1 **North elevation:** this elevation was formed from Rooms 3 and 4 (Figure 2), which appear to have been added to the north side of the original barn (Room 1a) at the same time. There were two skylights in the roof over Room 3, and the guttering was iron except for a short length of plastic at the east end of the elevation. There were four 10-light metal casemented windows, the upper row of five lights hinged inwards (Plate 5). All the windows related to Room 3 and had been replaced or inserted, and there was evident re-build around the jambs and below the concrete sills. This elevation housed three timber doors, one to Room 4 and two to Room 3. The east and west doorways were quoined (Plate 6), the central doorway was not, and had probably been inserted at a later date.



Plate 5: (left) North elevation, east end

Plate 6: (right) North elevation, west end

4.2.2 East elevation (north part): this elevation comprised two parts (Figure 2): the gable end formed by apparently contemporary outshuts (Rooms 2, 8 and 3) to the north (Plate 7), and a section of the main barn (Room 1b) and two further outshuts (Rooms 6 and 7) to the south (Plates 8 and 9). Room 3 had a window at the north end that had either been inserted or modified with the same appearance as those described for the north elevation (see *Section 4.2.1*). The doorway to Room 3 was located at the south end of the room; its rough quoining along with the grey sandstone lintel had once been whitewashed. The gable end formed by Room 2 and Room 8 had a central doorway and a window to the south; the surrounds of these apertures had once been whitewashed unlike the upper window, which was centrally located. The doorway was similar to that described for Room 3, however, the lintel sat upon a thin piece of timber that also formed the upper part of the doorframe, which housed a stable door. The ground floor window to Room 2 had a substantial grey sandstone lintel and a harder yellow sandstone sill; its jambs were un-quoined and had been rendered with cement. The window frame was white painted timber with a row of three square lights in the top hung ventilator over a row of three taller lights in the fixed casement below. The upper window (to Room 8) was similar to the lower window, but had rudimentary quoining and a 12-light casement.



Plate 7: East elevation (north part)

4.2.3 East elevation (south part): in this area the original barn (Room 1b) had largely been obscured by two outshuts (Rooms 6 and 7). The outshut at the south end (Room 6) had a double width doorway that had possibly been inserted or enlarged (Plate 8); this housed a modern steel panel stable-type door that was hung on a metal frame. There was a conventional timber stable door at the north end of this room. Between the doorways there was a small window with splayed jambs, a sandstone lintel and three lights arranged vertically in a fixed timber casement. The stonework of this outshut was roughly rendered, which distinguished it from all the other elevations. The east elevation of the second outshut (Room 7) appeared to have been added between the existing north wall of Room 6 and a pre-existing east/west wall to the north (see Plates 8 and 9). This elevation housed two windows identical to that of the adjoining outshut (Room 7). The small region of the original barn (Room 1b) that was visible just to

the north of the outshuts (Rooms 6 and 7) largely comprised a blocked wagon door into which a window had been inserted (Plate 9). The original oak lintel was still in place and it bore the scars of previous use. A line of cement render indicated the southern extent of the former doorway and its northern extent was flush with the southern elevation of the main barn (Room 1a). The inserted window had six-lights arranged three-over-three in a fixed timber casement.



Plate 8: East elevation (south part)

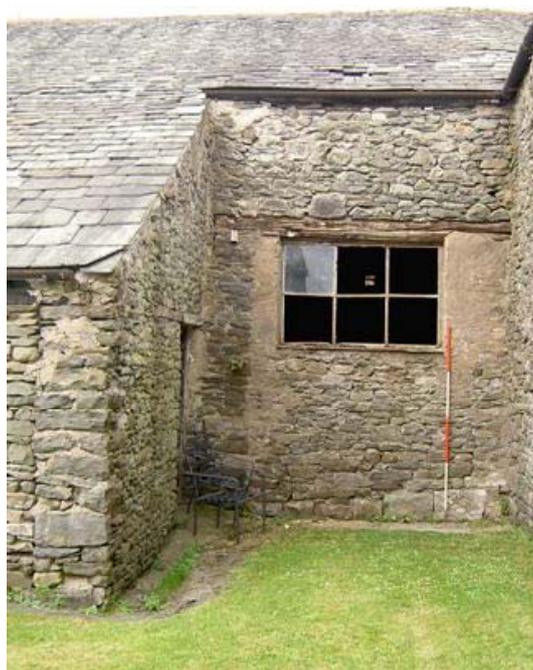
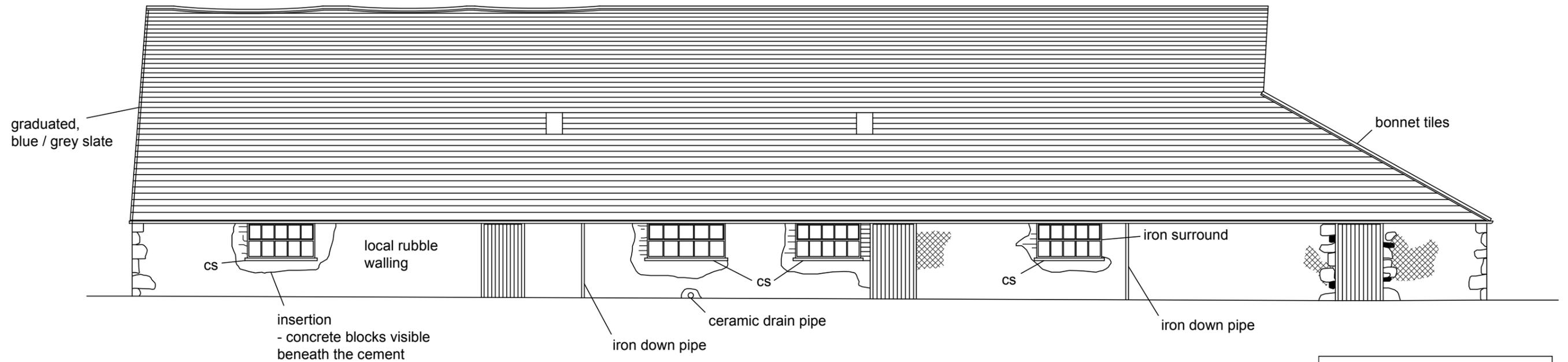
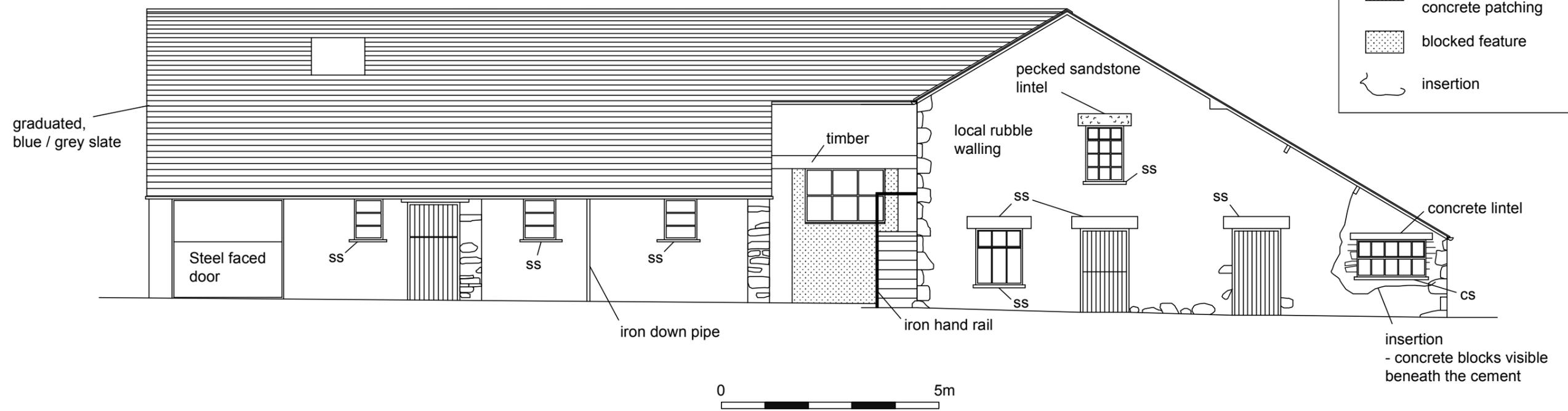


Plate 9: East elevation (central)

NORTH ELEVATION



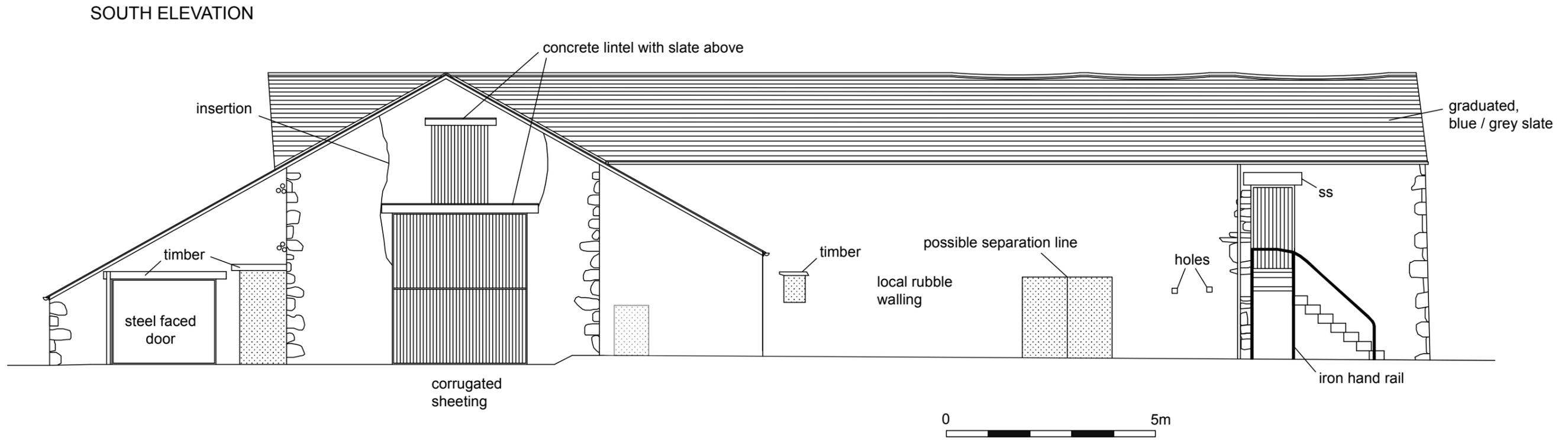
EAST ELEVATION



Key:

- cross-sectional timber
- ss sandstone
- cs concrete sill
- ▨ re-rendered / concrete patching
- ▩ blocked feature
- ⤴ insertion

Figure 2: North and east external elevations



Key:

ss	sandstone		re-rendered / concrete patching		insertion
cs	concrete sill		blocked feature		cross-sectional timber
			blocked doorway behind the line of the outshut		

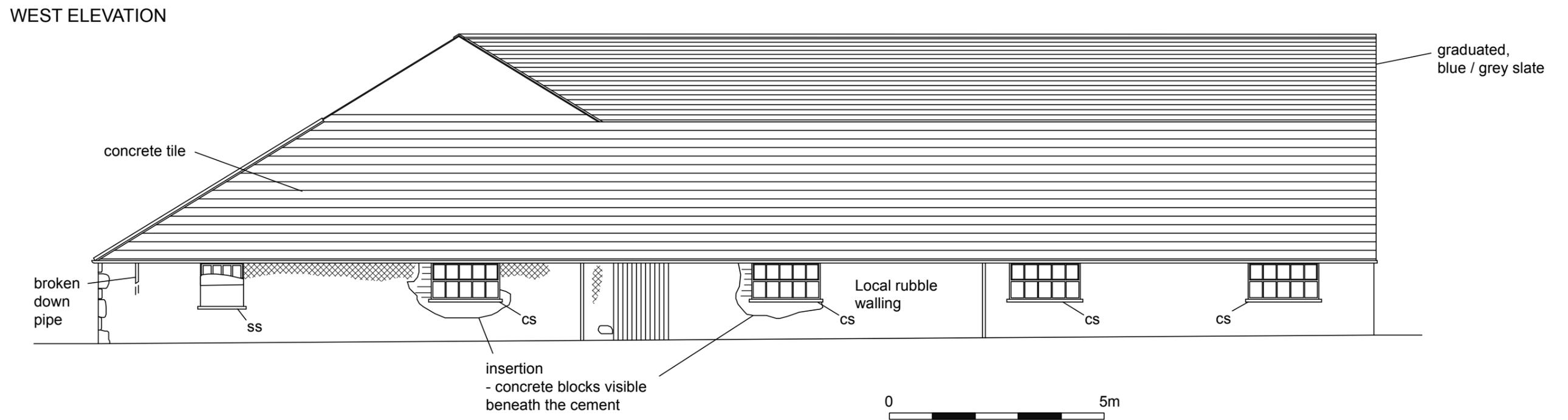


Figure 3: South and west external elevations

4.2.4 **South elevation (west gable):** this elevation was formed by two overlapping parts (see Figure 3), the most westerly part comprising the gable end of the barn (Room 1b) flanked by two outshuts to the west and east (Rooms 5 and 6 respectively). At the west end of the elevation the original extent of the earlier central barn (Room 1b) was clearly evident by its quoins, which were butted against by the outshuts (Plate 10). The outshut to the west (Room 5) comprised a double width wagon door with a blocked pedestrian entrance to the east. The pedestrian doorway had an external timber lintel under a slate drip course; the west jambs of this doorway were quoined suggesting it was an original feature. The ceramic pipes incorporated into the wall over this doorway would suggest that it was purpose built as a shippon. The wagon doorway had a modern metal sheet door under an oak lintel. The barn (Room 1b) had a huge wagon door located centrally below a large upper aperture; both these apertures appeared to have been inserted below concrete lintels and were closed with corrugated galvanised iron sheets. The south elevation of the outshut to the west (Room 6) was plain; this would appear to have been a stable and was one of the first additions to the original L-shaped barn (it is present on the corn rent map of c1836 (Plate 1)).



Plate 10: South elevation (west part)

4.2.5 **South elevation (east part):** this comprised the southern elevation of the main barn (Room 1a) and outshut (Rooms 2 and 8). The southern elevation of the barn contained three blocked apertures, but was otherwise plain except for two or three rough rows of projecting through-stones. The blocked pedestrian door at the west end lacked a lintel and had quoins on the west side but not on the east. The second blocked aperture was a window located some 3m further to the east; the window was small and square and the timber lintel was still evident. Further east still there was a blocked double doorway. This was located in an area of the elevation that appeared to have been re-pointed and possibly repaired, and it was noticeable that the roof in this area was badly damaged. (The west side of this doorway is visible

to the left of the scale in Plate 11 and the east side is to the left of the brick stack). It would appear that the blocking was carried out in two phases, with the eastern part of the doorway blocked at a later date than the west. The addition of the outshut (Rooms 2 and 8) is marked by the west jamb of the doorway and the steps that led to the hayloft (Room 8). Rudimentary quoining was evident at the east end of the barn, and this could also be seen behind the steps and in the doorway to the hayloft (Room 8). The southern elevation of the stables (Room 2) was plain except for the addition of the stone steps leading to the upper floor (Room 8). The doorway to the upper floor (Room 8) had a yellow sandstone step and a greyish sandstone lintel; the door was constructed from timber planks and was probably not contemporary with the addition of this extension, which the map regression suggests occurred in the second half of the 19th century (see *Section 5.1*).



Plate 11: South external elevation of Rooms 1a, 2 and 8

4.2.6 **West elevation:** this elevation was formed by Rooms 3 and 5, which were both clad in concrete tiles rather than slate, and a small plain section of the gable end of the main barn (Room 1a) was also visible at the north end of the elevation (see Figure 3 and Plates 12 and 13). The window to Room 3 at the north end was partially blocked by timber board with just a single row of four lights visible; the window had a sandstone sill and was roughly quoined. The remaining features on this elevation all belonged to Room 5 and comprised four 10-light windows as per the north elevation (see *Section 4.2.1*), which had been inserted/widened in the same way, and a single doorway with the remains of whitewash around the un-quoined jambs.



Plate 12: North end of the west elevation



Plate 13: South end of the west elevation

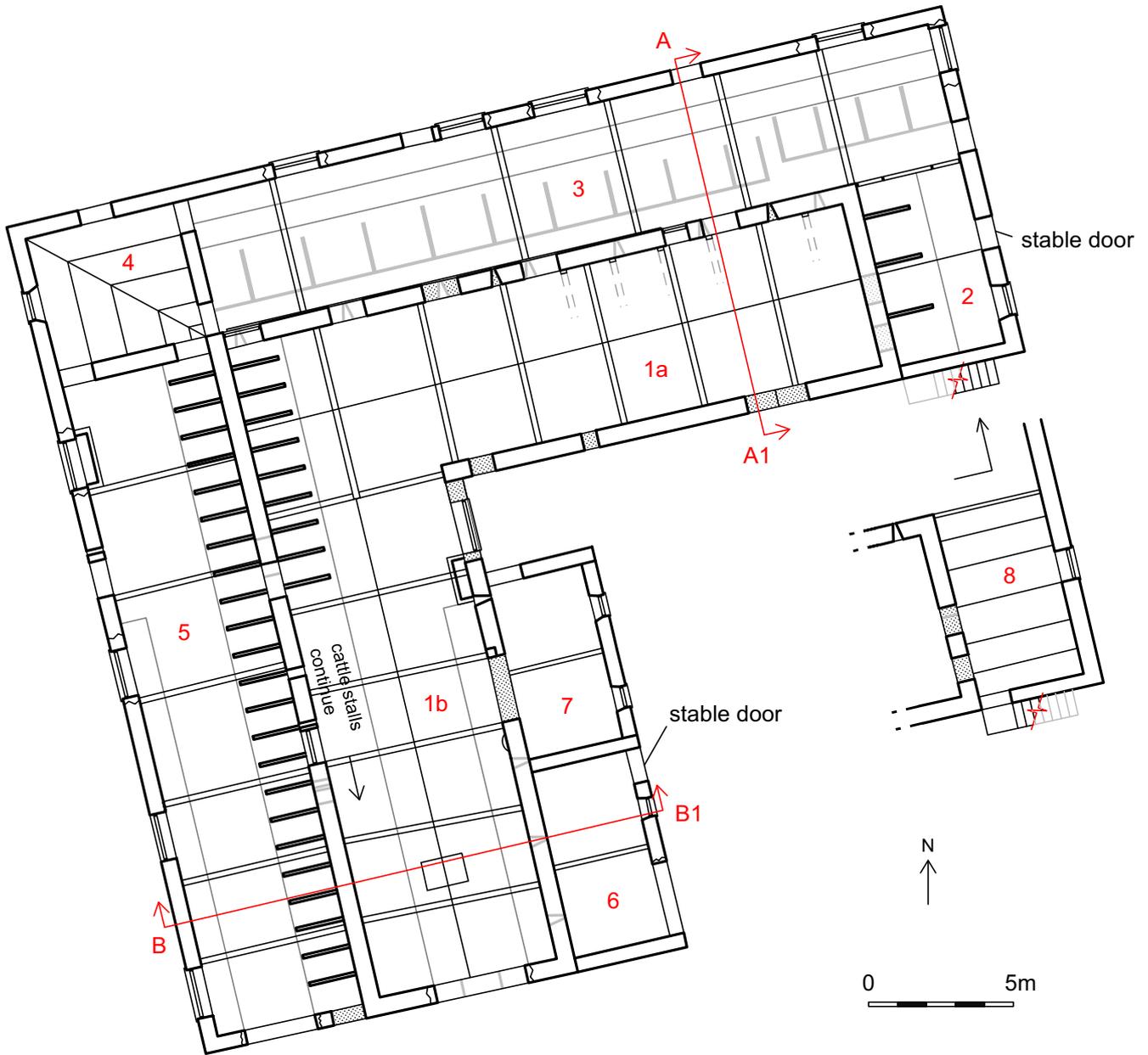
4.3 Internal Detail

4.3.1 **Room 1a:** this room formed the east/west wing of the original open-plan barn; the north/south and east/west elements of the original barn were contemporary and the separation of the L-shaped building into two parts (Rooms 1a and 1b) is for descriptive purposes. The floor of the barn showed evidence of being cobbled but was largely buried under muck and straw. The interior space is open to the rafters and has six north/south trusses. Only the three western trusses retained their upper collar (Plate 14); the others had slots where the collar had previously been (Plate 16). There were two large purlins per pitch that were lap jointed at the trusses where they were probably pegged together. The timbers did not appear to have been re-used and all of them were hand finished oak. The rafters and battens by contrast appeared to have been replaced by modern square cut softwood timbers. At the east end of the roof there was some evidence of plaster on the underside of the slates.



Plate 14: West truss, Room 1a

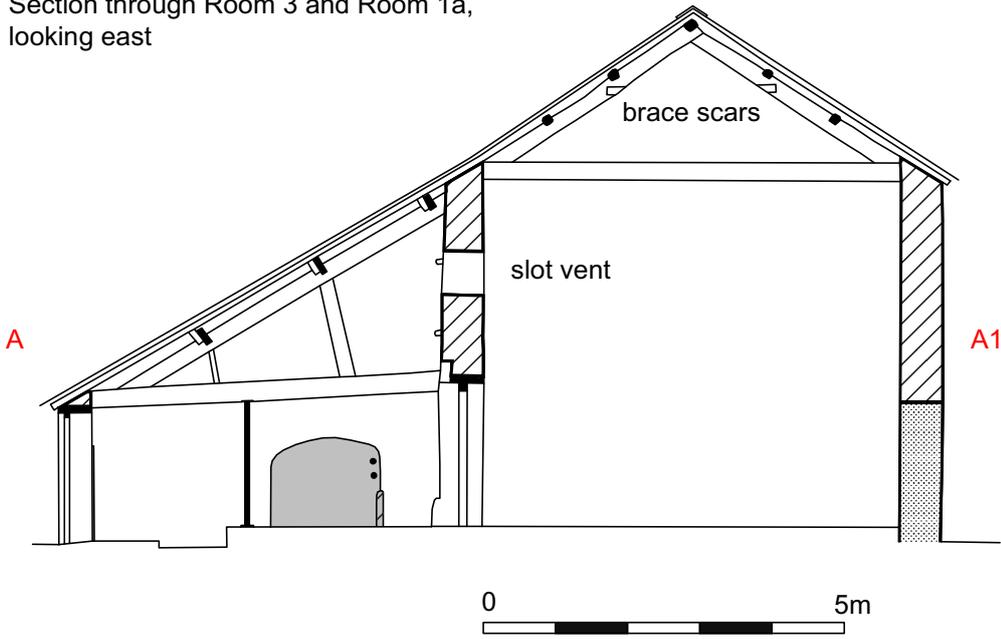
4.3.2 **North elevation:** this elevation appeared to have had five doors, two of which had been blocked up. The two doors towards the east end of the elevation were situated under roughly squared hand-finished oak lintels that appeared to be original, although the jambs were not particularly well quoined. The central blocked doorway was topped by a neater, square cut oak lintel which was below end set oak timbers sawn flush with the walls. There was a similar doorway further to the west which had some cement render around the aperture. The westernmost doorway had been half blocked to form a window, which was more modern, with an oak lintel and cement render over the sill. The window itself had three-over-three lights and the upper section hinged in the same way as those found on the exterior elevations of Rooms 3 and 5. There were two large timbers above door height that were built into the wall; one over the east door (Plate 15) and the other over the next door to the east. These timbers both sat over one of the five beams (now sawn off) that would have formed a half-loft at the east end of the building: there was no evidence to suggest that these extended right across to the south elevation. There was a square window between the two easternmost doorways, which appeared to have been original (Plate 15). The window had three square lights over a timber board and a thin roughly hand-squared oak lintel, with the slate sill forming a recess. There was a row of seven winnowing slots on the upper floor and two blocked slots visible on the ground floor; one central and the other near the east end (Plate 15). All of the winnowing slots had squared oak lintels.



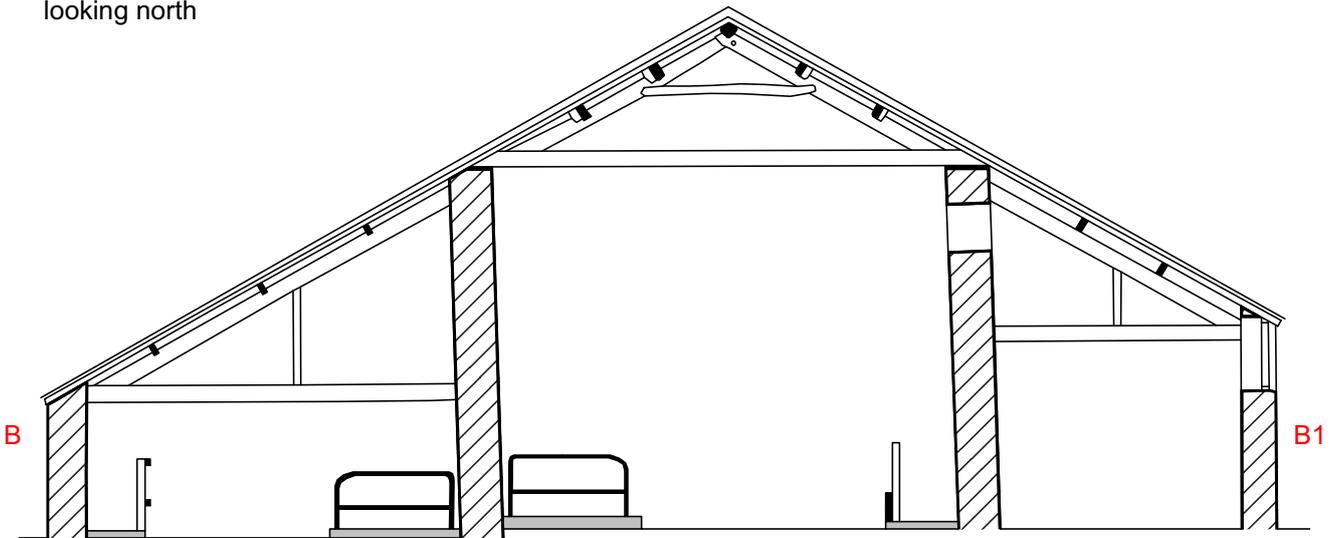
Key:					
	overhead features		blocked feature	2	room numbers
	concrete plinth		blocked features on the upper floor		relict timbers of the half-loft
	concrete stalls		features on the upper floor		indicative of iron cattle stalls

Figure 4: Floor plan

Section through Room 3 and Room 1a, looking east



Section through Room 5, Room 1b, and Room 6, looking north



Key:

	cross-sectional timber		concrete		iron support beam
	cross-sectional wall		iron stalls		blocked feature

Figure 5: Cross-sections



Plate 15: East end of north elevation, Room 1a, note sawn floor joist timbers for half loft

4.3.3 **East elevation:** this gable end (Plate 16) housed an owl hole under the roof apex, below which was a blocked pitching door with an oak lintel. This pitching door would have related to the half loft (whose sawn floor joists can be seen in Plate 15) and the wall below this level had been whitewashed. To the south of the pitching door a number of concrete blocks indicate the location of another blocked doorway which was narrower than the pitching door (Plate 16).

4.3.4 **South elevation:** this elevation was very plain, and the only blocked aperture visible internally was the small blocked door, 1.35m by 0.8m, at the west end of the elevation which sat under a roughly squared oak lintel (Plate 17). A blocked double doorway near the east end was evident from the outside, as was a blocked window in the centre (see *Section 4.2.5*).

4.3.5 **West elevation:** this gabled elevation was entirely plain.

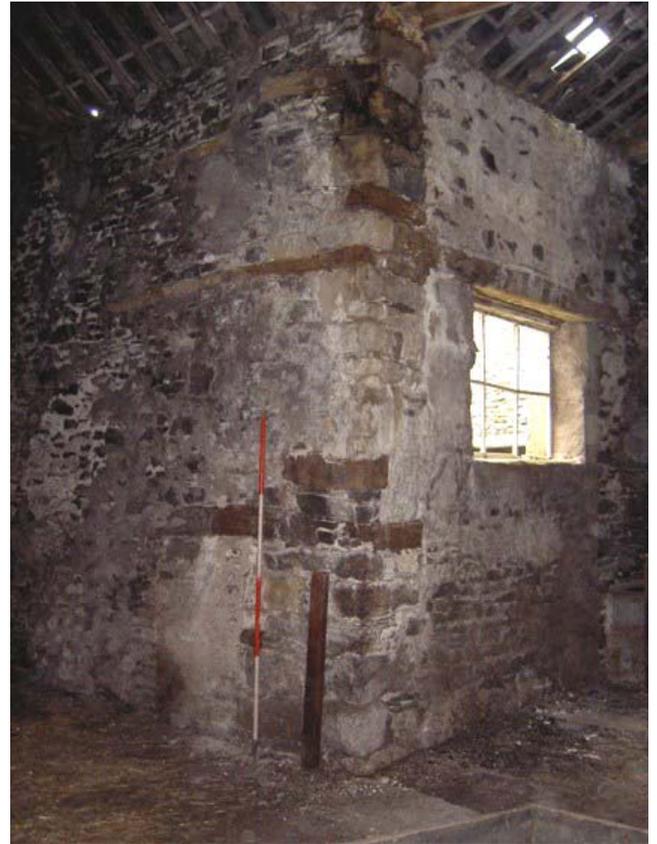


Plate 16: (left) East elevation, Room 1a

Plate 17: (right) Blocked door in south elevation, Room 1a

4.3.6 **Room 1b**: this is the south-west section of the original L-shaped barn. The floor was concreted and had a raised plinth with iron cattle stalls on the west side of the room (Plate 18). There was a timber plank and post feeding trough built against the east elevation that had a water trough at the north end (Plate 19). The six trusses ran perpendicular to those of Room 1a, but were otherwise identical (see *Section 4.3.1*). The tie beam of the northernmost truss supported the west truss of Room 1a (Plate 18).



Plate 18: (left) west elevation of Room 1b, looking south

Plate 19: (right) east elevation of Room 1b, looking south

4.3.7 **North elevation:** see description for Room 1a (*Section 4.3.2*).

4.3.8 **East elevation:** there was a blocked cart door at the junction with the south elevation of Room 1a (Plate 17) and a window had been incorporated into the upper part of the blocking. The roughly squared oak lintel sat over a six-light fixed timber casement. To the south of this door was one of a series of four upper and lower winnowing slots with oak lintels. Further to the east there was a lower square aperture with an oak lintel that was on the north side of a second, slightly lower, blocked cart door under an original square-cut oak lintel (see Plate 19). Over the cart door there were two small blocked square vent slots, also under oak lintels; the addition of Room 7 sometime between 1897 and 1912 (see *Section 5.1*) would have made these features obsolete. The first set of the three pairs of vents/slots to the south of the door were blocked, the others were not. Between the lower vent and the blocked door there was a semi-circular projecting stone which looked purposeful. The rest of the elevation was plain except for the two remaining pairs of winnowing slots. There was an unusual oak lintel over one of the lower slots, which had a deep a recess in the middle with many holes. This would appear to be a re-used rail from an early stud partition wall (Plate 20).



Plate 20: Re-used partition rail over slot vent, east elevation of Room 1b

4.3.9 **South elevation:** this elevation is plain except for a large inserted wagon door under a large inserted modern window both of which had concrete block jambs; the doorway had a concrete lintel whereas the window had a re-used timber lintel.

4.3.10 **West elevation:** there was a roughly central, partially blocked doorway, which housed a window at head height (Plate 21). This window appeared to be quite recent and had a timber casement that probably held two lights. Two metal bars spanned the lower part of the jambs. Just to the south there was an upper square window under an original oak lintel, situated below the wall plate (Plate 21). To the south of the lower central window there were four timber lintels built into the wall at the same height as the lower winnowing slots on the opposing elevation; there were no associated slots on this side, however, and it appeared there never had been. There were also other timbers more randomly built into the wall in this area. Immediately to the north of the lintel of the central blocked doorway was a small square slot under a square cut oak lintel, and north of the blocked door there was a small window slot with a stone lintel. Towards the north of the elevation there was a sliding door, made from timber boards, with a timber lintel. Above this door and slightly to the north there was a 20-light fixed timber casement window which was no longer glazed (Plate 22).



Plate 21: (left) Blocked door in the centre of the west elevation of Room 1b, viewed from Room 5

Plate 22: (right) Sliding door and window towards the north end of the west elevation, Room 1b

4.3.11 **Room 2:** this room was in use as a coal and firewood store, but the cattle stalls along the west side of the room indicated that it was previously used as a cow shed or possibly formed a loose box, and prior to this it may have been a stable with a hayloft over (Room 8). The floor was concrete and there was a shallow channel just inside the doorway which led to an exterior drain. The joists and timber boards of the floor of the room above were exposed in the ceiling and aligned east/west across the room. The north elevation of the room comprised a timber partition that separated it from the east end of Room 3 (see Plate 28). There is a doorway in the east elevation with slightly splayed jambs that held a timber stable door. To the south of this door there was a six-light casement window, with a timber frame and lintel, and a stone sill (see Plate 7). The window had splayed jambs and there were three metal bars set horizontally in the wall across the window. The south and west elevations are largely obscured by timber and fire wood.

4.3.12 **Room 3:** this outshut was probably contemporary with Room 2 and Room 8 and between them they obscured the north and east aspects of the original barn (Rooms 1a/1b). This area was entirely given over to cattle stalls which indicated it functioned as a cow house (Plate 23). The floor was concrete, with a feeding passage running along the south side (against the north exterior of the original barn, Room 1a) and stalls and a dung channel to the north. The stalls were made from cast concrete and iron bars and some had wooden gates. There were six half trusses across the room, all identical, with two slightly off-vertical braces between the tie beam and principle rafter. All the timber was relatively modern machine-sawn softwood.



Plate 23: Room 3 from the west

4.3.13 **North elevation:** the stonework of this elevation was cement rendered up to a height of 1.30m above which it was whitewashed. There were four 10-light top ventilator metal casement windows (see also *Section 4.2.1*) with concrete rendered stonework forming the sills. Modern concrete blocks visible through the render to the east side of the western door suggest that it may have been a later addition.

4.3.14 **East elevation:** there was a door to the south of the elevation of a similar timber frame and timber board fabric to the doors in the north elevation, but with an older, more roughly hewn timber lintel. There was cabling, fusing and a plug socket above the door, which leads outside. There was a window to the north of the door which had the same appearance as the windows on the north elevation. Some concrete blocks were visible to the north of the window, butting against the north elevation, which suggests that the window was a later insertion or part of a re-build.

4.3.15 **South elevation:** this elevation was two-storeys high, and largely comprised the external wall of the original barn (Room 1a). At the east end of this elevation a timber partition has been added separating Room 3 from Room 2. The exterior of the original barn had been entirely whitewashed up to the wall top, this part of the elevation housed seven upper and two lower slot vents, five doorways (of which two had been blocked, see Plate 24) and two windows (see *Section 4.3.2* for further details). A drip course began just to the west of the eastern door of the original barn (Room 1a), and ran westwards to the end of the elevation. A stone plinth, which jutted out approximately 0.10m from the wall, ran along the length of the wall at a height of 0.35m from the base. The eastern doorway had a stone arch above, suggesting that it used to be the main pedestrian entranceway to the barn, before the outshut (Room 3) was added (Plate 25).



Plate 24: (left) Blocked doorway under a drip course at the west end of the south elevation, Room 3

Plate 25: (right) Eastern doorway of the original barn (Room 1a), the only doorway with a stone arch

4.3.16 **West elevation:** there were two doors through to Room 4, one from the feeding passage and the other from the dung channel. Both doors were of a similar timber plank construction with the same square cut plain timber frame under a timber lintel.

4.3.17 **Room 4:** this small square room was located between the added shippens (Rooms 3 and 5) and was presumably used as a store room. The floor was concrete and the roof timbers were the same as those in Rooms 3 and 5. There were five doors in this small room, two accessing each shippon to the east and south, and a single external door. The walls were entirely whitewashed and the only window was in the west elevation. The top two-thirds of the window housed an eight-light casement window with a timber surround, whereas the bottom third of the frame was filled by vertical wooden slats. The sill was flat and possibly stone and the jambs were slightly splayed.

4.3.18 **Room 5:** this shippon ran south from Room 4 and in turn obscured the exterior west elevation of the original barn (Room 1b). The roof timbers, windows, and doors were identical to those of Room 3, except that the trusses had a single vertical strut (Plate 26). The floor was concrete and the walls were cement rendered on the lower north and west elevations. The stall arrangements were a mirror image of those found in the adjacent barn (Room 1b), with iron bar stall partitions on a raised plinth on the east side and a plank and post feeding trough on the west side with a drinking trough at its north end.

4.3.19 **North elevation:** this wall butts the west end of the north elevation of the original barn (Room 1a); it was plain except for the two doors that accessed Room 4.

4.3.20 **East elevation:** this elevation represented the original exterior of the barn (Room 1b; see *Section 4.3.10*; Plates 21 and 22), and the plinth visible on the north side of the barn (Room 1a) continued around and down the full length of this elevation. There were three windows and two doorways on this elevation, one of the doorways had been converted to a window (Plate 21). There was a slight return in the upper part of the wall (Plate 27) to the north of the northernmost window, approximately in line with

the south elevation of Room 1a, but there was no real evidence to suggest that this could help resolve whether Rooms 1a/1b were contemporary or not.

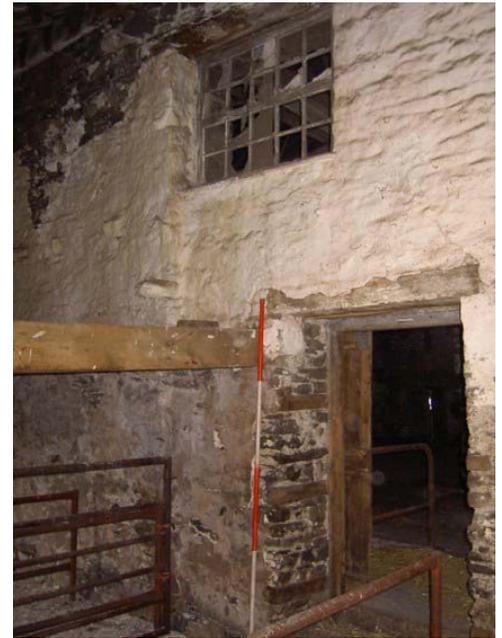


Plate 26: (left) Room 5, viewed from the south

Plate 27: (right) Slight return in the wall, east elevation, Room 5

4.3.21 South elevation: this elevation housed a blocked pedestrian doorway and a wagon door (see Plate 10). The pedestrian door had been blocked by stone rubble and was below an oak lintel. The wagon doorway appeared to have been inserted and the stonework over the timber lintel showed signs of re-build. It is probable that the wagon door was added to allow the housing of modern machinery and that the pedestrian door was blocked at this time for security reasons.

4.3.22 West elevation: this elevation had four 10-light casement windows, with timber frames, and sloping sills, which are identical to those in the north elevation of Room 3 (see Section 4.2.1). The walls were rendered with concrete to approximately 1.30m and whitewashed above. There was a metal water trough below the northernmost window which sat on a brick base, 0.63m wide by 2.00m long by 0.65m high, which butted the west wall. To the south of the water trough there was a sliding timber-board door which had been nailed shut. There was a slop-hole to the north of the door at ground level to allow drainage. South of the door and extending the remainder of the length of the elevation there was a timber post and plank feeding trough, which is raised slightly on a concrete plinth.

4.3.23 Room 6: this small outshut was added to the south-east side of the original barn (Room 1b) and appears to have existed as early as c1836 (see Plate 1). It is likely that it was used for stabling and it still has a stable doorway on its east elevation just to the north of a timber manger and below a small window (see Section 4.2.3). The floor of this room had been concreted and was in use as a general storage area, there was one central truss between the north and south walls and the timber appeared to be modern softwood. The north elevation had a wall up to first floor height which supported a second truss which was boarded. Upper slots in the west elevation verified that this room was an addition to the original barn (Room 1b).

4.3.24 Room 7: there was no access to this outshut, but examination through the only door, in the north elevation, revealed it had a wall mounted tap and straw covering the ground but that it was otherwise empty apart from a single central truss, the same as that in Room 6. This room was possibly also used as a stable, and the window in the east elevation was identical to that of Room 6 (see Section 4.2.3).

4.3.25 Room 8: this room, located over Room 2, was the only upper floor room at the site, and was being used as a timber store. The roof was bridged by two oak purlins per pitch and the floor was timber board (largely covered). The north elevation of this room was the uppermost section of the timber

partition wall between Rooms 2 and 3 (Plate 28). The east elevation was plastered stone. There was a 12-light timber casement, with a square cut timber sill and lintel, centrally located on the east elevation. The top three panes of the window appear to hinge inwards and the jambs were splayed. The entrance to the room was up a flight of stone steps and through a door in the south elevation; this had a plain square cut wood frame under an oak lintel. There was a blocked doorway in the south side of the west elevation; this corresponds with that of the upper east elevation of Room 1a (Plate 29). The pitching door of Room 1a was not really evident on this elevation, but the owl hole at a higher level was.



Plate 28: (left) Room 8 north elevation, upper section of the timber partition wall

Plate 29: (right) East interior elevation of Room 8/upper section of the external east elevation of Room 1a

5. Conclusion

5.1 Phasing

5.1.1 **Introduction:** a total of five phases of development were identified within the building, as outlined below and illustrated in Figure 6.

5.1.2 **Phase 1 - 18th century:** the earliest phase of construction at the site was clearly the erection of a large 'L'-shaped barn formed by Rooms 1a and 1b. This barn was clearly present on the c1836 corn rent map (Plate 1) by which time it had acquired additions to the east and west sides of the south wing. There were suggestions that that this barn may have been built in two phases; the western gable end roof construction at the corner of the L-shape of the barn seems unusual, as does the slight kink evident in the exterior west wall of Room 1a/b (see *Section 4.3.20*; Plate 27). Despite these factors, the similarity of the roof timbers and the lack of conclusive evidence in the walls suggest that Barns 1a and 1b were contemporary. At this stage the barn would appear to have had a purely crop processing function, with a pitching door onto a half loft at the east end and the threshing area in the south wing between the wagon doorways.

5.1.3 **Phase 2 - early 19th century:** this phase is represented by the additions evident on the corn rent map (Plate 1) which include an addition to the south-east corner of Room 1b and another addition to the west side. The addition on the west side has left no trace and was presumably demolished to make way for the addition of Room 5 in the second half of the 19th century. It is probable that this addition was a single storey as it seems to roughly correspond to a point in the western elevation of the barn (Room 1b) where there is a higher level window. A square slot in the wall just to the north of this window also suggests the possibility that an overhead axel horse gin was situated against this side of the building; the 1863 Ordnance Survey plan (Plate 2) shows an external circular feature in this area that could be a gin ring. The pedestrian doorway in this elevation was perhaps blocked at this time and replaced with a window through which the horses could be observed (see Plate 21). It is possible that the addition of a wagon door to the south became necessary for the delivery of crops to feed the horse powered threshing machine, which would account for the two wagon doorways on the same elevation. The more northerly doorway, which must be original, would have allowed a through draft for the earlier hand threshing. The outshut on the east side (Room 6) had clearly been added to the original barn as it made obsolete two of the slot vents in the east external elevation of Room 1b. In addition, the butting of this outshut against the east quoins of the barn (Room 1b) can be seen on the southernmost elevation. It seems probable that this addition (Room 6) was a stable, its addition still leaving access to the main barn through either or both of the wagon doorways on the east elevation.

5.1.4 **Phase 3 -late 19th century:** the extension to the north of the barn (Room 3) and the shippon on the west side of the barn (Room 5) had both been completed by 1898 (Plate 3). Rooms 2, 8 and 4 were also completed in this phase, which also sees the addition of the second stable on the east side of Room 1b. This phase is significant as it shows a shift from arable to dairy farming at the site, which is in keeping with the general trend at this time when urban populations were rapidly increasing. It seems likely that the barn was re-roofed, as illustrated by the ceramic bonnet tiles covering most of the apex.

5.1.5 **Phase 4 -early 20th century:** this latest stage of development sees the completion of the western shippon, at which point the building reached its present size.

5.1.6 **Phase 5 – 20th century:** this phase comprises various cosmetic modifications including those to the windows of the shippons (Rooms 3 and 5), and the various widened doorways with metal sheet doors and skylights.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 The buildings at Natland Hall Farm demonstrate a relatively typical development of agricultural buildings of this type, illustrating the manner in which farm technology and the economy changed in this region and nationally. The initial threshing barn appears to have incorporated a horse gin in the early part of the 19th century; this mechanism was presumably replaced by steam power in the mid to late 19th

century. The decline in farming in the late 19th century saw a huge drop in grain prices partly due to cheaper imports and for this reason, along with the growing urban populations, an increased emphasis on dairy farming became widespread (English Heritage and The Countryside Agency 2006, 28). Other national trends recognisable at this site include the inter-war re-building of many cattle houses due to new hygiene laws, with changes such as concrete floors, concrete and metal stalls, and larger windows all evident in the outshuts (Rooms 3 and 5; *op cit*, 29). Accurate dating of the early barn (Room 1a and 1b; see *Section 5.3.2* below) is difficult, but the maps consulted during the desk-based assessment have proved useful in dating some of the later phases of building at the site.

5.3 Significance

5.3.1 Natland is a village with a long and interesting history that has, fortunately, been reasonably well documented (see *Section 3.1*). Natland Hall Farm is highly significant in the overall history of the village and was probably the location of the manor court of Natland, which had its own chapel, recorded in 1246 (see *Section 3.1*). The original L-shaped barn at Natland Hall Farm is a relatively unusual form but the addition of a range of farm buildings, essentially all under one roof, shows a fairly typical development of such a site. The outshuts are so extensive, however, that the original threshing barn is completely hidden from view on the north, west and most of the east side. The outshuts themselves are of lesser architectural merit than the original barn, and while they provide a clear illustration of the changes in farm production and techniques over the past two hundred years or so, their more extensive modernisation sets them apart from the original barn (Rooms 1a and 1b).

5.3.2 The age of the early barn is difficult to determine; it certainly pre-dates the c1836 corn rent map by which time it had already been extended. The style of the trusses might also suggest an 18th or early 19th century date (Brunskill 2002, 153), which, although not ancient, is a relatively rare survival in a reasonably good condition. The various alterations that were made to it are also of interest, particularly in terms of the way they demonstrate the general development of such buildings and the typical changes in agricultural activities. The initial process of hand threshing appears to have quickly been succeeded by a horse gin that was added to the west side of the barn with an overhead gearing. A later map of 1863 (Plate 2) appears to show this building had been demolished, but seems to indicate that the gin ring still survived, possibly open to the elements. This is in keeping with the development of the horse gin: the overhead gearing was superseded by a lower shaft that the horses stepped over in their circular path and such an arrangement would often be uncovered (Brunskill 2002, 116). The roof timbers of the early barn are generally in good condition, as is the bulk of the structure; this may well be partly on account of it being sheltered on most sides for the last century by the later additions. The early barn apparently had two threshing bays, evident as larger doorways opposing smaller pedestrian doorways, and was a considerable structure when first built, comprising 13 bays.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Every effort should be made to preserve the original features of the early barn. These include many of the doorways and windows, as well as the timbers used in the trusses and purlins.

5.4.2 Any changes to the exterior of the barn should be completed in materials sympathetic to the appearance of the barn, which in combination with the Hall and grassed yard form a very attractive unit that fits well with, and forms part of the character and charm of the village.

5.4.3 In view of the relatively high potential for discovering below-ground remains of some archaeological interest (see *Section 3.1*) some form of further assessment might be considered necessary should any large-scale new construction be carried out at the site.

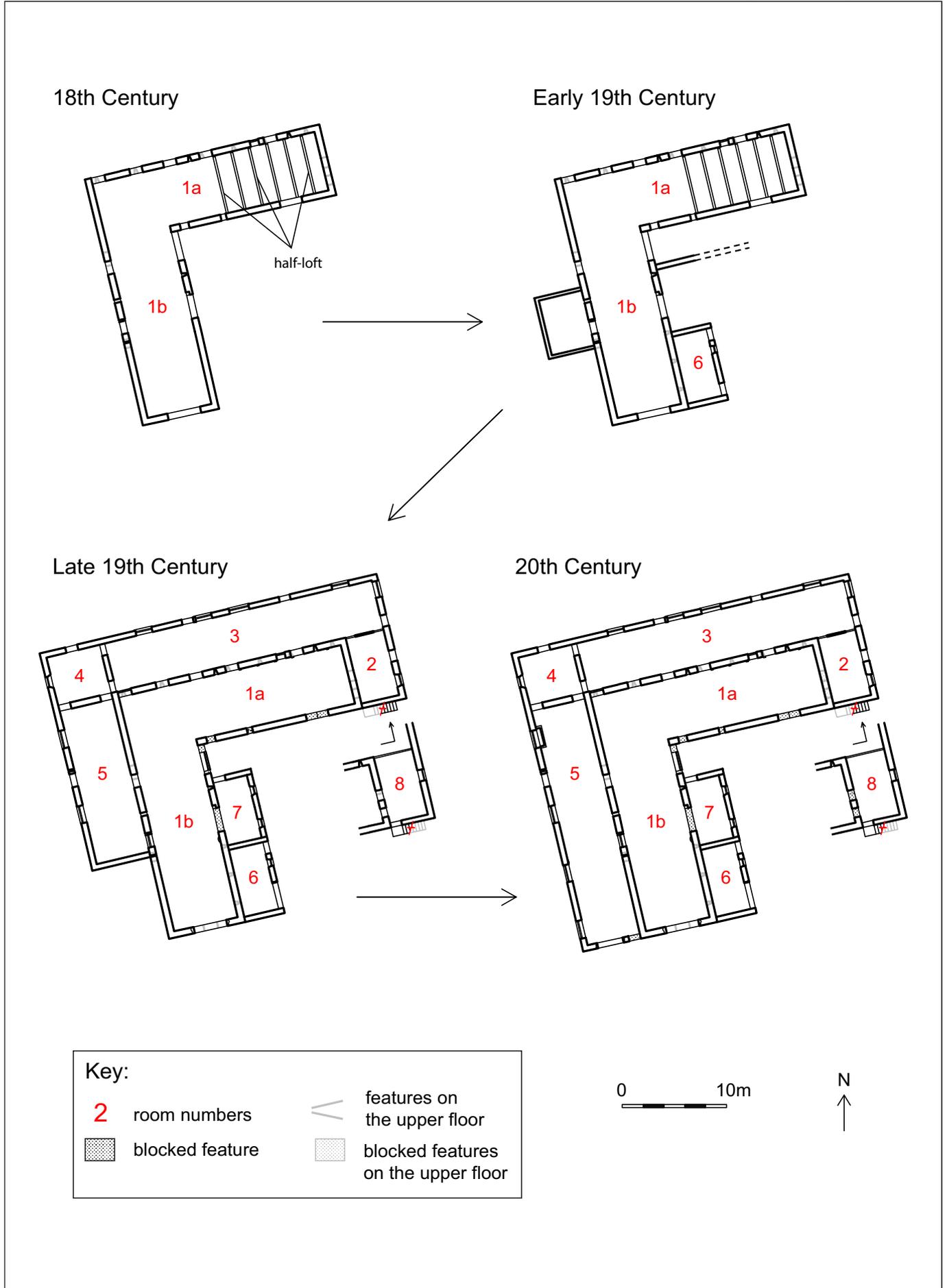


Figure 6: Phase plan

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