

# PARKHOUSE FARMHOUSE, PARKHOUSE ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Dr and Mrs Mardel  
NGR: SD 22365 71042  
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Greenlane Archaeology Ltd,  
2 Albrights Yard, Theatre Street,  
Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 7AQ

Tel: 01229 588 500  
Email: [info@greenlancearchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@greenlancearchaeology.co.uk)  
Web: [www.greenlancearchaeology.co.uk](http://www.greenlancearchaeology.co.uk)

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## Non-Technical Summary

A proposal was made to convert a small barn attached to Parkhouse Farmhouse, Parkhouse Road, near Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, into dwellings. After a recommendation by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council placed a condition on planning consent requiring a programme of building recording. This was to comprise an English Heritage Level 3-type recording and a rapid desk-based assessment. The work was carried out in June 2009.

Parkhouse Farm is known to have a very ancient history. It is named as a tenant farm of Furness Abbey from as early as c1510 and appears to have passed, along with the site of the abbey, to the Preston family following the dissolution of the monasteries. During the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries it was occupied by the Gibsons and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was occupied by the Boltons, who were involved in iron mining nearby by the late 1860s. An extensive archaeological investigation of the farm buildings to the north of the farmhouse was carried out prior to their redevelopment, and the farmhouse itself has also been examined to a more limited extent but little is known about it in any detail. The farmhouse is thought to be of 16<sup>th</sup> century origin while early maps of the site show that the barn attached to its south end was certainly present by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The building recording revealed that there appears to have been little alteration to the structure since it was built, although there was evidently originally an outshut attached to the south elevation, which is no longer extant. The barn was most likely built at a later date than the farmhouse as it butts against it, but clearly predates 1847, at which date it was surveyed for the first edition Ordnance Survey map. The external walls are original, although some rebuild has taken place on the southeast corner. There are no apertures except for an owl hole in the apex of the gable. The roof timbers are possibly as old as the barn, but have been re-used; the roof slates have been re-laid over felt. The floor was originally cobbled, but most of this has been removed. There is a staircase to the first floor of the farmhouse, which is enclosed with stud and timber walls, which was probably installed within the last 100 years or so.

A brief summary of the significance of the site and recommendations relating to the proposed development are also presented.

## Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Dr and Mrs Mardel for commissioning and supporting the project and for their help on site, and Bob Milloy of Craig and Green Architects for providing copies of the 'as existing' drawings. Further thanks are also due to Charles Wilton, Planning Officer at Barrow Borough Council, for approving the original project design.

The building recording was carried out by Steve Clarke, who also wrote the report and produced the illustrations. The project was managed by Dan Elsworth, who also edited the report along with Tom Mace and Jo Dawson.

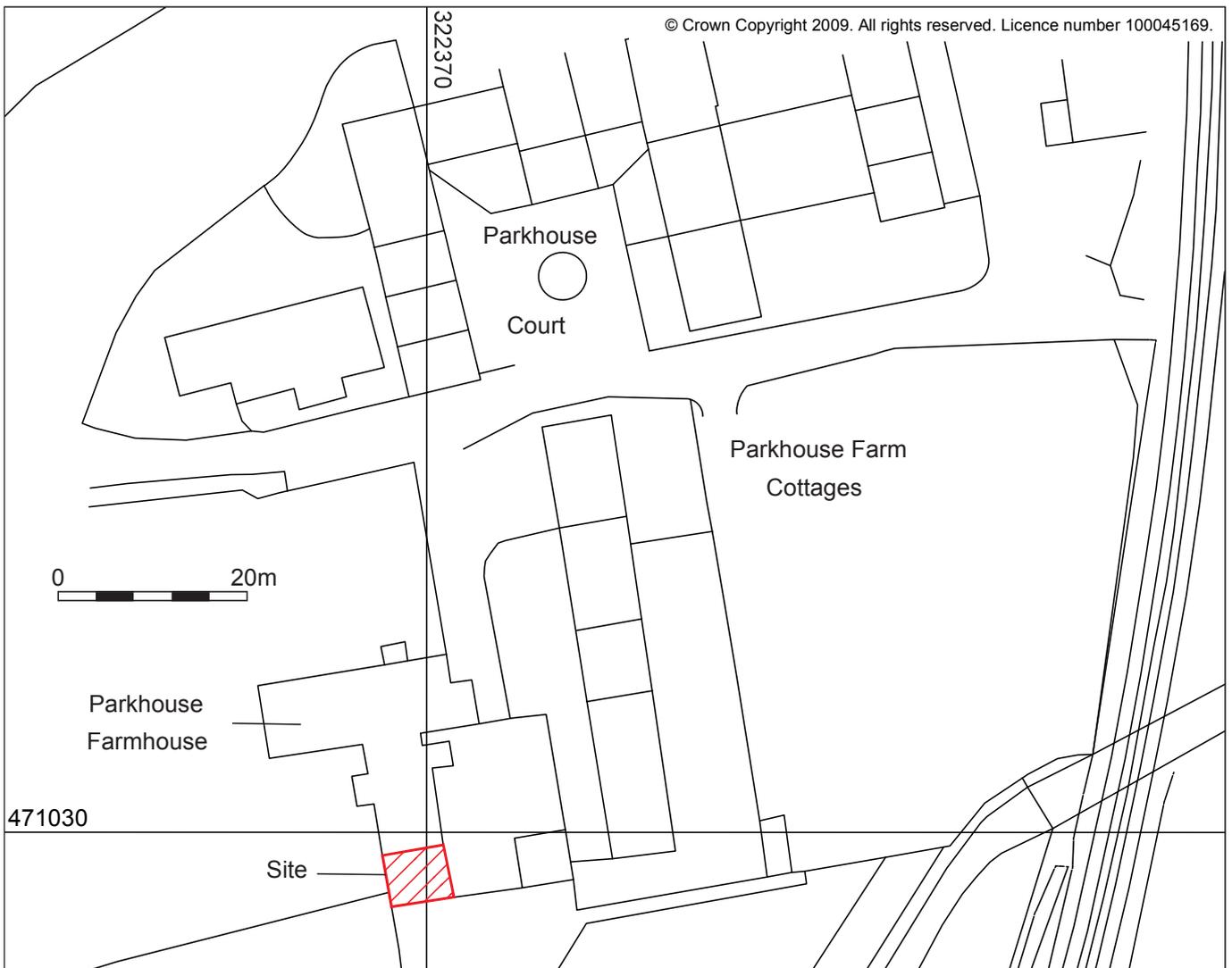
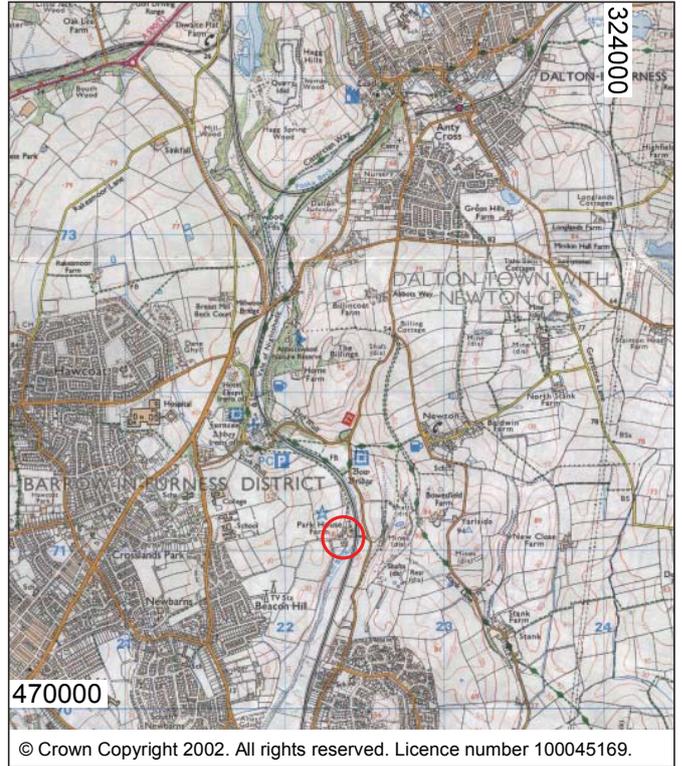
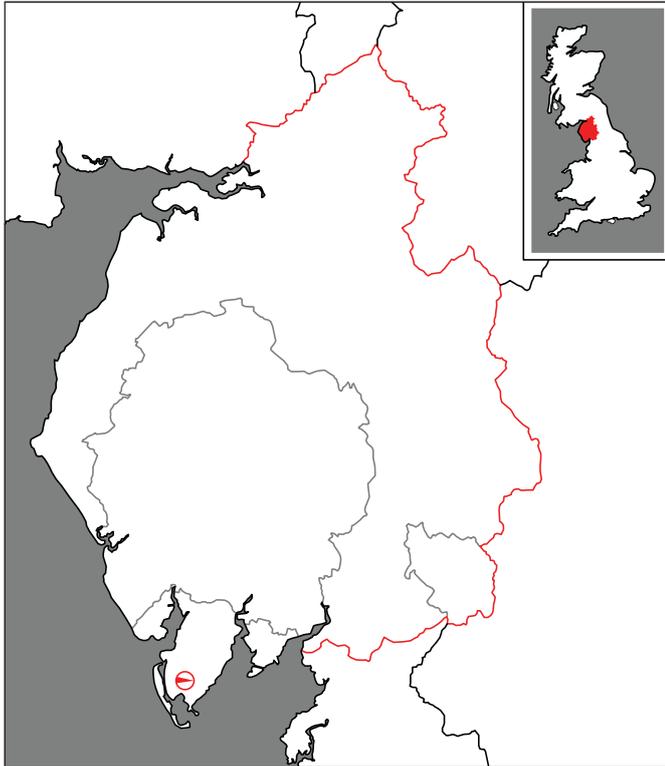
## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 An application was made by Dr and Mrs Mardel to convert a barn attached to Parkhouse Farm, Parkhouse Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (SD 22365 71042). As the house is Grade II\* Listed Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council requested that a building recording be carried out in order to accompany the planning application. After consultation with Charles Wilton, Planning Officer at Barrow Borough Council, the specific requirements of the building recording were confirmed as an English Heritage Level-3 type investigation (English Heritage 2006). A project design was produced by Greenlane Archaeology (see *accompanying CD*), and following the acceptance of this the recording was undertaken on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009.

### 1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Parkhouse Farm is situated approximately 3km south of the centre of Dalton-in-Furness, and less than 1km to the south-east of Furness Abbey (Figure 1). It lies at approximately 10m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2002). Parkhouse Farm is situated on the edge of the West Cumbria Coastal Plain, the landscape of which is typically pastoral and comprises an '*undulating or gently rolling topography*' dominated by pasture but scarred by repeated episodes of industrial activity, in this case principally iron mining (Countryside Commission 1998, 26). The solid geology is dominated by red sandstone of the Penrith Sandstone group (Moseley 1978, plate 1), although Parkhouse Farm is situated on the boundary between this and Carboniferous limestone to the north-west (*ibid*; Bolton 1869, 35). The overlying drift geology is derived from thick glacially-derived tills (Countryside Commission 1998, 27), and large amounts of alluvial sand and gravel are visible across the site.



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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 structures, in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006). In addition a rapid desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the project design (*see accompanying CD*), and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

### 2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 A detailed desk-based assessment had already been carried out for a previous piece of work (Greenlane Archaeology 2006) and information gathered for this was extracted for use in this report. This assessment had principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site, which could demonstrate the basic phasing and development of the buildings. In addition, directories relating to the area were also consulted in order to establish who the owners and occupiers of the site had been, so that information about the probable use of the buildings could be gathered. Secondary sources relating to the general history of the local area were also examined to provide a historical context for the results of the investigation. During the previous desk-based assessment a number of sources of information were consulted:

- **The Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness (CRO(B))**: this was visited in order to examine early plans of the site, and local and regional histories and directories;
- **The National Archives and Access 2 Archives**: information regarding occupiers of the site was acquired from the titles of documents found in catalogues on the websites of The National Archives ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)) and Access 2 Archives ([www.a2a.org.uk](http://www.a2a.org.uk)). These sources provided references to documents held in a number of locations:
  - i. CRO(B) – Cumbria Record Office (Barrow-in-Furness);
  - ii. CRO(W) – Cumbria Record Office (Whitehaven);
  - iii. LRO(P) – Lancashire Record Office (Preston);
  - iv. NA – National Archives.
- **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 Level-3 type standards (English Heritage 2006). This is essentially a descriptive investigation, but with a more detailed interpretation of the phasing and use of the building utilising available documentary evidence where applicable. The recording comprised several parts:

- **Written record**: descriptive records of all parts of the buildings 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 buildings, their general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A selection of the colour digital photographs are included in this report, and the remainder are presented on the accompanying CD;
- **Drawings**: drawings were produced by hand-annotating 'as existing' illustrations of the building provided by the architect or producing drawings from scratch on site. These comprised:

- i. plans of all of the main floors, at 1:100;
- ii. a cross-section, at 1:50;
- iii. the principal external elevations, at 1:100.

## 2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design (see *accompanying CD*), 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 supplied to Charles Wilton at Barrow Borough Council, one will be deposited with the Cumbria Historic Environment Record, one with the client, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition, a digital copy will be offered to the National Monument Record and a record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

### 3. Desk-Based Assessment

#### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The background history of the site is intended to help place the results of this investigation in their local context. More specifically, information regarding the development and use of the buildings, where known, is also presented. Much of this information was extracted from a previous investigation of the site (Greenlane Archaeology 2006).

3.1.2 The results of two previous investigations of the farmhouse, carried out by Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU 2000) and Oxford Archaeology North (OA North 2002), were also taken into consideration.

#### 3.2 Background History

3.2.1 **Parkhouse Farm:** Parkhouse is thought to have been one of a number of ancient sites in the Yarlside area (Farrer and Brownbill 1914, 306) and is recorded from an early date as being connected to Furness Abbey (Gaythorpe 1909, 111). There are three specific references to it in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. The first of these is from c1510 when it is named in association with 'Walton-cote' as a tenant property that was required to have one man with a horse 'able to serve the king against his ancient enemies the Scotts' (West 1805, 219). Again, in c1527, Parkhouse and Watton Cott are listed amongst tenant properties required to supply one man with harness ready to serve the king (*op cit*, 133-134). In a survey of the abbey lands of c1536 the rent of Parkhouse was assessed at 1l 1s 7¼d (*op cit*, 136). Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries the status of Parkhouse is not clear; the estates of Furness Abbey passed to the crown, although parts of it were granted to individuals at different times (Farrer and Brownbill 1914, 299). It was apparently not listed in a survey, made in 1649, of the lands belonging to the crown in Furness (*op cit*, 235-6), which would suggest that it had passed into private hands by this time.

3.2.2 **Occupiers:** a rapid examination of directories for the area and other easily available primary (details acquired from [www.a2a.org.uk](http://www.a2a.org.uk) and [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)) and secondary sources enabled identification of a number of occupiers of the property. These are summarised in Table 1 below:

Date	Occupier	Place	Occupation	Source
1614	Francis Preston	Parkehouse	-	NA E 134/12Jas1/Mich12 1614
1615	Francis Preston	Parkehouse	Gentleman	LRO(P) DDCA 10/18 1615
1690	John Duckett	Parkehouse	-	CRO(W) D Cu/4/201 1690
1695	Edward Gibson	Parkehouse	-	CRO(B) BDB 44/Bundle 1/14 1695
1697	Edmond Gibson	Parkehouse	Gentleman?	CRO(B) BDB 44/Bundle 1/15 1697
1702	Edmund Gibson	Parkehouse	Gentleman	CRO(B) BDB 44/Bundle 1/17 1702
1720	Richard Gibson	Parkhouse	-	LRO(P) DDCA 10/51 1720
c1723-4	Richard Gibson	Parkehouse	Debtor	LRO(P) QJB/1217/20 c1723-4
1725	Richard Gibson	Parkehouse	Debtor	LRO(P) QJB/10/63 1725
1725	Richard Gibson	Parkehouse	Farmer	LRO(P) QJB/11/69 1725
1829	William Bolton	Parkhouse	-	Rollinson 1986, 39
1829	Hannah Bolton	Parkhouse	Farmer	Parson and White 1829, 712
1832	John Bolton	Parkhouse	-	Rollinson 1986, 45
1837	John Boulton	Parkhouse	Yeoman	CRO(B) BDB/17/T1/6/10 1837
1838	John Boulton,	Parkhouse	-	CRO(B) BDB/17/T1/6/11 1838
1845	Late William Bolton	Parkhouse	-	Rollinson 1986, 63
1849	John Bolton	Park House	Farmer	Mannex 1849, 419
1851	John Boulton	Park House	-	Mannex and Co 1851, 419
1857	John Boulton	Parkhouse	Yeoman	CRO(B) BDB/17/T1/6/12 1857
1869	W. Boulton	Parkhouse	Mine owner	Bolton 1869, 89
1872	William Boulton	Parkhouse	Farmer	CRO(B) BD/BUC/61/Bundle 1/11 1872
1882	George Birkett	Park House	Farmer	Mannex and Co 1882, 144
c1910	George Case	Park House	Farmer	Bulmer and Co c1910, 163

Table 1: Recorded occupiers of Parkhouse Farm

3.2.3 As is evident from Table 1, from even a limited examination of primary sources it is possible to provide a list of inhabitants of Parkhouse from 1614 onwards. It shows that the first recorded owners are the Preston family and this is probably the same family whose ancestors acquired the estate at an early date; a John Preston was the son-in-law of Sir Thomas Cromwell, to whom Furness Abbey itself initially passed following the Dissolution (Dickinson 1987, 8). Following this, Parkhouse was eventually occupied by the Gibsons, although Richard Gibson evidently got into severe financial difficulty, which may explain the gap of more than one hundred years that follows in the records. The information from the directories continues the story throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Almost all of the occupiers were farmers, many of them belonging to the Bolton (or Boulton) family, and even William Bolton, who formed the Yarlside Mining Company in 1868 with his brother-in-law, Thomas Storey (Kelly 1998, 121), was involved in farming as well as iron mining.

### 3.3 Map Regression

3.3.1 **Introduction:** a number of early maps of the site were examined, ranging from county plans of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to Ordnance Survey maps of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These reveal a number of pieces of information:

3.3.2 **Yates 1786:** Parkhouse is not named on this map, however an unnamed building is shown in approximately the right location, and it is likely that this is Parkhouse Farm.

3.3.3 **Dalton Tithe Map 1840 (CRO(B) BPR 1/13/1/2 1840):** the land around Furness Abbey, including Parkhouse Farm, was evidently not titheable as it is not depicted on the tithe map. This map was therefore unable to provide any additional information.

3.3.4 **Ordnance Survey 1851** (Plate 1): this map shows 'Park House' on the north and south sides of a track; on the north side of the track is a complex of buildings on the north, east and west sides of a courtyard, and on the south side are two long buildings orientated north-south, and five smaller buildings in the south-east. A mill race appears to enter the buildings surrounding the courtyard from the north. Parkhouse Farmhouse is situated in the south-west corner of the farm complex. The map shows the barn was in existence at this time and a smaller outshut was attached to its south side.

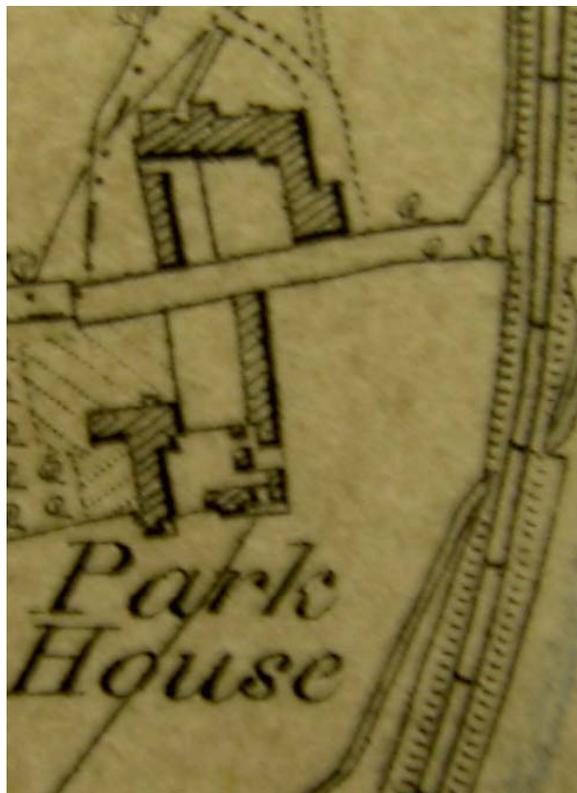


Plate 1: Ordnance Survey map, 1851

3.3.5 **Ordnance Survey 1891** (Plate 2): this is at a larger scale than the previous map, and shows a lot more detail. The barn with its outshut can be clearly seen at the south end of the farmhouse.

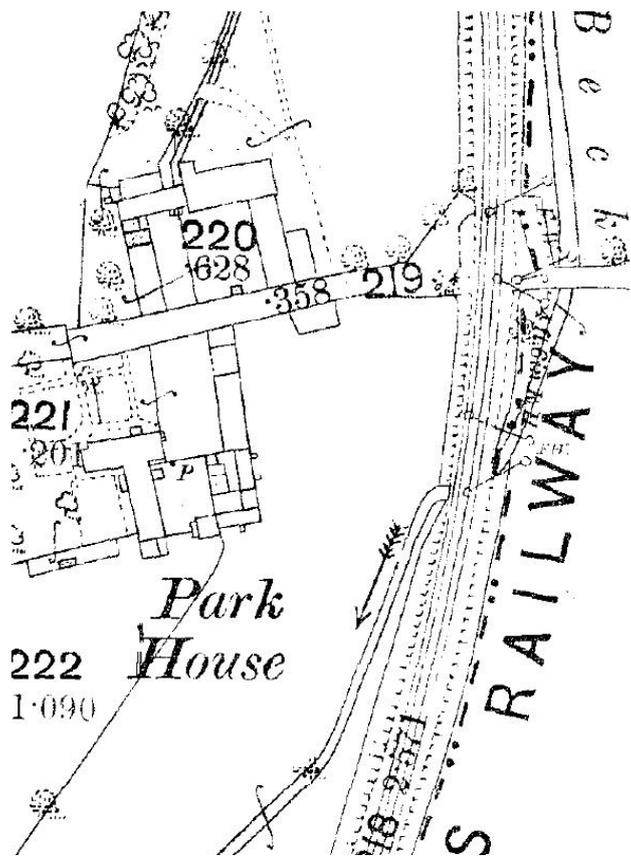


Plate 2: Ordnance Survey map, 1891

3.3.6 **Ordnance Survey 1913** (Plate 3): this map also shows the barn and the outshut clearly. Little has changed since the previous map.

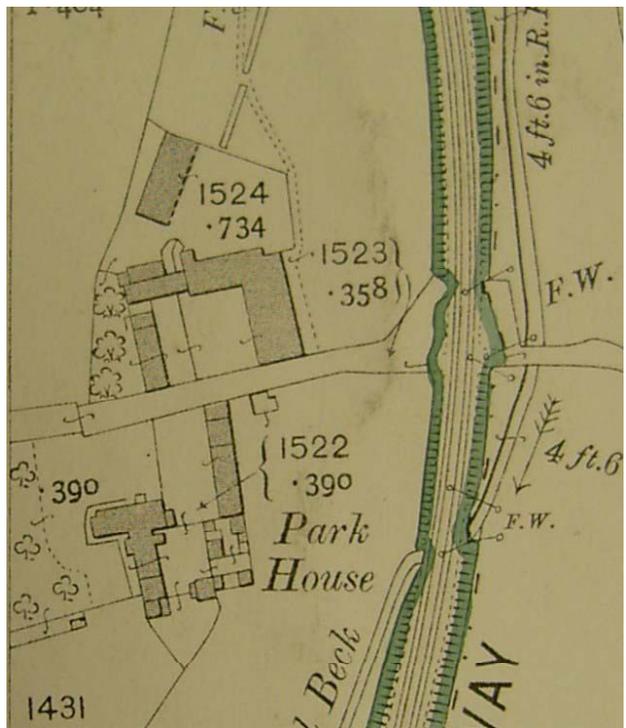


Plate 3: Ordnance Survey map, 1913

## 4. Building Recording

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The barn is attached to the south end of Parkhouse Farmhouse which is itself situated to the south end of the farm complex. To the north is a large courtyard with converted farm buildings (now cottages) on the east side. The new farmhouse is situated immediately to the south-west of the courtyard and there are numerous modern agricultural buildings to the north-east of the complex. The farm is accessed by a short track, which crosses the railway and connects to Parkhouse Road. This runs effectively north-south between Holbeck and Yarlside to the south and Dalton to the north, with a branch to Furness Abbey to the north-west (Figure 1). The site is situated within a wide valley and on the west side of Mill Beck, a stream that runs through the grounds of Furness Abbey and onto the coast near Salthouse. It is surrounded by pasture fields, presumably the result of ancient enclosure, although on the west side of the valley earthwork remains of extensive iron mining are clearly evident.

### 4.2 Arrangement and Fabric

4.2.1 The barn is oriented east/west and attached to the south end of Parkhouse Farmhouse, although the walls have not been keyed into the farmhouse structure. The walls, which are between 0.5 and 0.9m in thickness, are constructed of red sandstone rough-cut blocks and sandstone rubble.

4.2.2 The roof has a centrally situated truss and A-frame supporting a ridge purlin with two purlins either side. The main truss is irregular, suffering from woodworm, and has been repaired at the east end. The principal rafters have been chamfered on the lower edges and have an empty slot, probably for the original cross member; the west rafter had a carpenter's mark in the form of the Roman numerals 'III'.

### 4.3 External Detail

4.3.1 **West elevation:** This elevation (Plate 4) has few features, although it has been coarsely re-pointed at some point. There is a clear butt joint between this building and the farmhouse to the north.



Plate 4: West elevation

4.3.2 **South elevation:** this is the gable end of the building (Plate 5). It is constructed from a mixture of sandstone blocks of varying quality and some sandstone rubble with occasional pieces of slate. The east side has been rebuilt above two meters where there is a 1.6m long concrete lintel (Plate 6), and the sandstone blocks used in this section are of better quality than the remainder of the wall. At a height of approximately 2.5m is a thin course of slate extending from this repair to the east end of the elevation. Just below the apex of the roof is a small rectangular aperture, probably an owl-hole. There is a sandstone wall extending southwards some 3m from the west end of the elevation. The elevation is being supported by a temporary timber buttress due to the wall bulging out just below and to the east of the owl-hole. The cleaner red sandstone of the lower half of the wall indicates the previous existence of a small outshut butting this elevation.



Plate 5 (left): South elevation

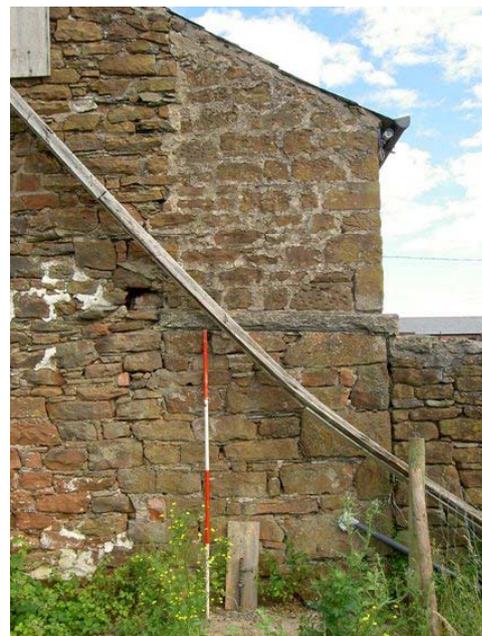


Plate 6 (right): Rebuild on the south elevation

4.3.3 **East elevation:** this elevation (Plate 7) has a large central doorway with timber double doors hung directly from the jambs. The doorway has a shallow arch constructed of sandstone blocks approximately 0.3m high by 0.25m wide (Plate 8), above which is a layer of slate, probably originally a drip course. The door jambs are constructed of larger sandstone blocks, and there is also a threshold of large sandstone blocks. There is a sandstone wall butting the south end of the elevation and extending to the east. There is a clear butt joint between this elevation and the farmhouse to the north.



Plate 7 (left): East elevation

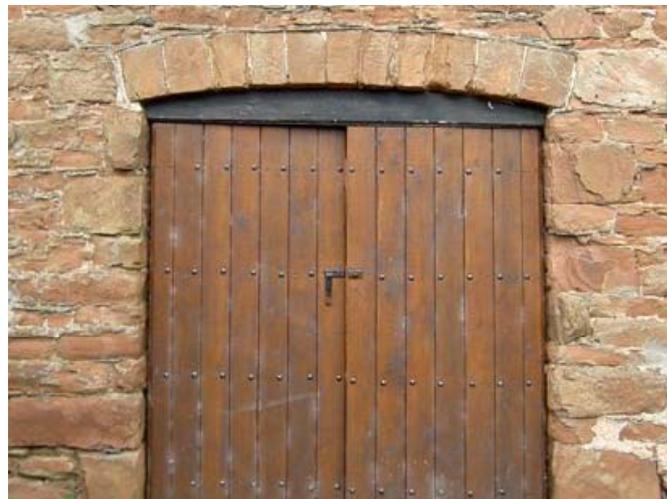
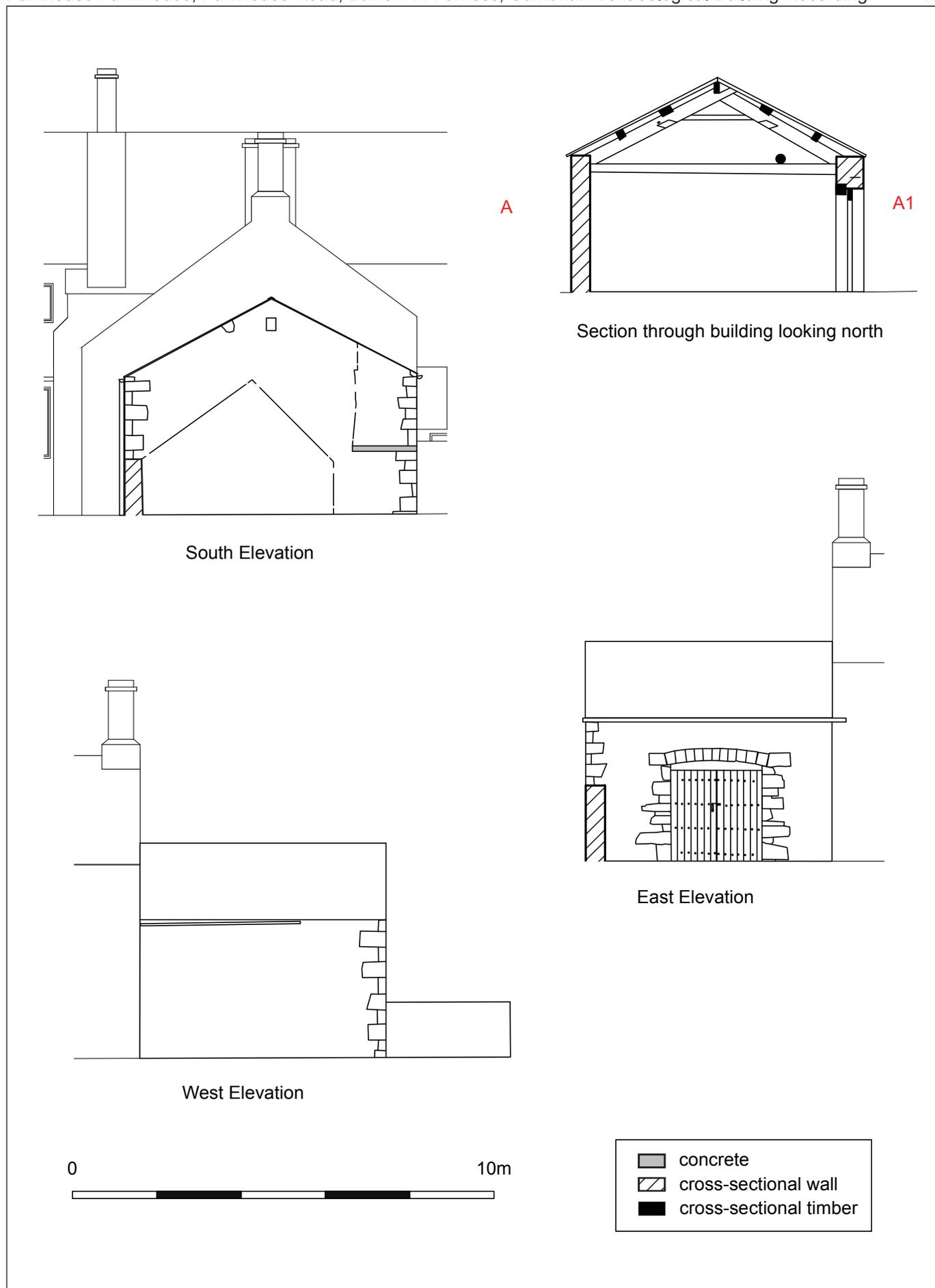


Plate 8 (right): Detail of the doorway in the east elevation



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Figure 2: External elevations and cross-section

## 4.4 Internal Detail

4.4.1 **North elevation:** this elevation is the south wall of the farm house to which the barn is attached. This wall is constructed of fine cut red sandstone blocks of a uniform height and width. There is an enclosed plain timber staircase (Plate 9) against it on the east side giving access to a doorway on the first floor to the farm house. The staircase is enclosed by timber stud and planking, which extends to the roof (Plate 10) and is accessed by a doorway on the ground floor at the east end. The staircase is a relatively plain timber construction with square posts, spindles, and hand rail.



Plate 9 (left): Stud and timber wall of enclosed staircase on the north elevation

Plate 10 (right): Stud and timber wall enclosing the staircase

4.4.2 **East elevation:** this elevation (Plate 11 and Plate 12) has no features except the main doorway which has a large timber lintel (over 3.5m long by 0.3m deep and 0.25m thick). Notches cut on the underside suggest this is a re-used beam of some sort. This elevation has also been partly painted white and re-pointed. The double doors are of a timber plank and ledge construction and hung directly to the door jambs; there is a timber panel between the doors and the doorway arch.



Plate 11 (left): East elevation

Plate 12 (right): East elevations and roof timbers

4.4.3 **South elevation:** apart from the owl-hole already mentioned, this elevation (Plate 13) is featureless except for a small recess (0.2m x 0.15m) at a height of 1.5m on the west side. The lower half of the elevation has been painted white, while the remainder has been heavily re-pointed (Plate 14). A beam has been inserted into the wall, which runs north/south across the room, the opposite end resting on the truss.



Plate 13 (left): Gable of south elevation



Plate 14 (right): Lower half of south elevation

4.4.4 **West elevation:** this elevation (Plate 15) is similar in appearance to the south elevation although there is a small recess (0.1m x 0.1m) situated centrally, at a height of approximately 2.5m.



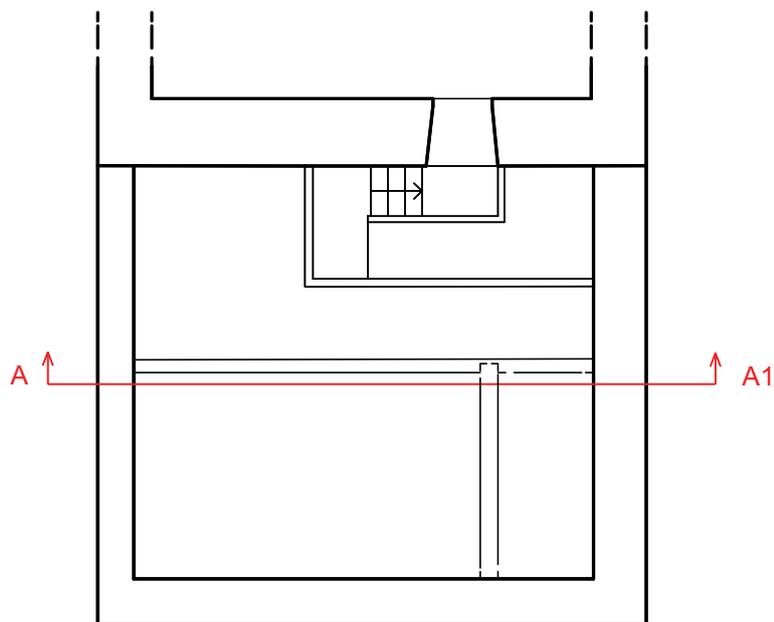
Plate 15: West elevation

4.4.5 **Roof.** the roof (Plate 16) has a centrally situated tie beam truss supporting a ridge purlin with two purlins either side. The tie beam is hand-finished, irregular, and suffering from woodworm, and has been repaired at the east end. The principal rafters have been chamfered on the lower edges and have an empty slot, probably for the original collar. The west principal rafter has a carpenter's mark 'III' chiselled into it and a modern piece of timber has been attached on the opposite side to replace the missing collar. A further horizontal beam has been installed, which rests on the tie beam of the truss at the south end and is fixed into the gable wall at the north end. It supports a chain with a hook and a light fitting. The slates are supported by rafters and have roofing felt beneath.

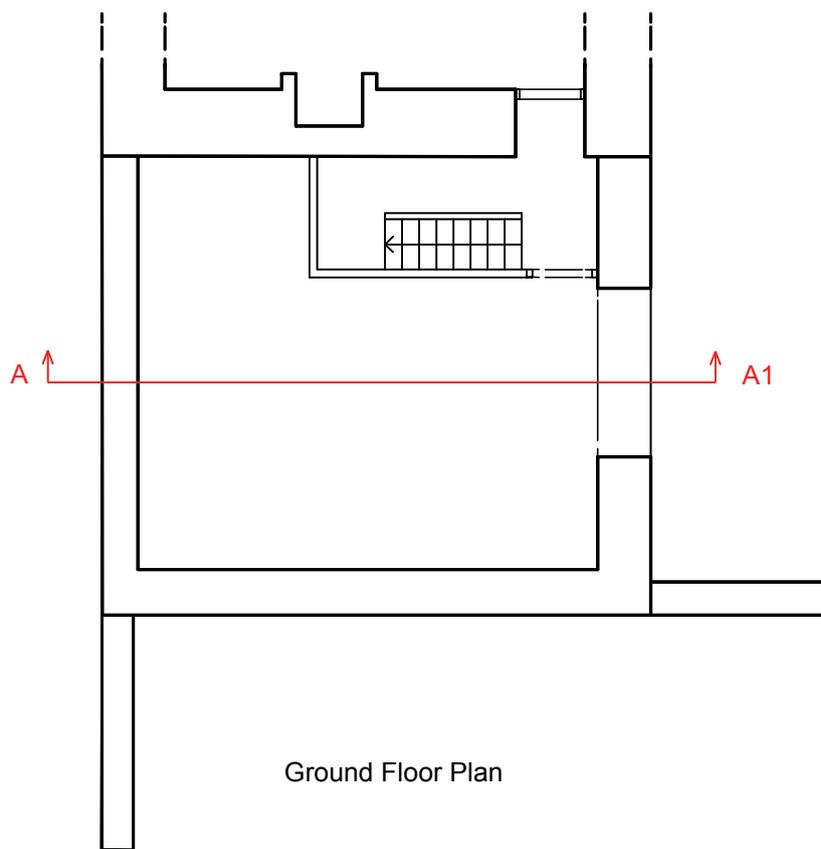


**Plate 16 (left): Main truss and purlins**

**Plate 17 (right): West principal rafter showing empty slot and carpenter's mark**



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan



Figure 3: Floor plans

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This building undoubtedly pre-dates 1847 as it is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1851, which was surveyed in that year. Earlier dating evidence is not forthcoming, although the style of the truss might suggest an 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century date (Brunskill 2002, 153).

### 5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 There appears to have been little alteration to the structure since it was built, although there was evidently an outshut attached to the south elevation, which is no longer extant. The barn was most likely built at a later date than the farmhouse as it butts against it. The barn is also of a different construction, comprised of coarser stonework, and is not to the same standard as the farm house, which has regular cut masonry. The position of the outshut that was attached to the barn can be seen quite clearly by the reddish sandstone off-centre to the west side of the south elevation (see *Section 4.3.2*; Plate 5), which suggests that it was removed fairly recently.

5.2.2 The rebuilding of the south east corner of the barn was probably due to the installation of the concrete beam immediately below this work and two metres above ground level. This beam appears truncated, so may have originally extended out from the wall; it was perhaps associated with the outshut though not part of the original structure. The sandstone blocks used for this rebuild were probably imported from another building as, although of a similar material, they are of a different cut; they may have been re-used from Furness Abbey, something that evidently happened a great deal during the construction of the neighbouring farm buildings (Greenlane Archaeology 2006).

5.2.3 The re-used timber present in the roof is possibly from an earlier building, made use of during the original construction, or used at a later date to replace timbers, possibly affected by woodworm, of which there is evidence in the main truss. The re-use of timber is known to have been commonplace from at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Tyson 2000, 41).

5.2.4 The encased staircase is a later addition; it is of plain design so it is difficult to date, but it most probably dates to within the last 100 years. The staircase gives access from the ground floor to the first floor as well as access to the barn from the house. It is not possible to say whether the staircase is contemporary with the ground floor doorway to the barn or is a later addition; it is possible that the farmhouse was split into two separate dwellings and the staircase was added for this reason. The most recent alterations include the insertion of a round beam orientated north/south – inserted into the south elevation, and resting on the tie beam of the truss, which was added to form a hoist for motorbike engines to be lifted in the last 15 years or so (Dr Mardel pers comm.). The original collar of the truss has evidently also been removed and replaced with a piece of timber attached to the north side. This is clearly quite modern and may relate to the addition of the hoist beam.

### 5.3 Significance and Recommendations

5.3.1 The barn is of little significance in comparison with the rest of the farmhouse, being a much later addition, of relatively plain form and little architectural merit. Nevertheless, it does demonstrate the development of this important Grade II\* Listed building (something that was also shown during the investigation of the fireplace in the adjoining south wing (OA North 2002)). Any alterations to the barn should work to minimise the removal of original fabric such as the main walls and roof timbers, while making improvements to the existing structure such as stabilising the south gable, sympathetic repair such as more appropriate repointing (perhaps in lime mortar) and the replacement of the missing truss collar, and removing the inserted hoist beam and concrete lintel from the south elevation.

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