



Axe Head Barn, Upper Fold
Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire
Historic Building Record
ArcHeritage 2018

Axe head barn, Upper Fold
Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire
Level 2-3 Historic Building Recording

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a level 2-3 Historic Building Recording of Axe Head Barn, Upper Fold, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire (NGR SK 06055 83072). The survey was required as an archaeological condition attached to Planning Consent for redevelopment of the building. ArcHeritage were commissioned by Adrian Hill to undertake the building survey and reporting.

The building is a late 18th or early 19th century combination barn, built of gritstone. The barn is functionally divided into two parts, a threshing barn in the southern two bays and a cow house and hayloft in the northern three bays. The fabric of the barn remains relatively unaltered and, although much of the original interior and most of the fixtures and fittings have been lost, enough evidence remains to demonstrate its former use. The barn retains most of its original roof structure and some of its hayloft floor.

A flagstone threshing floor and opposing doors give clear evidence that the southern part was a threshing barn. Redundant mortises in the remaining hayloft floor, as well as surviving stall dividers and *in situ* muck holes and forking holes provide evidence that the cow house accommodated up to twelve cows, whilst similar evidence in the contemporary rear lean-to demonstrates that it was probably a calf house with space for up to four calves.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a Level 2-3 Historic Buildings Survey of Axe Head Barn, Upper Fold, Derbyshire, a vacant combination barn. The survey was undertaken to record the history and the historic architectural features of the building in advance of redevelopment. ArcHeritage was commissioned by Adrian Hill to undertake the survey and report, which were carried out in line with the WSI produced by ArcHeritage and approved by the Peak District National Park Authority. This was undertaken in support of Planning Application No. NP/HPK/0718/0591.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located at Upper Fold, approximately 2km north of Chapel-en-le-Frith, 1km northeast along an unnamed road leading northeast off Hayfield Road (A624). Axe Head Barn is located 0.8km east of Upper Fold Farm, and is accessed from a farm track leading from the farm (NGR SK 06055 83072, Figure 1).

The structure is a late 18th- or early-19th-century combination barn associated with Upper Fold Farm. Bounded on all sides by fields, the barn is orientated north-south with its principal elevation facing west towards the farm. The barn is accessed via a walled track from Upper Fold Farm.

3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims

The general aim of the project was to produce a building survey report in line with the guidelines for a level 2-3 survey as set out by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings* (HE 2016), guidance from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and industry best practice.

The building recording was undertaken to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with The Peak District National Park Authority who had requested that a WSI for a programme of Historic Building Recording be submitted for approval, stating that:

'The conversion of the L-shaped combination barn to residential use will require changes to the historic fabric and plan form, including the loss of 19th and early 20th century windows and door furniture; the loss of the remains of the cow stalls internally and hay loft, loss of possible historic floor finishes, insertion of a new opening into the rear elevation and the almost complete loss of the internal dividing wall between the threshing bay and the cowshed. This will harm the historic and archaeological interest of the building.'

And that the work can be mitigated through:

'A programme of descriptive building recording that would supplement the existing Heritage Statement and correct the errors it contains, to achieve an overall level of recording in accordance with Historic England 2016 'Understanding Historic Buildings' guidance Level 2/3.'

The specific aims of the recording were:

- to undertake a level 2-3 building recording survey of Axe Head Barn;
- to provide annotated elevations and plans of the building showing all the relevant historic details and phasing within the building;

- to collate historic maps, previous survey information and other relevant documentary evidence that might assist in the understanding of the phasing and land-use history to help formulate a historic narrative for the site;
- to produce a final report presenting the results of the building recording survey.

The Historic Building Recording will also help to inform the wider research aims as defined by the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework. In particular, the following research objectives for the Modern Period (1750 to present):

- 9G - Assess the landscape impact of the early industrialisation of agriculture
- 9H - Characterising the rural environment: identify and record historic buildings and landscape features

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Desk-based research

The historical background of the site has already been covered by an ArcHeritage heritage statement which will form the basis of the historical background for this report. This has been supplemented with additional information acquired during the production of this report.

3.2.2 Building Recording

A full analytical survey of the buildings was conducted, including internal measurements and full written descriptions of the exterior and interior of the building. The onsite survey involved written notes and annotated printouts of the CAD drawings. The site was visited by Christopher Curtis on 13-14th September 2018.

Photography of the building was carried out using a tripod and artificial light when necessary. A Panasonic Lumix DMC Z200 for all digital photography and a 35mm SLR for black and white film photography. The photos included:

- general views of the buildings in the wider setting;
- the external appearance of the buildings, showing all external elevations;
- the overall appearance of all rooms and circulation areas;
- external and internal decorative detail relevant to the building's design, development and use;
- dates, inscriptions or graffiti which contribute to understanding the building;
- building contents and ephemera which had a significant bearing on the buildings' history.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This summary is based a previous heritage statement written for the building by Greg Laban (ArcHeritage 2018).

Axe Head Barn sits within an area of enclosed fields on the boundary of the White and Dark Peak. Across much of the South West Peak and the Dark Peak isolated farmsteads of medieval to 17th-century date are strongly associated with small-to-medium sized irregular fields, enclosed from woodland or on a piecemeal basis from medieval arable land. Isolated farmsteads with buildings dating from the late 18th century often relate to areas of moorland newly enclosed in the late 18th and 19th centuries. This period of farming was concerned with boosting soil fertility, through the more systematic containment of livestock and their manure, and the construction of large numbers of field lime kilns. Axe Head barn appears to match this type of newer farming with its location surrounded by fields.

An enclosure award for this area, dating to the mid 18th century, suggests some of the land was being consolidated at this time. The barn lies 100m to the east of Upper Fold Farmhouse, dating to the late 17th century and Troutbeck Farmhouse, dating to the 18th century. The barn could be associated with either farmhouse or other outlying farmhouses such as Slack House Farmhouse (1762), or Shire Oak Farm (1680).

The earliest detailed map of the site is the Chinley Tithe Map of 1841 (Figure 3). The barn appears on the map with its current footprint. The map depicts the barn as being owned, along with the adjoining north-west and east field, by John Hudson and occupied by Phillip Barnes. Philip Barnes also occupied a small plot and building labelled as a homestead (no. 916) next to the two farmhouses but it appears to be too small to have been a house. Troutbeck Farmhouse and Upper Fold Farmhouse appear were owned by Godfrey Webster and occupied by Robert Collier, indicating that by that point Axe Head barn was separate from Upper Fold Barn.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880 shows Axe Head Barn and its surrounding fields in the same configuration as the 1841 map (Figure 4); however, the buildings around Upper Fold Farm had been altered; a large farm building to the south (presumably a barn) had been removed and several more buildings to the north had been added. The Ordnance Survey map of 1898 shows no difference in the layout of Axe Head Barn and its surrounding fields or the layout of the buildings around Upper Fold (Figure 5). However the map shows Upper Fold Farmhouse and Troutbeck Farmhouse under separate ownership and Axe Head Barn under the same ownership as Upper Fold Farmhouse. Subsequent Ordnance Survey maps from 1921 to 1979 show no substantial changes to the barn, surrounding fields or the group of buildings around Upper Fold (Figures 6 & 7).

Axe Head Barn has been disused since at least 2003, and possibly earlier, when a planning application to convert the barn into a domestic dwelling was submitted. However the pastures to all sides are currently in use, most likely used by the nearby Shire Oaks Farm over 1km to the east. The nearby Troutbeck House and Upper Fold Farm are no longer in use as working farms, and instead are domestic houses only. The large barn at the north end of Upper Fold farm has been converted to a domestic dwelling in the last 30 years.

Discussions between the current owner of the Upper Fold Barn and Greg Laban have revealed a number of facts about the barn and the area. The current owners of Upper Fold Barn purchased the barn in 2004 having purchased and moved into nearby Troutbeck Farm in 1999. Prior to them the barn was owned by Mary Simpson who also owned Shireoaks Farm to the east. Prior to M. Simpson a Mr Tissot owned the farm for a few years, but the total length was unknown. Before Mr. Tissot the Goddard family owned the barn and used it as a milking parlour for what was likely a considerable amount of time, and it was Tommy Goddard that sold the barn to Mr. Tissot. The Goddard's lived at Redgate Farm on Beet Lane.

5 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Overview

The two storey barn is rectangular in shape and is orientated north-south (Plate 1). The principal elevation faces west and contains the main entrances to the building. The barn has a small lean-to at the north end of the east elevation. The building is built from coursed gritstone of varying quality and the pitched roof is clad in modern concrete tiles, apart from the lean-to which is clad with stone slate. Internally the barn is divided into five bays. The southern two bays comprise a threshing barn, open to the roof, while the northern three and the lean-to comprise cow-houses and the remains of a hayloft.

5.2 Exterior

The principal elevation, facing west, is given the most prominent architectural treatment with a façade of dressed gritstone (Plate 2). The elevation is punctuated by three doorways to its northern half and a larger double doorway to the southern half. The small doorways are topped with freestone lintels while the large doorway has a segmental arched head with finely cut voussoirs of the same stone (Plates 3 & 4). All the doorways feature voussoirs or lintels faced with margined broach-work, with that of the voussoirs radiating from the centre of the arch. All of the doorways feature modern plank doors. The façade also has six ventilation holes, three for each storey. The front of the cow house also features a strip of paving setts flanked by flagstones before the two outer doors (Plate 5).

The rear elevation faces east towards a pasture field (Plate 6). The elevation includes the lean-to which appears to be contemporary. The walls are constructed from coursed gritstone rubble, with larger blocks similar to the west elevation reserved for the quoins. The main wall has a small doorway leading into the barn topped with a wide lintel, finished in the same style as those of the west elevation. To the north of the doorway the barn has a ground and first floor opening, the muck and forking hole respectively. The ground floor opening was used to remove the manure from the cow house into a dung heap which could then be spread on the field in the spring. The forking hole was used for forking hay into the loft over the cows. The east wall of the lean-to also has a muck and forking hole, only smaller. The lintels and sill stones of the openings are crudely finished compared to the doorways, and use irregularly shaped stones (Plate 7). Interestingly, the lean-to's forking hole has monolithic jambs. The barn door itself is of modern plank construction and the muck holes have been glazed. The east elevation has a ventilation hole on each storey at its south end and a single ground floor ventilation hole in the wall of the lean-to.

The south elevation is constructed with stonework in the same style as the east (Plate 8). The façade is relatively blank, featuring two ventilation holes in each storey and a crude off-centre dovecote in the gable. The dovecote is formed of three stone slabs set in a triangular fashion into the barn's wall. The dovecot holes are simply gaps in the stonework separated by courses of thin stone slabs. The use of longitudinal stone blocks and the slabs set into the stonework suggests that either the dovecot is probably original to the building, or was inserted with great care.

The North elevation features a ventilation hole on each floor as well as a first floor forking hole and a small muck hole in the lean-to wall (Plate 9). A blocked opening that would have served as a further muck hole is evidenced by a remaining sill stone and a difference in the pointing

above it. The forking hole features a softwood plank and batten door which upon internal inspection is constructed with machine sawn wood and wrought iron strap hinges that were probably reused from an earlier door.

5.3 Interior

Overview

Internally the barn is divided into five bays by four king-post roof trusses (Plate 10). The roof is constructed principally from hand-sawn softwood. The tie beams rest directly in sockets in the wall, and lie on timber bearers with more substantial timber bearers a course below. The king posts are bolted to the tie beams and feature joggles supporting raking struts dovetailed into the principal rafters. The roof has two flights of butted side purlins with run out chamfers, attached to the principal rafters with through-tenons and face-keys. The purlins in the southernmost bay appear to be reused timber and those on the west side of the northern bay have been replaced. The purlins carry slender common rafters which meet at a ridge-piece. Each truss has clear carpenter's marks numbering the trusses I-III from south to north (Plate 11). The roof has had makeshift roof-lights inserted at various points with glass laid instead of roof tiles.

Internally all of the openings are supported with timber lintels, most of which appear to be oak and show signs of reuse, possibly from an earlier structure on or near the site.

The interior is functionally divided into two parts by a stone wall rising a single storey in line with truss II (Plate 12). The southern two bays comprise a threshing barn whilst the northern three bays comprise a cow house and hayloft. The wall is of rubble construction with random sized blocks in a lime mortar. The wall is not bonded to the external walls of the barn but is probably original as it separates the two original functions of the barn and carries the hayloft floor.

The Threshing Barn

The southern two bays are relatively devoid of features but feature a tightly jointed flagstone floor between the front and rear barn doors which is presumably the original threshing floor (Plate 13). The tight joints between the flagstones would prevent grain falling between the stones while the cross-draft created by the two doors would facilitate threshing and winnowing, with the larger doorway facing westwards into the prevailing wind. The southernmost bay has a modern concrete floor and would have served as storage for unprocessed crops.

The Cow House

The northern three bays as well as the lean-to originally served as a cow-house and hayloft, and although much of the interior fixtures and fitting have been removed, evidence for its former arrangement remains.

The northern three bays are accessed via three doors in the west wall of the barn which enter into a space which is now open to the roof. The eastern third of the cow house is floored over (Plate 14). The floor structure is composed of slender softwood joists tenoned into a longitudinal bridging beam supported by the stone walls and makeshift posts. The bridging beam features merchant's marks on the east side of its south end (Plate 15). Redundant mortises in the cow house walls and in the bridging beam indicate that there was a second

bridging beam and that the entire cow house was floored over. Parts of the lost bridging beam have been repurposed to prop up the one that remains. No original floorboards survive with the remaining floor which is instead covered with modern boarding. Traces of whitewash indicate that the entire ground floor of the cow house was whitewashed, a common feature in cow houses which improved hygiene and light. The floor of the cow house is constructed from concrete leaving no evidence of its original surface.

The remaining bridging beam has four redundant mortises in its soffit, most of which are obscured by the present posts. The mortises form two pairs and would have been for posts which would have supported the floor and formed part of the framing for timber stall dividers. It is likely that the arrangement was repeated on the missing bridging beam. Two stone slab dividers remain *in situ* in line with the presumed stall dividers and the remains of a stone wall (Plates 16 & 17). The slabs would have also acted as stall dividers, approximately one per metre, providing five dividers and six spaces for cattle. Assuming the arrangement was mirrored on the north side of the cow house, the main cow house would have accommodated twelve cows.

This arrangement indicates that the central door gave access to a central feeding passage, which also lead to the lean-to and presumably provided access to the hayloft. The two side doors therefore gave access to each individual half of the cow house. Each half also had its own muck hole and forking hole. The southern muck hole is still in situ but the northern opening, as mentioned above, has been blocked but is clearly visible from the inside (Plate 18).

The Lean-to

The lean-to to the rear of the cow house is accessed via two openings between it and the barn at its north and south ends. Structurally the lean-to is bonded into the stonework of the barn and appears to be contemporary with it. The lean-to is floored similarly to the cow house, with a north-south bridging beam and slender joists (Plate 19). The bridging beam has three redundant mortises in its soffit which may relate to former stall dividers.

The lean-to is currently divided with a makeshift east-west partition made with pallets and a plank and batten door which probably comes from one of the doorways. Although the partition is of fairly recent construction it probably reflects the original layout as the lean-to has two entrances and two small muck holes, one for each side of the partition. This indicates that the lean-to functioned as a cow house, however its scale indicates that it housed calves. If the stalls were divided along the bridging beam there would be space for up to four calves.

The first floor of the lean-to is accessed from a single doorway in the main hayloft. The interior of the first floor is devoid of features and consists of whitewashed stone walls and a now glazed forking hole in the east wall. Although the framing of the floor is largely original to the building the floorboards have been replaced with modern boarding.

The lean-to's roof is constructed similarly to the main barn and consists of a single half king-post truss with butt purlins, through tenons and face keys (Plate 20). The timbers are of softwood and display merchant's marks on the tie beam. The common rafters are mostly obscured by a modern covering but those that are visible appear to be contemporary with the truss and purlins. Although the first floor of the lean-to almost certainly functioned as a hayloft, it is unknown whether there was direct access between floors within the lean-to the four south-

eastern floor joists have been replaced removing possible evidence (or lack of evidence) of a hatch.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The form and function of Axe Head Barn, as well as its construction indicate that it was constructed as a combination barn in the late 18th or the early 19th century, functionally divided into a threshing barn to the south and a cow house and hayloft to the north. Cartographic evidence confirms that the barn existed and occupied its current footprint by the tithe map of 1841.

It is clear that the barn largely retains its original layout, and that the lean-to and all of the openings are original to the building, as is the majority of the timberwork in the roof and remaining cow house floor, this is indicated by the similarity of construction and lack of straight joints between the lean-to and main barn. Similarly the surviving structural timberwork uses the same construction methods, and hand-sawn softwood. The roof trusses all rest on bearers built into the fabric of the walls and the pitch of the gable appears not to have been altered. Therefore it is highly likely that the roof, and therefore the cow house floor, is contemporary with the rest of the barn.

The traditional carpentry, softwood, use of modern king-post trusses and hand-sawn timber indicate that the barn would not have been built later than the early 19th century, and probably not much earlier than the late 18th century. The inclusion of a threshing barn is also indicative of a date no later than the early 18th century, as technological improvements rendered traditional threshing floors obsolete in the early 19th century.

Although much of the original interior fixtures and fittings have been removed from the cow house, remaining slab dividers and redundant mortises in the remaining bridging beam indicate that the cow-house consisted of two rows of six stalls either side of the central passage. Little evidence remains as to the barn's later use, but it is likely that the threshing barn fell out of use fairly early as the repeal of the corn laws in 1846 and the opening of the American prairies in the 1870s made cereal production in many upland areas uneconomical. It is likely therefore that the two southern bays were latterly used for either general storage or for storing hay.

It is not clear when the cow house fell out of use, but it probably remained in use for at least the first half of the 20th century. The blocking of the muck hole and the removal of all stall dividers in the northern end of the barn indicate that the southern row of cow stalls may have remained in use after the northern stalls were removed.

The barn and the results of the study were considered in the context of the research aims in the *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework*, in particular those relating to the landscape impact of the early industrialisation of agriculture and the characterisation of the rural environment.

The barn is a typical example of a combination barn of the late 18th or early 19th century combining a threshing barn and cow house located in the upland landscape of the Peak District.

From the late 18th century onwards industrialisation was to have an increasing impact on agriculture. Mechanised threshing and winnowing rendered threshing barns redundant (at

different rates around the country), and the use of powered feed mills saw new buildings built to house the machinery as well as the adaptation of old buildings. In addition, the early 20th century saw the introduction of powered milking parlours. Despite this, Axe Head barn shows little evidence of industrialisation, apart from a gradual decline in its original functions. Any evidence of machinery that may have been installed in the barn has proved too ephemeral to survive into the present day. It is therefore not possible to determine what, if any, machinery may have been installed in the barn although it is possible that no major modernisations were made. By the 21st century the barn, in common with many traditional farm buildings was used principally for storage although it retains ample evidence of its original use and layout.

7 DISSEMINATION AND ARCHIVING

A bound copy of the report, along with a digital copy in PDF/A format, will be provided for inclusion within the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record. In addition, a digital copy in PDF/A format will be provided to the Peak District National Park Historic Building, Sites and Monuments Record.

A full archive for deposition with Derbyshire Record Office has been prepared. The full site archive has been prepared to recognised standards (Brown 2007). The archive comprises copies of correspondence relating to fieldwork, site notebooks/diaries, original photographic records, site drawings (plans, sections, elevations), and computer discs and printouts. An OASIS online record has been made and has the number archerit1-329227.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Adrian Hill for commissioning the report and arranging access to the barn.

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Archive Documents

Derbyshire Record Office

(D2360/3/184a-b) 1841 Chinley Tithe Map and Award

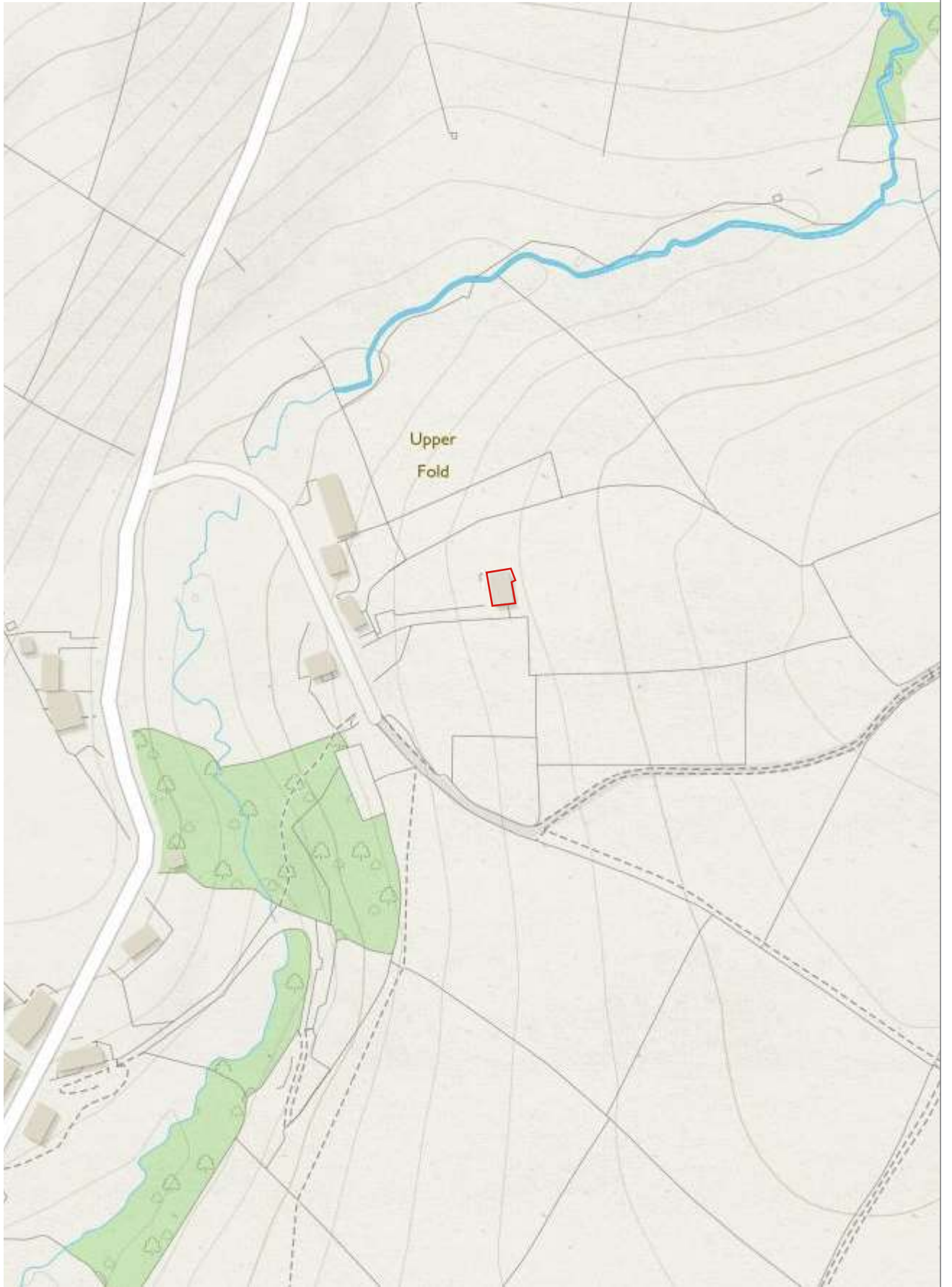
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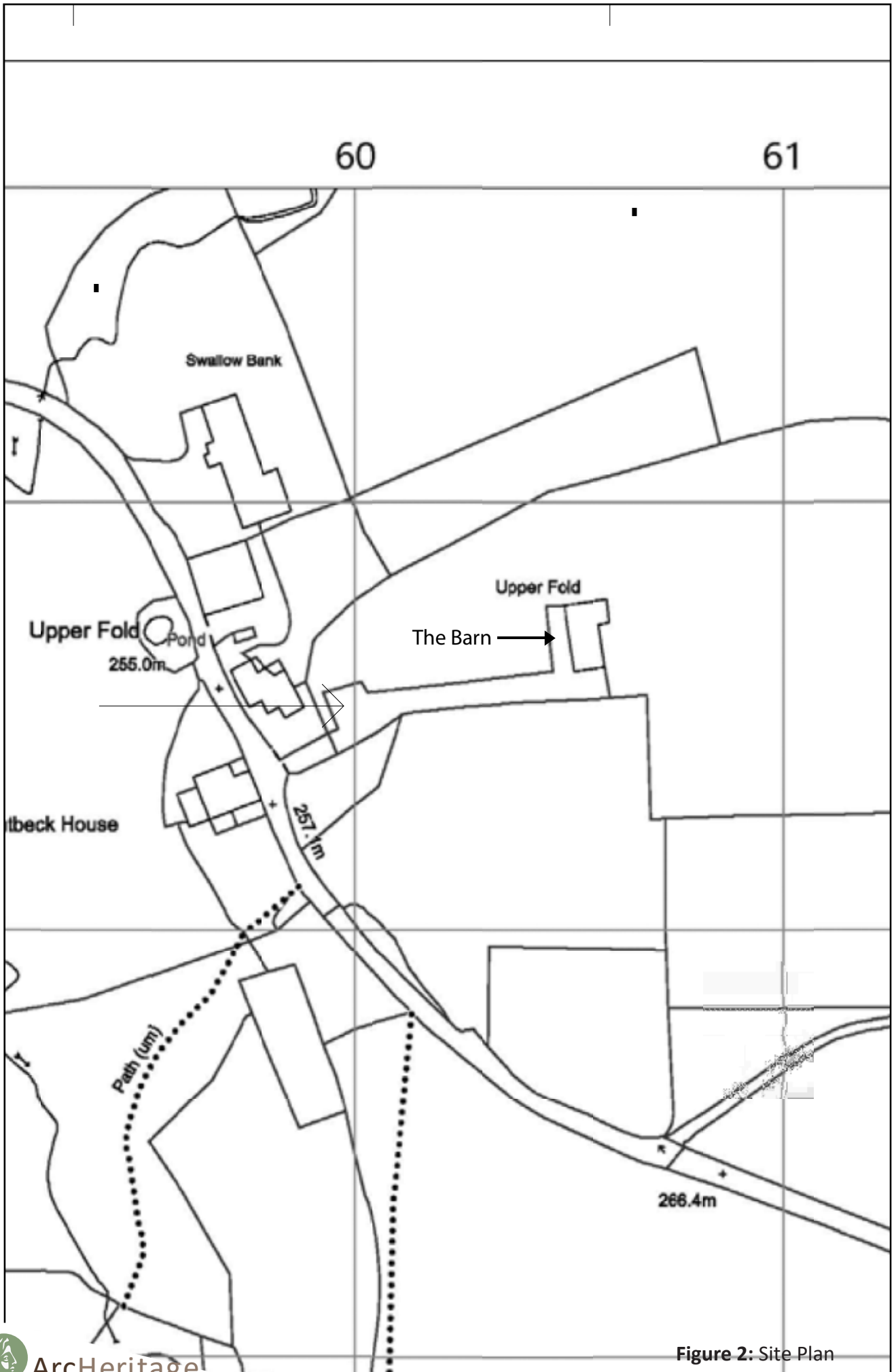
First edition 25 inch OS Map 1880

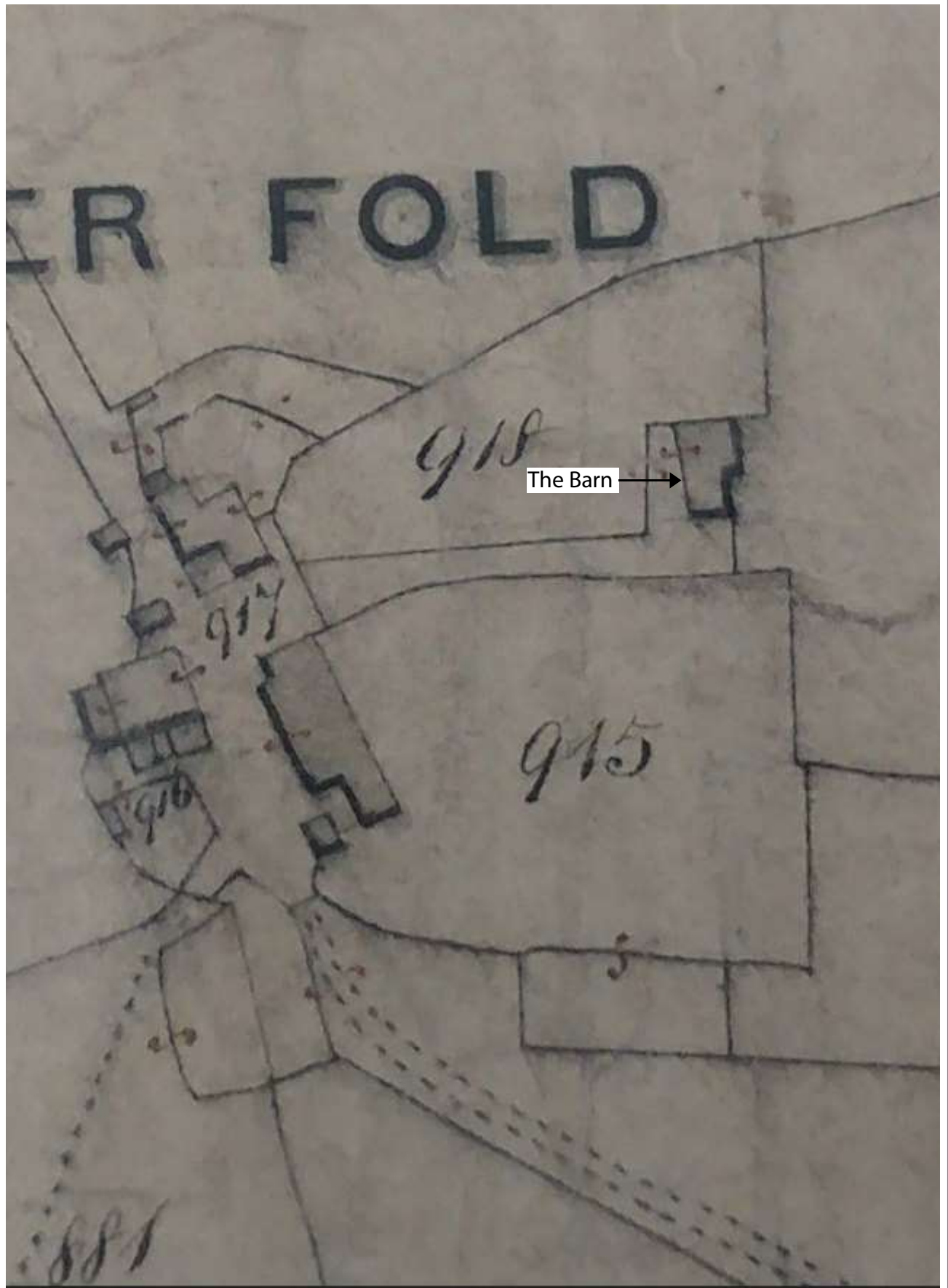
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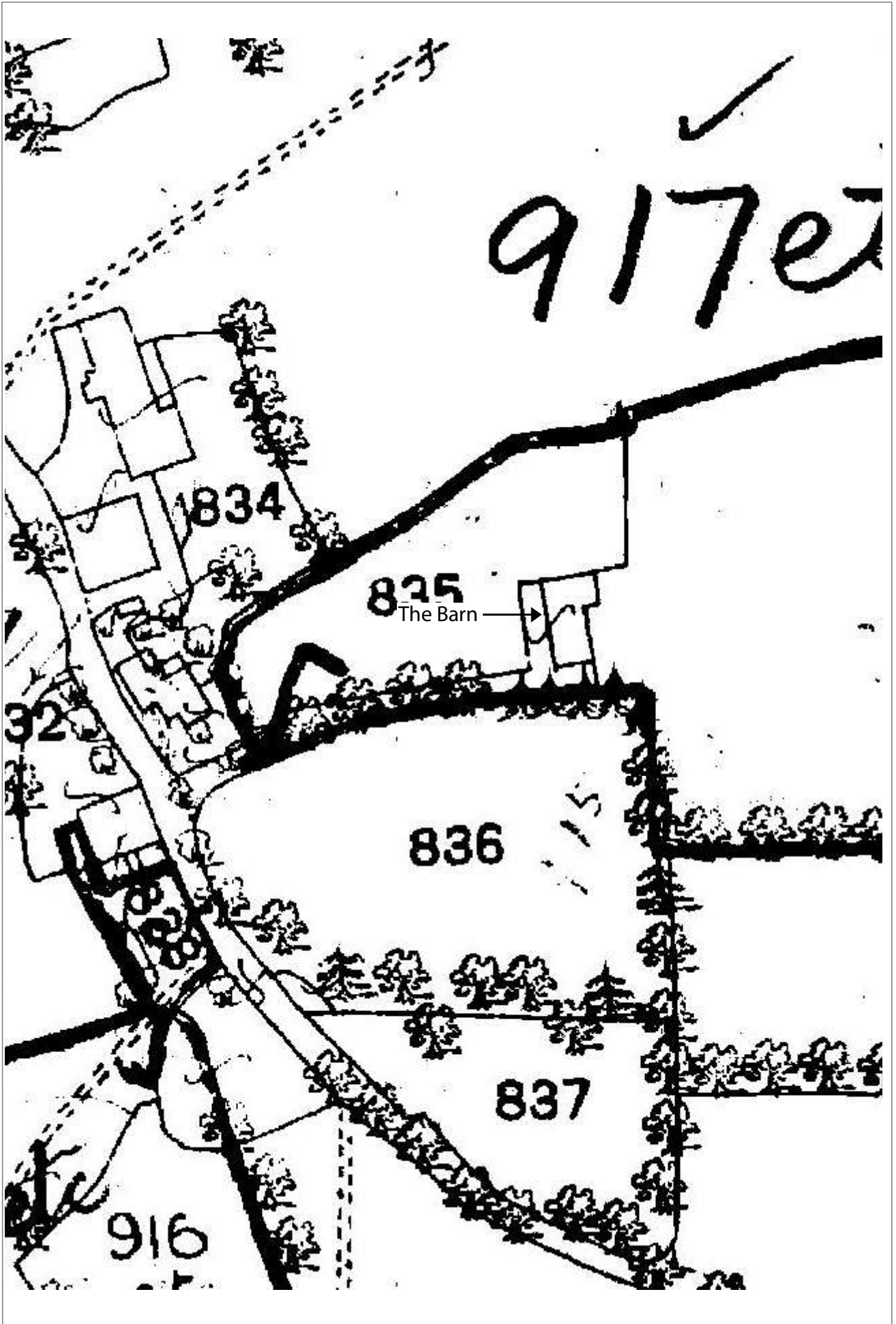
Third edition 25 inch OS Map 1921

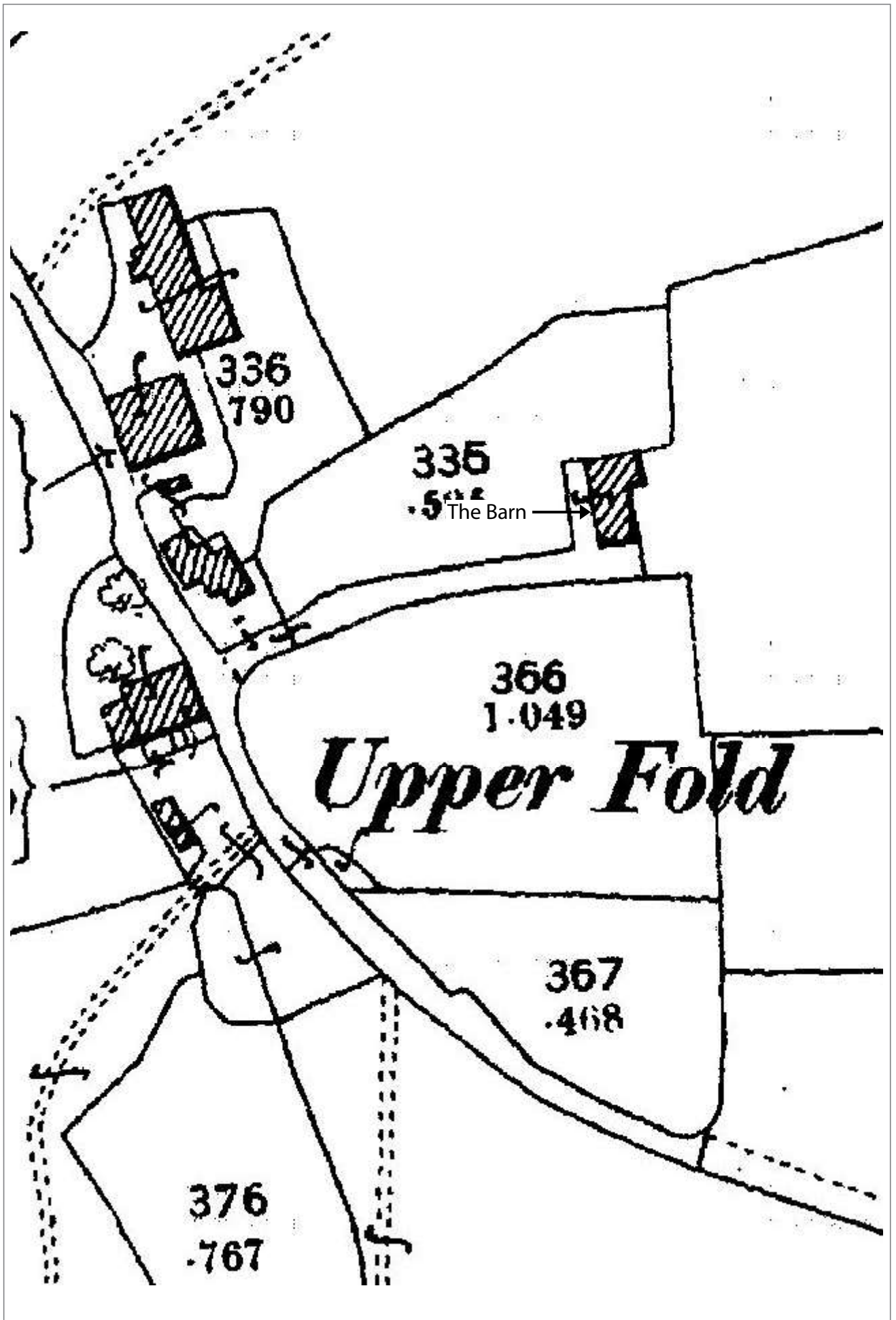
1971-79, 25 inch OS Map

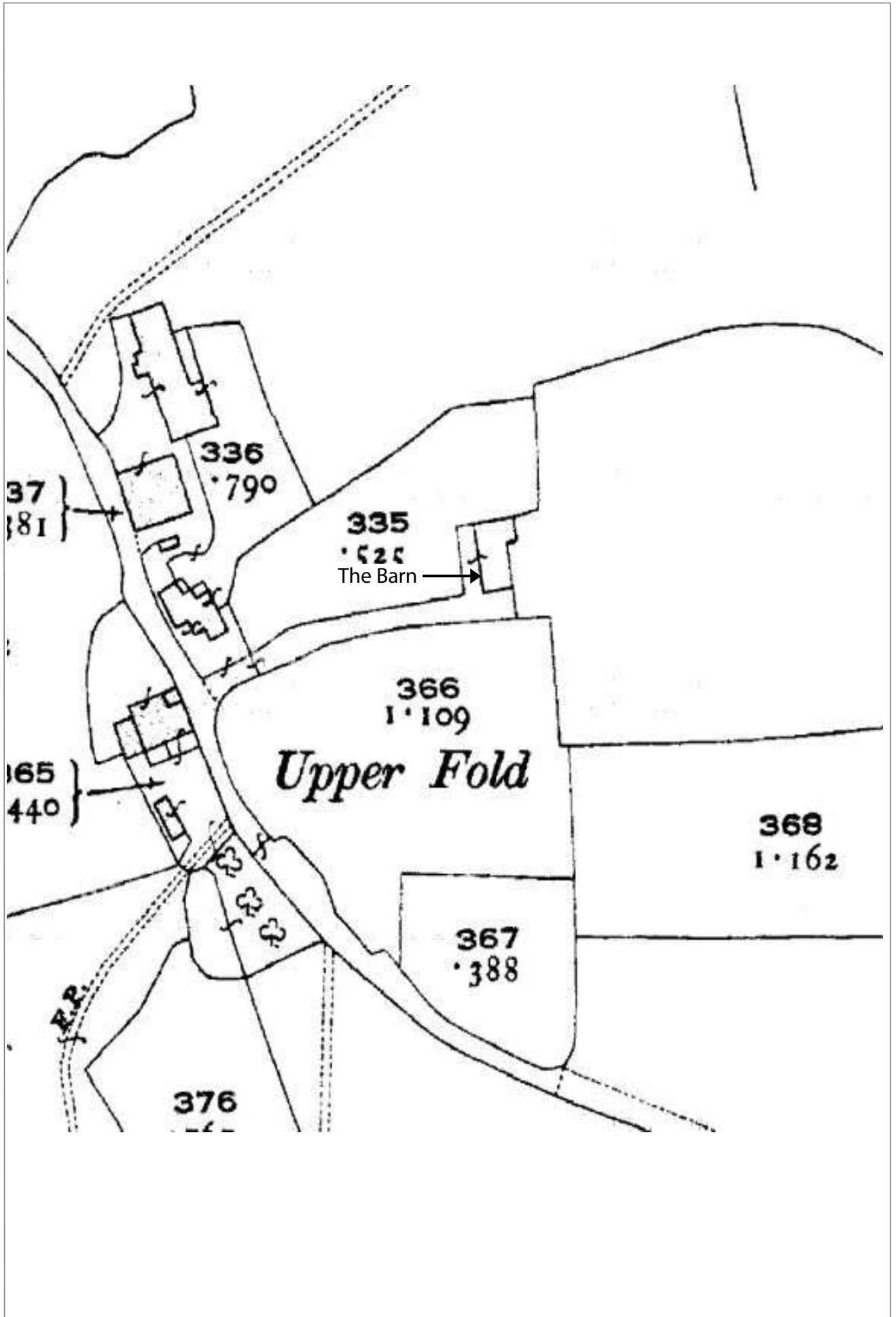


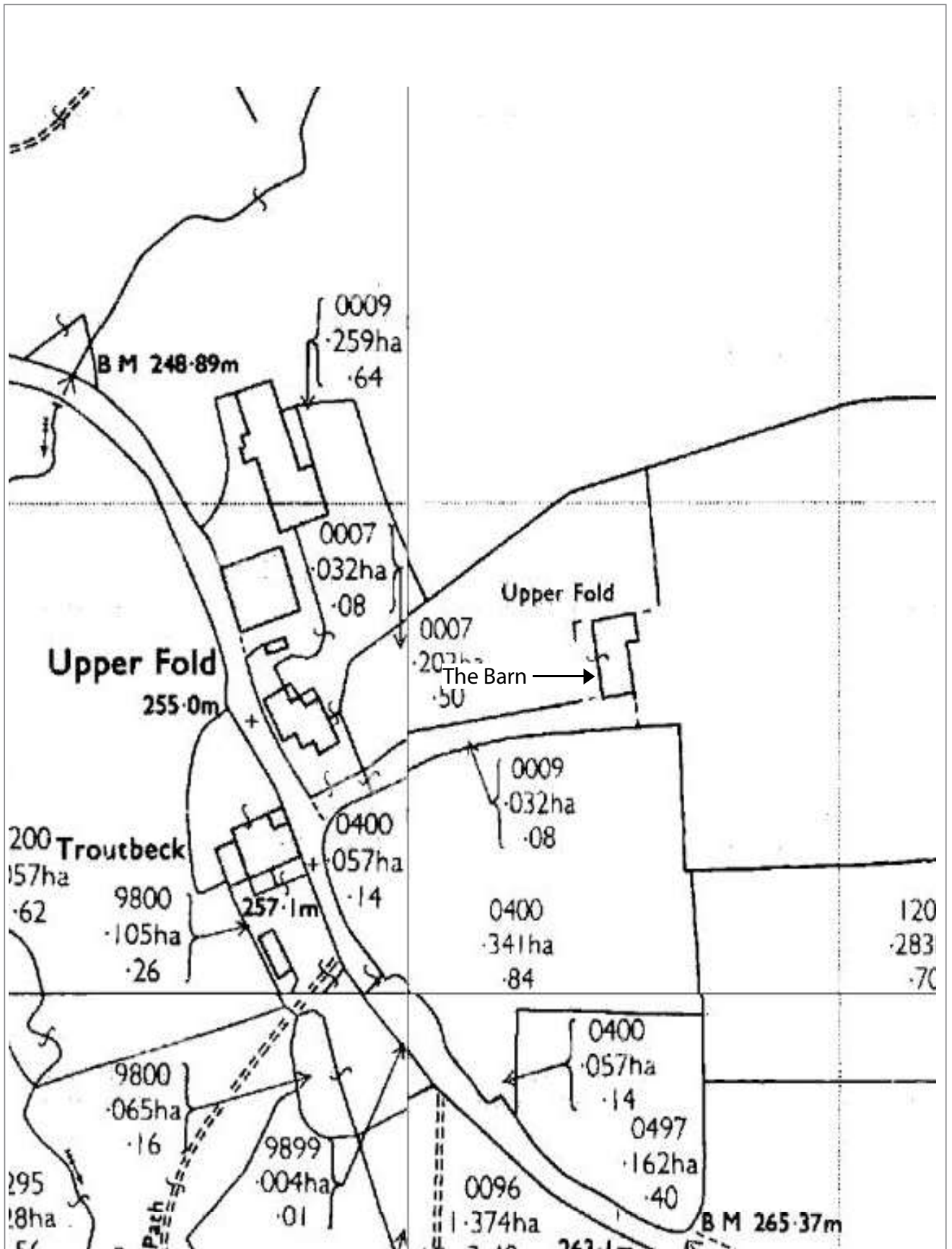


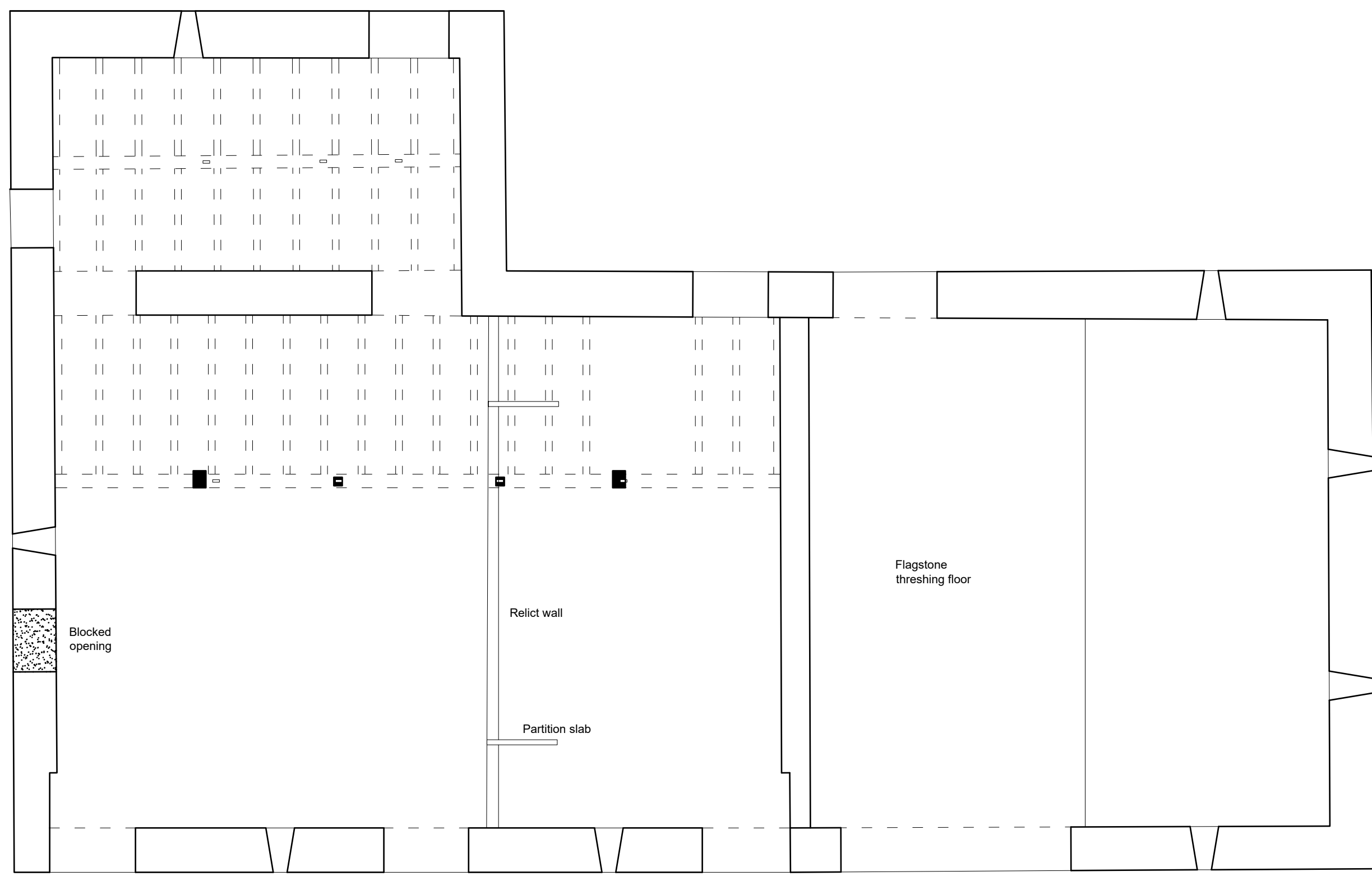
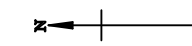


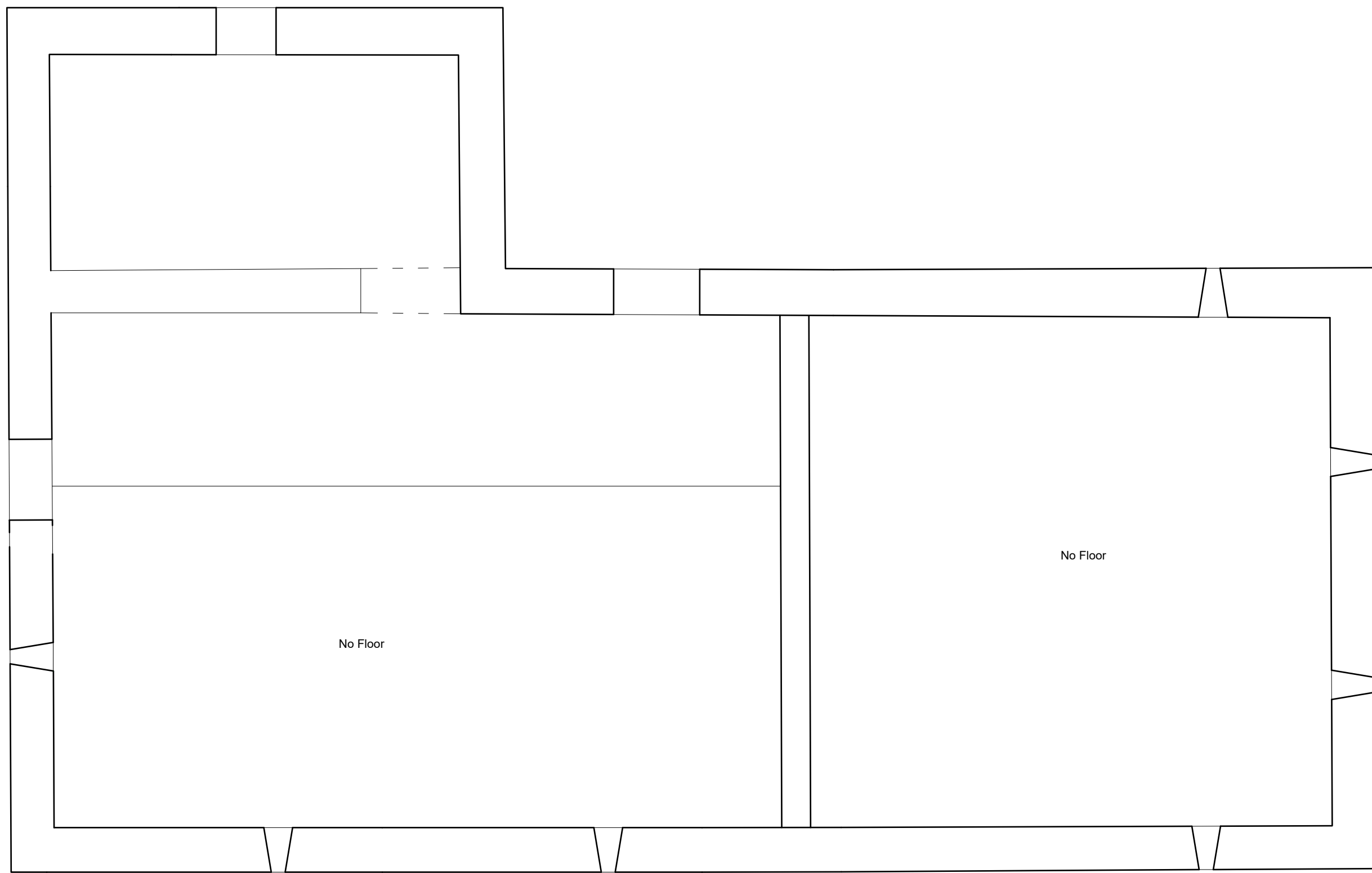
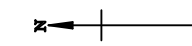


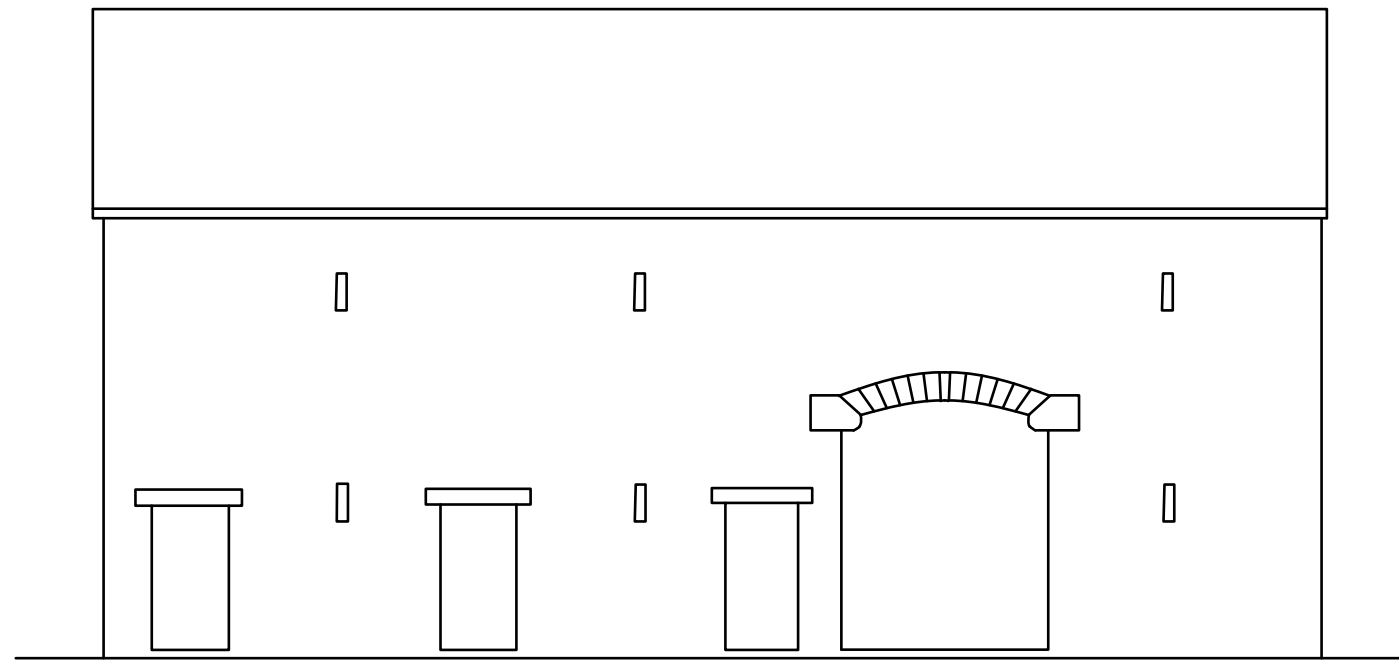




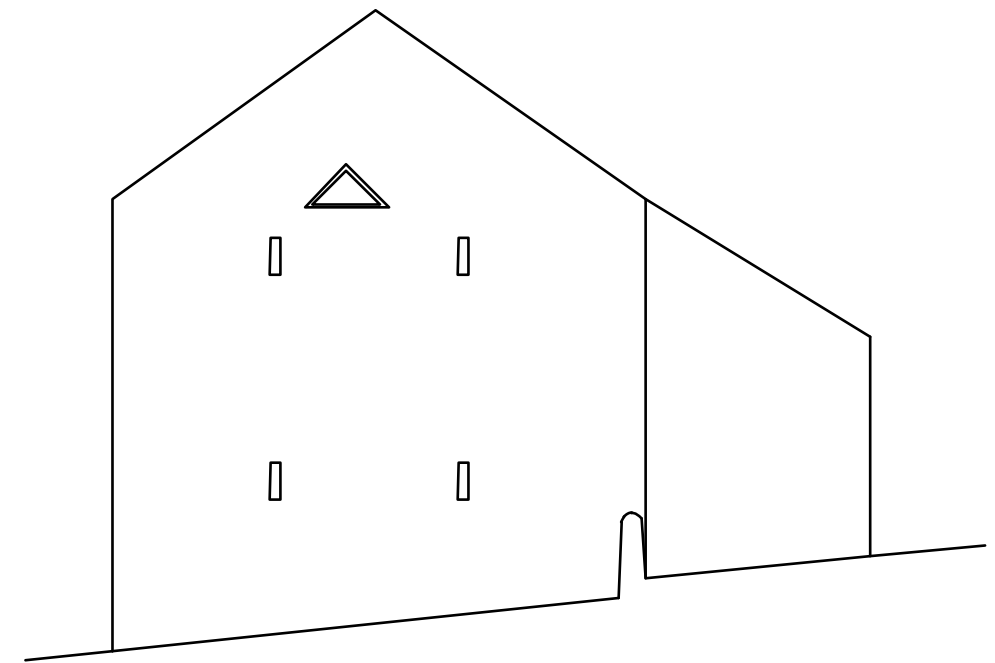




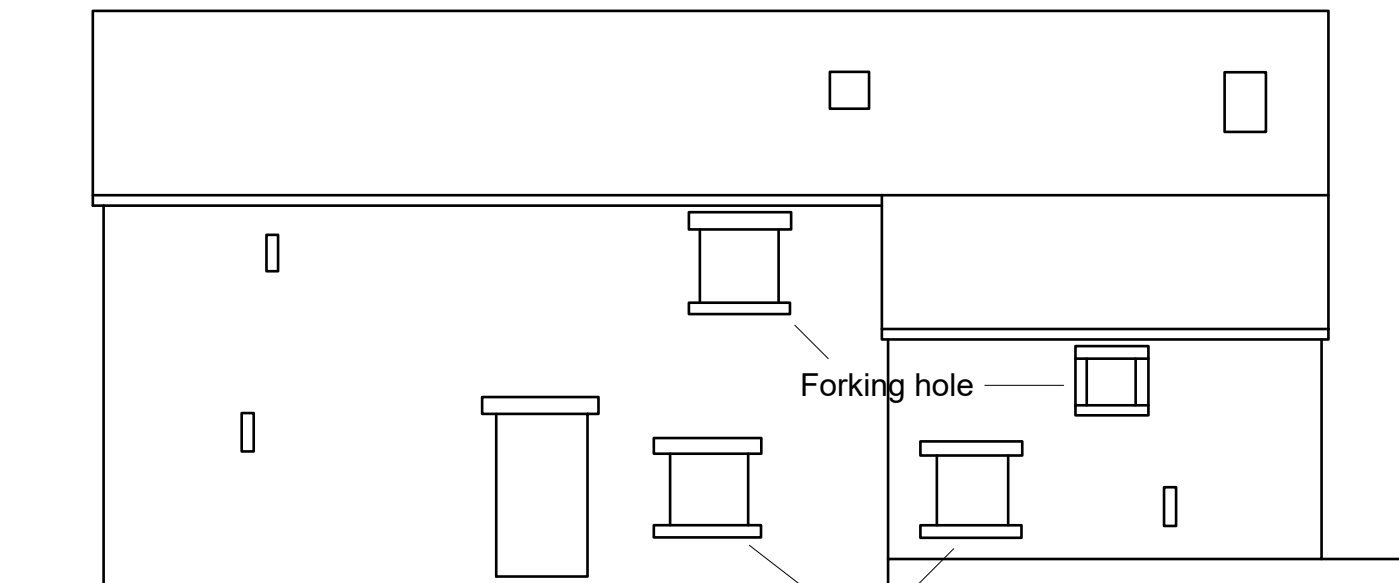




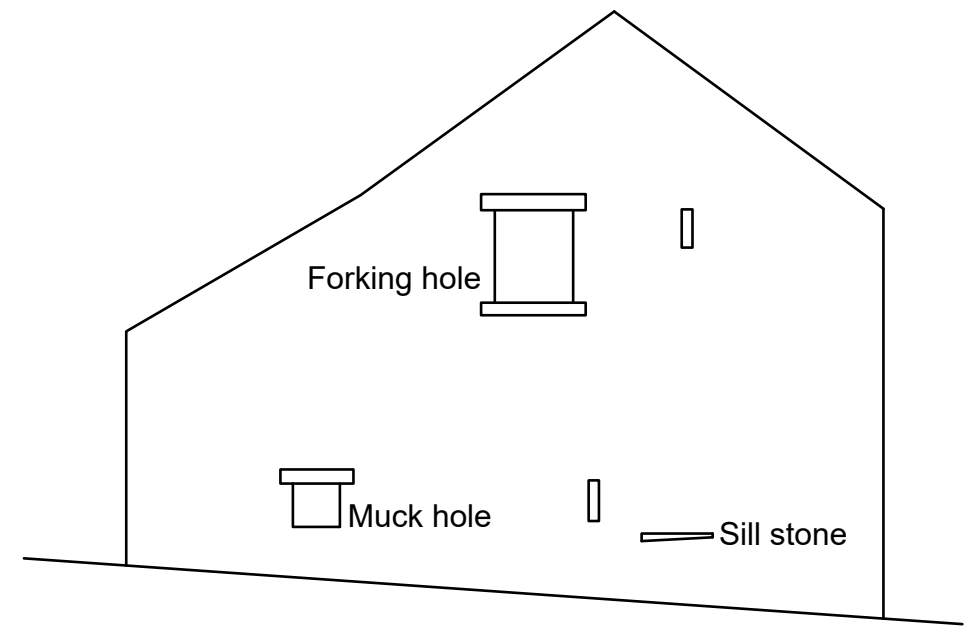
West elevation



South elevation



East elevation



North elevation



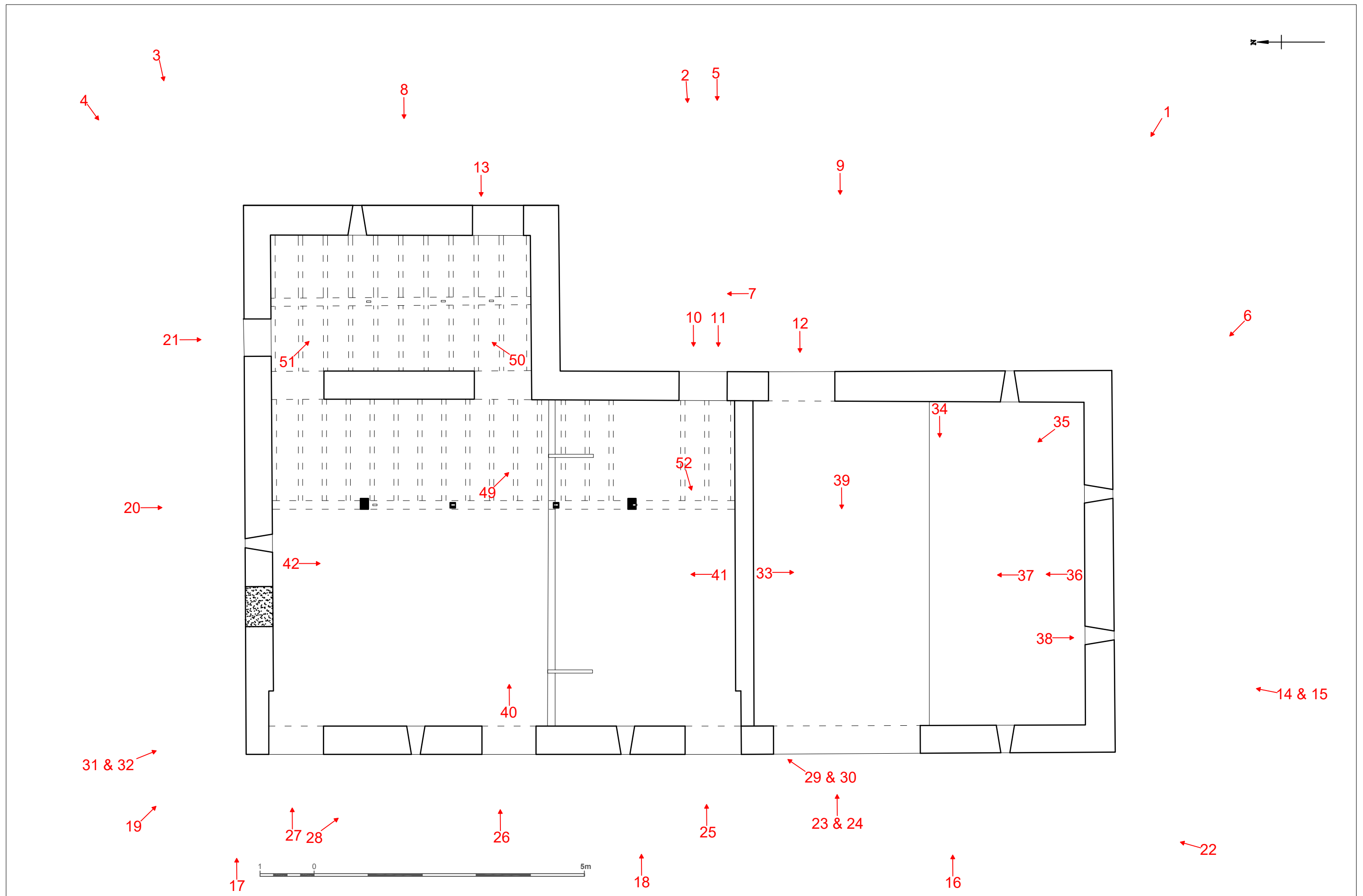
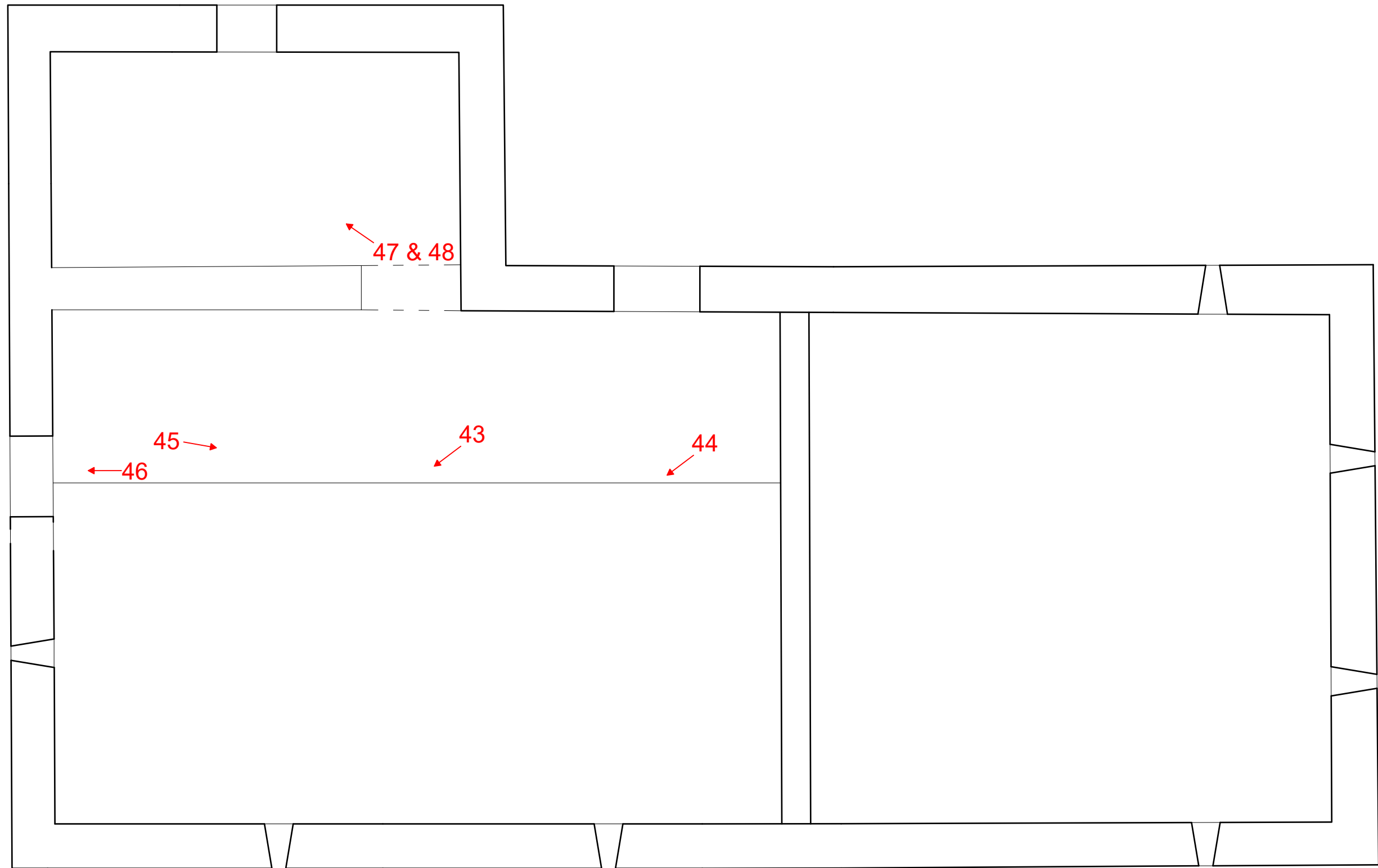
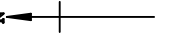


Figure 11. Ground floor photo location plan



PLATES



Plate 1: Axe Head Barn, looking south-east



Plate 2: West elevation

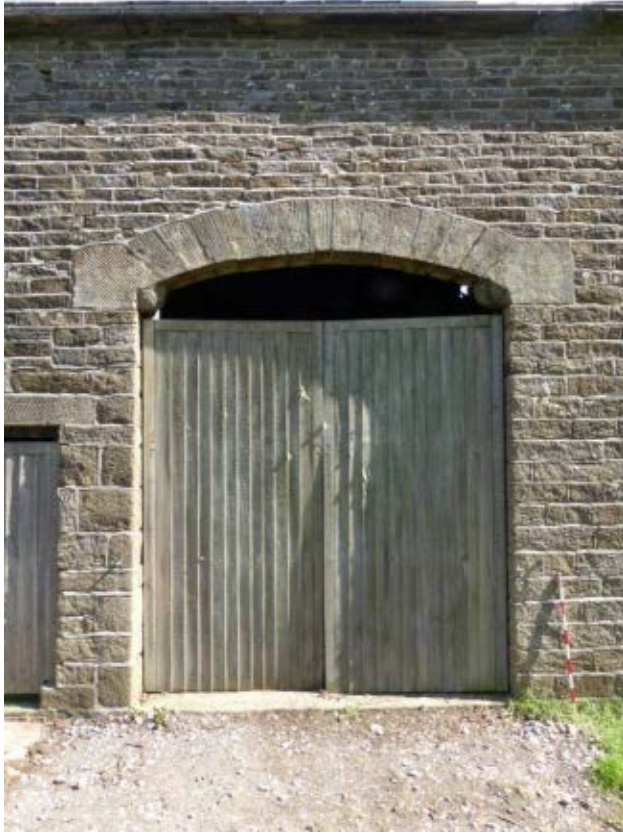


Plate 3: Main barn doorway, looking east



Plate 4: Central door to cow house, looking east



Plate 5: Central Paving setts in front of cow house entrance, facing south-east



Plate 6: West elevation



Plate 7: Muck hole in east wall of cow house with later glazing, facing west



Plate 8: South elevation



Plate 9: West elevation



Plate 10: The roof, looking north



Plate 11: Carpenter's marks on truss III, facing north-west



Plate 12: Interior of the barn, facing south



Plate 13: Flagstone threshing floor between the two barn doors, looking north



Plate 14: Interior of cow house, facing south



Plate 15: Interior of the cow house, merchant's marks on remaining hayloft bridging beam, facing west



Plate 16: Interior of the cow house, the remains of a stone wall run from the bottom right of the photo, past an *in-situ* slab divider, looking east



Plate 17: Interior of the cow house, *in-situ* slab divider, looking south-east



Plate 18: Interior of cow house, a blocked muck hole can be seen as well as the forking hole above, looking north



Plate 19: Ground floor of lean-to, facing south-east



Plate 20: First floor of lean-to, merchant's marks are visible on the right of the tie beam, facing north

Appendix I: Index of Digital Photography



1741_20180913_0001



1741_20180913_0002



1741_20180913_0003



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1741_20180913_0017



1741_20180913_0018



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1741_20180913_0020

Appendix I: Index of Digital Photography



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1741_20180913_0023



1741_20180913_0024



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1741_20180913_0026



1741_20180913_0027



1741_20180913_0028



1741_20180913_0029



1741_20180913_0030



1741_20180913_0031



1741_20180913_0032



1741_20180914_0033



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1741_20180914_0036



1741_20180914_0037



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1741_20180914_0039



1741_20180914_0040

Appendix I: Index of Digital Photography



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1741_20180914_0043



1741_20180914_0044



1741_20180914_0045



1741_20180914_0046



1741_20180914_0047



1741_20180914_0048



1741_20180914_0049



1741_20180914_0050



1741_20180914_0051



1741_20180914_0052

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