



BUILDING RECORDING

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NEWBIGGIN HEARSE HOUSE,
NEWBIGGIN,
COUNTY DURHAM

prepared for

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Client Chris Dauber
Location Newbiggin Hearse House, Newbiggin, Co. Durham
District Teesdale
Planning Ref DM/18/01414/FPA
Grid Ref NY 91509 27532

**NEWBIGGIN HEARSE HOUSE
NEWBIGGIN, COUNTY DURHAM
BUILDING SURVEY**

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Summary

Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd. (NAA) was commissioned by Chris Dauber to undertake a Historic England Level 2 historic building survey at Newbiggin Hearse House, Newbiggin, Co. Durham (NGR: NY 91509 27532). The requirement for work was stipulated under Condition 7 of Planning Consent granted for the conversion of the listed building to accommodation (Planning Ref. DM/18/01414/FPA).

The first documentary evidence of Newbiggin dates from the medieval period, but there is evidence of settlement prior to the Norman conquest. Newbiggin grew considerably during the post-medieval period due primarily to the growth of the lead mining industry in Middleton-in-Teesdale. However, as the lead mining industry declined in the late 19th century, so too did the village and it now hosts a considerably smaller population.

The hearse house is a Grade II listed building built between 1878 and 1879 to house a hearse on the ground floor and a reading room in the upper floor. Adjacent and to the rear of the Hearse House is a blacksmithing workshop. The funding for the hearse house and reading room was raised through subscriptions and by donation of the Duke of Cleveland, the primary landowner in the area, and the London Lead Company, the area's major employer. It is unknown when the workshop was built, but it was likely to be at a similar time. After the obsolescence of the horse-drawn hearse in the early 20th century, the hearse house was used primarily for storage. The reading room was closed during the inter-war years and the stairs removed in the 1960s.

A Historic England Level 2 Historic Building Survey was carried out on the 2nd May 2019. Each distinctive building element was assigned an individual number (context number) and a photographic record was produced. Photographs of the interior and exterior were taken from as near parallel as possible, with a ranging rod for scale. These photographs were combined with field observations to create an archive and interpretation of the building.

The hearse house and workshop were constructed in single phases with minor subsequent alteration. The first floor door and window of the reading room were blocked and the stairs were removed due to safety risks some decades later. It is unknown when the hatch in the first floor was created for access, but it was probably soon after the closure of the reading room. The workshop has undergone little change save for the addition of a larger door and the demolition of some of the walls to accommodate such an alteration. The roof tiles were recently removed.

It is rare to find a hearse house with a reading room over and the building is therefore of high significance. Such a combination reflects the social mores and utilitarian needs of the villagers in

the late 19th century. Moreover, the building retains an intrinsic aesthetic appeal that fits with the 19th-century character of the village. The blacksmith workshop also fits with the aesthetic character of the village and retains many of its original elements, thereby providing moderate-low significance.

This building survey has provided further understanding of the development of the Newbiggin Hearse House within the wider context of the area. Considering the state of the buildings, this survey provides sufficient archaeological mitigation towards the conversion of the buildings into accommodation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd. (NAA) was commissioned by Chris Dauber to undertake a Historic England Level 2 historic building survey at Newbiggin Hearse House, Newbiggin, Co. Durham (NGR: NY 91507 27541; Fig. 1, Plate 1). The requirement for work was stipulated under Condition 7 of Planning Consent granted for the conversion of the listed building to accommodation (Planning Ref. DM/18/01414/FPA).



Plate 1: exterior of the hearse house with the workshop in the rear looking south-west.

- 1.2 The 'descriptive survey' was carried out in accordance with the relevant standards and guidance as published by Historic England (2016) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2014). The following report uses both documentary and physical evidence to explore the origins and history of the building. This programme of works was executed according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (NAA 2019) which was approved in advance by Durham County Council.
- 1.3 The Hearse House was built between 1878 and 1879 and is a Grade II listed building (National Heritage List for England Entry 1322792), and is two storeys, of sandstone. The workshop to the rear is a single storey, of sandstone, with evidence of its use as a blacksmith shop still present. Both buildings have been disused for many years.

Scope of Work

- 1.4 The scope of work included both the hearse house and the workshop to the rear (Fig. 2), but pertained to the buildings and their fabric only and did not include the yard. The area surrounding the building was considered only in terms of the significance and context of the buildings, but was not otherwise included in the survey.

Aims and Objectives

- 1.5 The general aims of the building recording were to provide an outline survey (Historic England Level 2) of the interior and exterior of both floors of the hearse house and the single-storey workshop to the rear, along with an assessment of significance, in order to allow the subsequent conversion of the building. This survey comprised:
- the production of an annotated site plan, based on architects' plans and elevations, depicting the form and location of any structural features; and
 - a written and photographic record of the buildings and their structural features, providing details of their form, function, date and significance.
- 1.6 The work has the potential to further the understanding of life in the North Pennine dales, which is one of the key research priorities for the post-medieval period (PM7 Post-Medieval; Petts and Gerrard 2006, 181).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Documentary Evidence

- 2.1 A survey was conducted of all readily available documentary and cartographic material to inform an understanding of the development and history of the hearse house and workshop. These sources included:
- Durham Historic Environment Record (HER);
 - historic cartographic sources (Ordnance Survey maps); and
 - published historical studies.

Building Recording

- 2.2 Fieldwork was carried out on the 2nd May, 2019. Full access to the site had been granted for both the interior and exterior of both structures.

2.3 Each element was given a unique identification number (context number). All external features of the hearse house were numbered 1000+, with the interior of the ground floor labelled 1100+ and the first floor 1200+. The exterior of the workshop was labelled 2000+ with all interior features 2100+. A complete list of all archaeological features can be found in Appendix A. The existing architect's plans were consulted and annotated in the field along with detailed descriptions of each feature and room. To accompany the written record, photographs were taken of the interior and exterior of both buildings along with each archaeological feature. All photographs were taken from an angle as near parallel to the elevation or feature as possible, with each photograph containing an appropriate scale.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Location and geology

3.1 The site is centred on NY 91509 27532, just east of Rose Cottage, in Newbiggin, County Durham (Fig. 1). The hearse house lies on a north-east – south-west axis fronting onto the B6277. The workshop lies to the rear of and at an angle with the hearse house, along a nearly north – south axis.

3.2 The local geology comprises carboniferous limestone with subordinate sandstone and argillaceous rocks of the Yoredale Group, overlain by Devensian till (BGS 2019).

4.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The first documentary evidence of Newbiggin dates to 1133. There is possible evidence for earlier dispersed settlement, but whatever settlement existed in the early medieval period was destroyed in the Harrying of the North. There is, furthermore, little documentary evidence of medieval Newbiggin and no conclusions can be drawn as to the nature of the village. It may have been little more than a loose configuration of small farmsteads (DCC 2011).

4.2 In the post-medieval period, the lands at Newbiggin were held as part of the Raby Estate owned by the Neville family and passed into the hands of the Crown, following the fall of favour of the Nevilles after the Rising of the North. The lands were then granted to Lord Barnard and have remained in the Raby estate (DCC 2011).

4.3 The rise of the lead mining industry in the Tees Valley brought considerable growth to Newbiggin. The Duke of Cleveland, owner of the Raby Estate, leased the mineral rights

to the London Lead Company, which opened its North Pennine headquarters in Middleton-in-Teesdale. In 1801, the population of the Newbiggin township was 281 rising to 583 50 years later, at which point the village contained 92 houses, a small Wesleyan chapel (one of the oldest in the district), a smelt mill, a few tradesmen, and a school, built in 1799, which by then accommodated 50 students.

- 4.4 The link between the lead industry and the prosperity of Newbiggin is evident from population fluctuations in the later 19th century. In 1861, the population had risen to 641, residing in 107 houses, with 127 children in the school by the 1880s. However, the decline of the lead mining industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries caused many families to move away, leaving a population that is now around 120. There have been only two new buildings in the streetscape of Newbiggin since the turn of the 20th century.
- 4.5 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map (not shown) reveals that there were no buildings on the site of the hearse house and workshop in 1856. This fact is unsurprising considering the date of the hearse house, but confirms that the workshop post-dates the 1850s. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map (1898; not shown) shows the presence of the workshop at its current location. It is likely that the workshop was broadly contemporaneous with the hearse house.

Hearse House and Reading Room

- 4.6 The first documentary mention of the hearse house is from an advertisement in the Teesdale Mercury on the 22nd of May 1878, inviting tenders for the construction of a hearse house and reading room. The hearse was purchased from Barnard Castle for £40, but the matter of raising funds for the construction of the reading room was much more contested among different village factions. Eventually contributions were made by residents with significant donations of £10 each from the Duke of Cleveland and the London Lead Company (Collinson 2018).
- 4.7 The reading room opened on the 28th of October 1879 and it is presumed that the hearse house was also in use by then. Robert Allinson and Gibson Collinson were at one time the hearse drivers. However, the use of the hearse house was short-lived, with the arrival of the automobile rendering the horse-drawn hearse obsolete. It then lay forgotten in the hearse house until Joseph Sowerby eventually used it to make a wagon to carry wood for Bonfire Night (Collinson 2018).

- 4.8 The reading room seemed to have been well-used for a time. Five years after its opening, it had 35 members and over 200 books. However, by the inter-war period, it had become an unruly place and the parish council had the door walled up. The ground floor had for some years been used as storage space, including to house haymaking machinery or seats for the village hall. The stairs were later deemed unsafe and removed (Collinson 2018).
- 4.9 The closure of the reading room followed a national trend of disappearance as middle and lower classes began to assert their desire for self-governance and more entertainment became available. Reading rooms were built in rural areas throughout the 19th century, yet they were often imposed upon the working classes by upper classes as an alternative to the public house and reflected Victorian notions toward philanthropy, recreation, and class divides linked with the temperance movement. They reflected an idea of paternalism toward the working class and yet the idea of 'self-help' was integral in that it was imperative that they be self-sufficient through a subscription system (King 2009). It is unknown whether the funding for the reading room was separate to that of the hearse house or the primary subject of the Duke of Cleveland's donation. However, the construction of a combined hearse house and reading room is rare.
- 4.10 Little is known of the workshop to the rear, but it was the location of the village blacksmith shop. There were two village blacksmiths registered in the 1871 census – William Gibson and James Temple. Local poet Richard Watson wrote of the blacksmith William Gibson and his shop in his poem 'Journey to Work:'

Newbiggin's reached, where miners often stop
To light their pipes at Willie Gibson's shop.
A blacksmith Willie is, of well-tried skill
Whom we find hard at work call when we will;
Though toiling hard, he does no strong drink use,
Give him the proffer he'll at once refuse. (Watson 1884, 116)

It is likely that Gibson's shop is the one located behind the hearse house. It was eventually used as a private blacksmith shop for a local hobbyist. It is unknown when the workshop came into disuse but had long been abandoned by the 1960s.

5.0 BUILDING AND FORM

- 5.1 The hearse house is a two-storey square building facing onto the B6277. It is composed of sandstone rubble with lime pointing. It is different from most hearse houses in that it

contains a second storey reading room, accessed from steps along the east elevation. The ground-floor hearse house is accessed through arched double doors that open onto the road.

- 5.2 To the rear, the blacksmith workshop is at an angle to the hearse house but is of similar material. It is accessed from a large door to the east and has three windows, two on the east elevation, and one on the west. On the south wall is the forge, with some old tools and the bellows still intact.

Hearse House (1000)

Exterior

North-east elevation (1010)

- 5.3 The north elevation (Plate 2; Fig. 3) is the front of the Hearse House and faces onto the B6277. The elevation is gabled, with a square chimney **1012** at its peak and a small side doorway **1011** with access to the space between the Hearse House and the adjacent garage (part of the adjoining property). It is possible that this doorway is a later addition. The elevation contains large, arched double doors, that would have provided access for the hearse. The double doors **1112** are contained within a large stone arch **1111** with voussoirs and quoins. The east elevation has discontinuous quoins on both corners.



Plates 2 and 3: north (left) and east (right) elevations of the hearse house. The blocked window, door, and the scar left by the stairs is visible.

South-east elevation (1020)

- 5.4 The east elevation (Plate 3; Fig. 3) formerly held the stairs and an entrance to the reading room. The scar of the stairs **1021** is still visible leading up to the blocked door **1222** beside a blocked window **1221**. The stairs were originally supported by a stone wall **1013** on the south corner that is now partially collapsed. On the north corner of the elevation is a gutter **1022** that retains its original rain head.

South-west elevation (1030)

- 5.5 The south elevation (Plate 4; Fig. 4) is gabled and capped by a chimney **1031**. No evidence of a fireplace was found in the interior, so it is assumed that the chimney forms a purely decorative purpose to match that on the north elevation. Two terracotta vents **1131** are evident along the wall above a horizontal building scar **1032**, formed from the remains of mortar along the wall. The presence of metal pegs **1033** and an electrical fitting **1034** imply the previous existence of roof structure in the space between the hearse house and the workshop that may have housed a woodshed for the forge.



Plates 4 and 5: oblique views of the south (left) and west (right) elevation. The metal pegs and electrical fitting are visible and labelled on the south elevation. The niche is evident on the west elevation.

North-west elevation (1040)

- 5.6 The west elevation (Plate 5; Fig. 4) can only be accessed from the side doorway **1011** and contains a single niche **1041**. There is no evidence that this niche once served as a window or ventilation, as there is no trace of it inside the hearse house. Its function is unknown. There is an electrical fitting **1034** in the south corner.

Interior

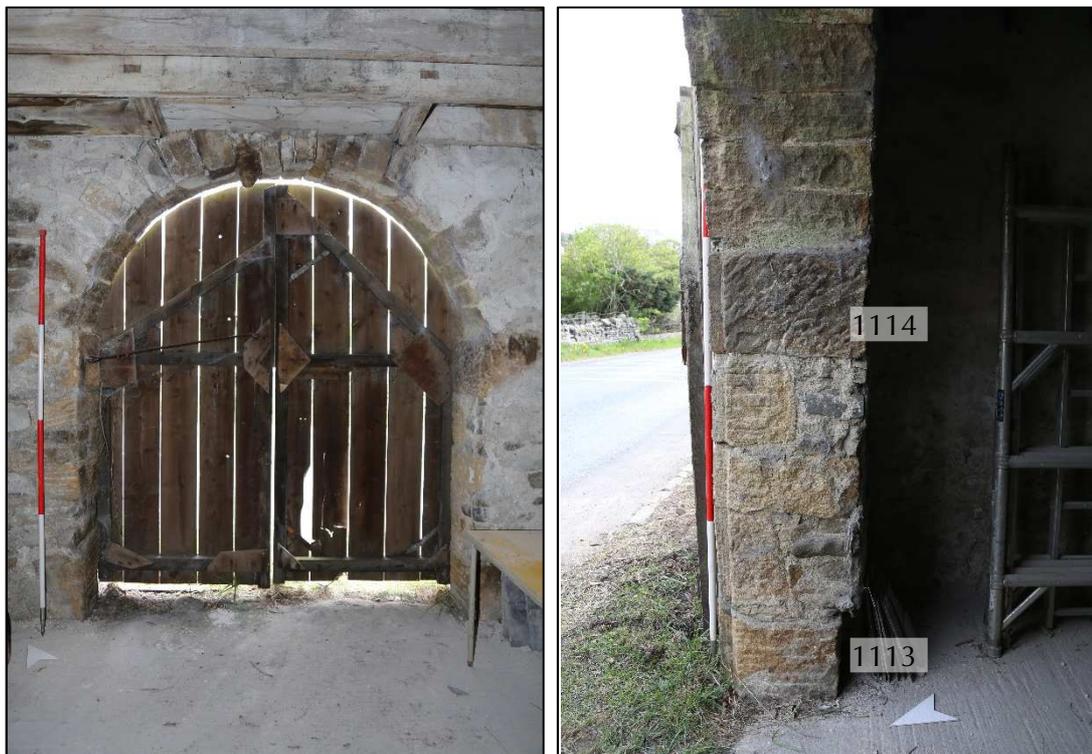
Ground floor (1100)

- 5.7 The interior of the hearse house was originally entirely whitewashed, much of which still remains. On the south wall (Plate 6; Fig. 5), the two round terracotta vents **1131** would have provided extra ventilation. A hatch in the ceiling in the south-east corner provides access to the floor above with a ladder. The ladder hatch is a later addition that post-dates the removal of the steps on the east elevation. The floor of the hearse house is of cement.

- 5.8 The doorway of the hearse house (Plate 7) is the distinguishing feature of the first floor. The wooden door **1112** is intact and fits, when closed, into a groove on the outside of the doorway arch **1111**. Within the archway (Plate 8) are small wooden remains **1114**, the use of which is unknown. In the lower east corner of the doorway is a small niche **1113**, also serving an unknown function.



Plate 6: south wall of first floor with the terracota vents and ladder hatch visible.



Plates 7 and 8: view of the doorway arch (left) with the niche and wooden remains visible (right).

First floor (1200)

- 5.9 The first floor (Plate 9; Fig. 4) would have once been a well-lit reading room with light streaming in from the now-blocked window **1221** and door **1222** located on the east wall. The only source of light is now the skylight **1202** (Plate 10) which lies south of a single truss **1201** that supports the roof (Fig. 6). It is uncertain whether this skylight is a later addition, but it is likely. Joists are visible on the north side of the roof structure indicating the original ceiling level. This level matches that of the plaster on the south wall. The floor consists of wooden planks, some of which are damaged and unstable.



Plate 9: north elevation of the first floor.

- 5.10 The walls of the reading room were originally plastered and contained a skirting board **1204** lining the walls, both of which remain on the west wall. The south wall has still largely intact plaster remains but the skirting board is completely missing. The east wall (Plate 11) retains much of the plaster and the moulded doorframes **1223**, but the skirting board has been removed. The north wall retains some of the plastering, with a patch missing around the fireplace **1211**, but the skirting board has been removed west of the fireplace. The fireplace is small, under 1m high with a cast-iron surround. The grate has been removed and lain to one side.



Plate 10: truss, joists, and skylight looking north.



Plate 11: east wall of the first floor. The window and door are blocked but still retain their doorframes.

Workshop (2000)

Exterior



Plate 12: exterior of the workshop looking south-east.

North elevation (2010)

- 5.11 The north elevation (Plates 12 and 13; Fig. 7) has a gable end and contains a single horizontal building scar **2011** created from the remains of pointing similar to the building scar on the south-west elevation of the hearse house and it was likely caused by the creation of a shelter, perhaps for a woodshed for the forge.



Plate 13: north elevation of the workshop with the evident horizontal scar.



Plate 14: east elevation of the workshop.

East elevation (2020)

- 5.12 The east elevation (Plate 14; Fig. 8) is the front of the workshop. A large sliding corrugated-metal door **2121** provides the only access into the building. Beside it are two windows **2122** and **2123** with stone lintels and sills. The north window **2122** has round holes cut into the north half of the sill (Plate 15) which may have been used for a shutter. These holes are not replicated elsewhere.



Plate 15: holes on the sill of the north window.

South elevation (2030)

- 5.13 The south elevation (Plate 16; Fig. 9) is gabled, and topped with a chimney **2131**. A single small vent is located in the centre of the wall and would have provided ventilation for the forge on the other side of the wall.



Plate 16: south and west elevations looking north-east.

West elevation (2040)

- 5.14 The west elevation (Fig. 10) has a single window **2141** that opens onto the wall of the adjoining property. The window is similar in dimension to those on the east wall.

Interior (2100)



Plate 17: interior of the workshop looking south-east. A drill press is located on the table along the east wall.

- 5.15 The workshop was once protected by a stone-flagged roof, which has now been removed due to safety concerns with the flags now stacked on the flagstone floor **2101** (Plate 17). The roof structure **2102** remains and consists of three king-post trusses with offset purlins that join at the middle truss (Fig. 11; Plate 18).



Plate 18: roof structure of the workshop. The purlins are offset and join at the truss.

- 5.16 A wooden beam **2112** across the north wall (Plate 19) is in line with the top of the door; and is lined with nails, perhaps used to hang tools. Similar nails are found on the north and central trusses and may also have been used to hang implements or to support a partition wall. Below the beam on the north wall is an old fire extinguisher **2152**.



Plate 19: north wall of workshop with the red, conical extinguisher beside the old door.

5.17 The workshop is accessed from the large modern metal door, but the original door **2111** remains, still on its hinges attached to a post flush with the north wall. The metal door **2121** is supported on a metal frame which is nestled into the wall on the south side of the doorway. To the south of the door are two windows **2122** and **2123** with wooden sills and lintels and which are splayed through a partial thickness of the wall (Fig 11). Lining the wall beneath these windows is a long table on which lie several tools (Plate 20) once in use at the workshop, including an old drill press, bench vice, tongs, hammers, and punches.



Plate 20: south window with tools leaning against the side.

5.18 Most of the south wall is covered by the forge and bellows (Plate 21; Fig. 12). The forge consists of a large stone hearth **2131**, which is capped by the chimney **2132** (Plate 22). The hearth measures approximately 2.5m across the south wall at a height of 2m and is typical of a blacksmith's forge. The key to a successful forge is being able to control airflow in order to control the heat of the fire (Bealer 1995). Air comes from the *tuyere* **2138** (Plate 23), which is attached to the bellows (it serves as a connector between the forge and the bellows). Vents in the rear of the forge **2133** (Plate 24) or to the side **2135** (Plate 25) may have also been used for extra ventilation or to remove excess ash or debris in the hearth. Two niches on either side of the forge **2134** may have been used for storage along with the one below **2136** (Plate 26). On the side of the forge is a long bench **2137** (Plate 27), which may have held a water trough for cooling tools and creations.



Plate 21: forge and bellows located on the south wall of the workshop.



Plate 22 - 23: parts of the forge: (upper left) chimney; (upper right) tuyere; (lower left) rear vent; (lower right) side vent.



Plates 26 and 27: east side of forge with bellows looking south-west (left); west side of forge with bench looking south-east (right).

- 5.19 The west wall (Plate 28) contains a single window **2141**, with wooden sills and lintels partially splayed. Some parts of the wall are limewashed. More limewash appears on other wall and would originally have covered most of the building due to its antibacterial properties.



Plate 28: west wall of workshop.

6.0 PHASING AND DISCUSSION

Hearse house and reading room

- 6.1 The hearse house has two building phases, the first being its construction and the second occurring after the closure of the reading room when the window and door were blocked. Later, the steps were removed, but the fabric of the building remained untouched. The closing of the reading room and removal of the steps required the opening of the hatch in the floor for access to the first floor, but it is uncertain how long after the initial closure this event occurred. In a photograph from 1960 (Plate 29), the building looks largely similar to its current state, but with the stairs extant.
- 6.2 Both floors have remained largely unchanged. In comparing the hearse house at Newbiggin with photographs and examples of others around County Durham, the building looks largely similar, except, of course for an upper storey. Most hearse houses consist of a small building, generally with an arched doorway for the hearse to exit. Notably, however, most hearses are intimately connected with churchyards (Anonymous 2017). The dissociation of the hearse house with any sort of churchyard makes this building distinctive.



Plates 29: photograph of the hearse house 1960 (Chris Dauber).

6.3 The architecture of reading rooms, as with most buildings, generally reflected their funding. If largely sponsored by local lords, they were grandiose; if funded by public subscription, as this one was, then they were much more utilitarian in nature, as simple structures with ample light. The combination of hearse house and reading room demonstrates a building campaign that combined social mores and utilitarian needs.

Workshop

- 6.4 The workshop still retains some of its original features, most notably in the survival of the forge and bellows, and the long table with the drill press, vice, and tools and provides a good understanding of how a Victorian blacksmith workshop would have appeared.
- 6.5 The only significant phase of change occurred when the door was removed and replaced with the sliding corrugated-metal door. At that time, the east wall was cut back to create a larger opening for the door. The lintel was removed as was the wall above it so that the new door reaches the full height of the wall. The stone slate roof was recently removed.

7.0 SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.1 As a listed building, the hearse house is nationally significant. The superposition of hearse house and reading room is rare and therefore has high archaeological value. Furthermore, the construction of such a building is associated with a historical movement that saw the construction of reading rooms across the country based on social and moral ideas. The building also retains a certain aesthetic appeal and is part of a key view into the village from both sides of the B6277. A summary of its values can be found in Table 1.

7.2 **Table 1** – Summary of heritage significance of the hearse house and reading room

Value	Description	Ranking	Overall
Evidential	The building provides a rare example of a combination of hearse house and reading room.	High	High – moderate
	The building provides evidence of the use of hearse houses and reading rooms.	Moderate	
Historic	The building is associated with a national trend of reading room construction related to Victorian social constructs and ideas of philanthropy.	High	High
	The dissociation of the hearse house with a church and churchyard is unique.	High	
	The documentary evidence regarding the construction of the building shows the needs and mores of Newbiggin residents in the late Victorian period.	High	
	The building is associated with an important local landowner, the Duke of Cleveland, and a significant local employer, the London Lead Company.	Moderate	
Aesthetic	The building fits with the aesthetic appeal and 19th century character of the village.	High	High
	The building is central in key views into the village from both ends of the B6277.	High – moderate	
Communal	The building has served as storage and as a play-place for many members of the community.	Low	Low

7.3 The blacksmith workshop to the rear, though less visible from the road, is aesthetically congruous with the hearse house and neighbouring buildings and contributes to the largely 19th-century character of the village. The retention of much of the blacksmithing accessories is of archaeological interest as it provides good insight into the function of a workshop and the practice of blacksmithing, yet many of these accessories are not intimately related to the building fabric, but are simply found within the building. The building is therefore of moderate – low significance. A summary of significance is found in Table 2.

Table 2 – summary of heritage significance of the workshop

Value	Description	Ranking	Overall
Evidential	The fittings and accessories in the building provide a good example of the layout and function of a blacksmith workshop.	High – moderate	Moderate

	The fabric shows little evidence of change and provides some evidence as to the use of the building.	Low-moderate	
Historic	The building is associated with a famous local poet.	Low	Low-moderate
	The building was constructed during a period of historical growth for Newbiggin.	Low	
Aesthetic	The building fits with the aesthetic appeal and 19th-century character of the village.	Moderate	Moderate
Communal	The building has negligible communal value.	Negligible	Negligible

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The impact of the conversion of both buildings to accommodation is low. Much of the fabric of the hearse house and reading room will remain unaltered, though portions of the walls of both workshop and hearse house will need to be removed to create access between buildings. In the workshop, however, the hearth and other blacksmithing equipment will be removed. Nevertheless, the current report is considered to be a comprehensive record of the Hearse House and workshop sufficient enough to mitigate against the potential loss of any archaeological remains during the conversion phase.

8.2 There is no indication that any additional information regarding the above ground structure would be gained from further investigation or from monitoring during the conversion works. There are to be only limited further sub-surface works as the floor level of both buildings is to remain the same.

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APPENDIX A: GAZETTEER

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1000	hearse house exterior	The hearse house is two-storeys, constructed of sandstone rubble. It faces onto the B6277.	1010 – north-east elevation 1020 – south-east elevation 1030 – south-west elevation 1040 – north-west elevation	
1010	north-east elevation	The north-east elevation is gabled with a chimney at the top. Some sections of quoins exist on both corners but are not consistent. The most distinctive feature of the elevation is the wooden door set into a stone arch doorway. A side door opens onto a small space between both properties.	1011 – side doorway 1012 – north-east chimney 1013 – buttress 1111 – doorway arch 1112 – door	

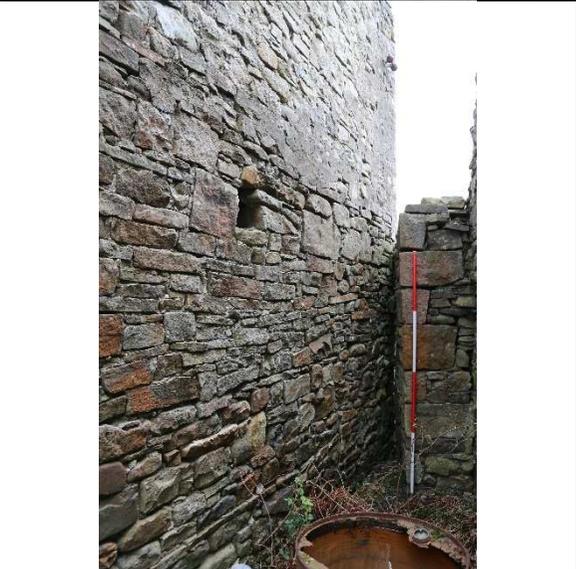
Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1011	side doorway	<p>The side doorway accesses the west elevation and a small space between the hearse house and the adjoining property. The doorway is constructed of a single stone lintel with crenelated stones above. It is approximately 0.95x1.6m with a depth of 0.3m.</p>		

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1012	north-east chimney	The north-east chimney is composed of stone and is square with a small parapet at the top.	1031 – south-west chimney	
1013	stair support	This short wall used to support the stairs on the east elevation, but is now beginning to collapse. The buttress is 0.5m wide with a minimum height of 2m and a maximum height level with the door threshold at 2.7m. The buttress extends 1.2m from the wall.		

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1020	south-east elevation	The south-east elevation is of stone rubble and originally held the access to the reading room via the stairs and doorway. The door and adjacent window have now been blocked and the stairs removed. A large stone crack cuts through the stairs indicative of structural integrity of the east elevation.	1021 – step scar 1020 – gutter 1221 – blocked window 1222 – blocked door	
1021	stair scar	A scar along the east wall indicates the presence of 13 steps up to the door to the reading room. Each stair is approximately 0.3x0.17m. The stairs begin 0.7m from the north corner of the elevation.		See above

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1022	gutter	A round cast-iron gutter with a semi-octagonal rain head is located along the north corner of the elevation.		
1030	south-west elevation	The south-west elevation is of stone rubble and culminates with a gable and a chimney. A horizontal pointing scar indicates the presence of a shelter of some sort, perhaps to house items related to the electrical fittings visible. Two vents are visible along the wall.	1031 – south-west chimney 1032 – horizontal scar 1033 – hooks 1034 – electrical fitting 1131 – vents	
1031	south-west chimney	The south-west chimney is decorative, as there is no indication of a fireplace on the interior of the south wall. It is similar in dimension and shape to the north chimney.	1012 – north-east chimney	See above

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1032	horizontal scar	The horizontal scar is formed from pointing and may have originated as the seam between a temporary shelter and the walls of both the hearse house and workshop. The scar is approximately 1.75m long and approximately 2.5m above the ground.		
1033	pegs	Three large iron pegs stick out of the wall, one of which is inserted in the east vent. These nails may have initially supported wiring or a cable related to the electrical fitting on the corner.	1034 – electrical fitting	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1034	electrical fitting	The electrical fitting lies on the south-west corner of the building and would have been used to hold a wire or cable coming down the temporary shelter which formed the wall scar.	1033 – hooks	
1040	north-west elevation	The north-west elevation is of plain sandstone rubble with a single square niche placed in the middle of the wall.	1041 – niche	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1041	niche	A square niche, measuring 0.22x0.26m. Its use is unknown.		
1100	ground floor	The ground floor consists of plain walls on the south, east, and west with two terracotta vents along the south wall. Along the north wall is a rounded arch and door. All walls would have originally been covered in plaster, though some of it has now fallen away.	1110 – north-east wall 1120 – south-east wall 1130 – south-west wall 1140 – north-west wall	
1110	north-east wall	The north-east wall contains the only access into the building. A large rounded stone archway with a wooden door opens onto the road.	1111 – doorway arch 1112 – wooden door 1113 – door niche 1114 – wooden remains	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1111	doorway arch	The doorway arch is constructed from 22 voussoirs forming a rounded arch. The arch is 0.5m thick. The north side of the arch is incised to fit the wooden door.	1112 – wooden door 1113 – doorway niche 1114 – wooden remains	
1112	door	The door is constructed of two wooden panels, supported by a doorframe that fits flush with the doorway on its north side. The hinges are located along the north elevation. The doors are each 1.15m wide, each with five planks of 0.22m. A hook to hold the door is located on the west arch.	1111 – doorway arch	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1113	door niche	A small niche is located along the inside of the east part of the doorway arch. It is 0.4m high, and 0.06x0.28m in dimension.	1111 – doorway arch	
1114	wooden remains	Wooden remains are imbedded within the stonework on both side of the arch. They are located approximately 1.3m above the ground.		

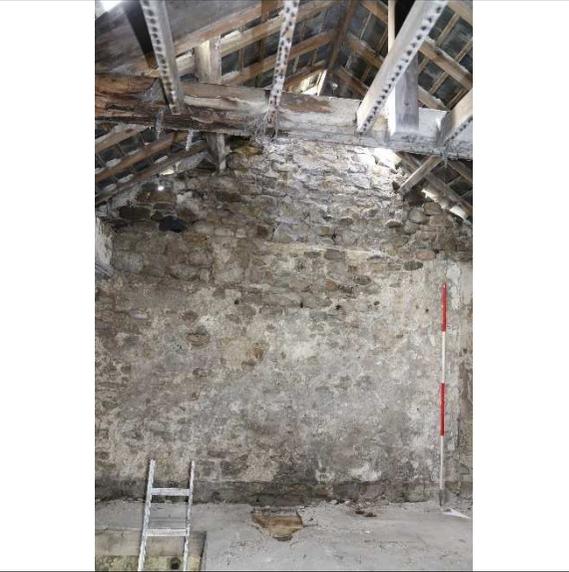
Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1120	south-east wall	The south-east wall has retained most of its plasterwork, but has no other archaeological features.		
1130	south-west wall	The south-west wall has largely retained its plasterwork and contains two vents near the top of the wall.	1131 – vents	
1131	vents	Two round terracotta vents measure 0.08m in diameter and lie approximately 2.3m above the floor level. They are spaced 1.8m apart, and approximately 0.85m from each wall.		See above

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1140	north-west wall	The north-west wall retains less of the original plaster showing stones underneath. It is otherwise devoid of archaeological features.		
1200	upper floor	The upper floor contains a fireplace on the north wall and a blocked window and door. The only light source is therefore from a skylight, which is located directly beside the trusses.	1201 – truss 1202 – skylight 1203 – ladder hatch 1204 – skirting board 1210 – north-east wall 1220 – south-east wall 1230 – south-west wall 1240 – north-west wall	
1201	truss	A single truss divides the room in two, with the northern part also containing joists indicating the possible presence of a loft.	1202 – skylight	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1202	skylight	A single skylight cuts across the purlin on the west side of the roof.	1201 – truss	
1203	ladder hatch	A ladder hatch is located in the south-east corner of the space beside the blocked door.		
1204	skirting board	Skirting board the east side of the north wall and the whole length of the west wall. It runs 0.2m above floor level.		

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1210	north-east wall	The north-east wall contains a small fireplace with skirting board running along the east side of the wall between the fireplace and the south-east wall. Some of the plaster has fallen away above the fireplace.	1211 – fireplace 1204 – skirting board	
1211	fireplace	Centrally located along the wall, the fireplace and surround are approximately 1.1m high. The fireplace itself is 0.5m, combined with the surround to be approximately 1m.	1012 – north chimney	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1220	south-east wall	The south-east wall contains the blocked window and blocked door. The skirting board has been removed, but moulding still lines the door and window frames.	1221 – blocked window 1222 – blocked door 1223 – door frames	
1221	blocked window	Nearer the centre of the wall is a large blocked window. It measures 1.35m across and approximately 2m high.	1222 - blocked door 1223 - moulding	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1222	blocked door	The blocked door abuts the south-west wall and runs approximately 1m wide by 2m high.	1223 - blocked window 1021 - stair scar 1223 - mouldings	
1223	moulding	Both the windows and door have moulding, 0.065m wide. The moulding entirely surrounds the window and only the top of the door.	1221 - blocked window 1222 - blocked door	See above
1230	south-west wall	The skirting board has been removed on the south-west wall, but some of the plaster has been retained. The plaster extends to the height of the truss, after which the gable is bare. This indicates the location of a ceiling.		

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
1240	north-west wall	The north-west wall has lost much its plaster on the north side but retains its skirting board.	1204 – skirting board	
2000	workshop exterior	The front of the workshop is the east elevation with access coming from the large sliding door on the north end. The building is a single storey and is built of sandstone rubble. The stone flags of the roof have been removed and placed inside the building.	2010 – north elevation 2020 – east elevation 2030 – south elevation 2040 – west elevation	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2010	north elevation	The north elevation is gabled at a height of 2m off the ground on the west end and 2.41 on the east end.	2011 – horizontal scar	
2011	wall scar on north wall	A single scar runs 1.48m horizontally at a height of 1.72m above the ground.		

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2020	east elevation	The east elevation contains two windows and a door. The large sliding metal door is an addition and occupies much of the north side of the elevation. Beside it to the south are two windows, each with stone sills and lintels.	2121 – door 2122 – north window 2123 – south window	
2030	south elevation	The south elevation is gabled with a chimney at its apex. The wall is of sandstone with a single small vent located at its centre.	2133 – vent	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2040	west elevation	The west elevation lies parallel to the adjoining property. It contains a single window on the south side.	2141 – west window	
2100	interior	The interior retains many of the fittings related to blacksmithing including the forge, bellows, drill press and other blacksmithing tools. The floor is made of flagstones. Three trusses support the now-open roof.	2110 – north wall 2120 – east wall 2130 – south wall 2140 – west wall 2101 – floor 2102 – roof structure	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2101	floor	The floor is made up of large flagstones, each larger than 0.5 m ² .		
2102	roof structure	The roof is supported by three king-post trusses evenly spaced along the building. Four purlins run along each side of the trusses, each pair joining at an offset on the middle truss.		
2110	north wall	The north wall is largely whitewashed with a single beam running across the wall below the gable. The wall retains an old fire extinguisher and the old double door, now replaced by the large sliding metal door.	2111 – old door 2112 – beam	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2111	old door	The old door to the workshop is a double wooden door, approximately 1.25m wide and 2m high. It is considerably narrower than its modern replacement.	2121 – new door	
2112	beam	A plank of wood lies across the north wall below the gable. Its use is unknown but may have been used to hold tools.		See 2110
2120	east wall	The east wall contains two windows and a large metal sliding door. Along the wall lies a narrow table on which are several old blacksmithing tools including a drill press, bench vice, and tongs.	2121 – new door 2122 – north window 2123 – south window 2153 – drill press 2154 – tools	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2121	new door	The new door is a large corrugated metal sliding door. It is 2.68m wide and 2.44m high. It is supported on a metal frame that is 0.1m thick and is inserted into the wall on the south side of the doorway.	2111 – old door	
2122	east wall north window	The north window is splayed through a partial thickness of the wall, with only the inner half of the window thickness. The outer width of the window is 1.07m increasing to 1.3m over a 0.26m depth of the splay. The internal sill and lintel are of wood, whereas externally they are of stone. The window is 1.31m high. The stone sill has 10 small holes along its northern half, perhaps as part of a shutter. The drill press lies on the table in front of this window.	2123 – south window 2141 – west window 2153 – drill press	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2123	east wall south window	The north window is splayed through a partial thickness of the wall, with only the inner half of the window thickness. The outer width of the window is 1.06m increasing to 1.28m over a 0.28m depth of the splay. The internal sill and lintel is of wood, whereas externally they are of sandstone. The window is 1.28m high. This window lies 1.03m south of the north window. Several tools lie on the windowsill including a bench vice, tongs, hammers, and punches.	2122 – north window 2141 – west window 2154 – tools	
2130	south wall	The south wall of the workshop houses the forge and bellows. The forge is a large fireplace with several niches and vents, along with a tuyere which connects to the bellows. A chimney leads up the gable from the forge.	2131 – forge 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2131	forge	The forge is a large square fireplace of sandstone with several niches. It is 2.62m wide, 2.53m high and 1.32m deep.	2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	
2132	chimney	The chimney curves up toward the gable from below the hood. At its base it opens 0.73m across at 0.43m depth. It narrows to 0.31m across and 0.32m depth.	2131 – fireplace 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2133	vent	A small vent is in the rear of the forge which opens to the outside. The vent is located in the south-east corner of the forge and measures 0.15x0.15m.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	
2134	side niches	Niches are located on the walls of the forge both 0.15x0.23x0.15m. The niches were likely used for storage.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2135	old tuyere	A square opening is located on the west wall of the forge measuring 0.24x0.21m. It may have formerly housed a tuyere. It is blocked on the exterior above the bench along the side of the forge.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	
2136	lower niche	A large niche is below the hearth of the forge 0.56x0.78m. The depth is approximately 0.4m.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	

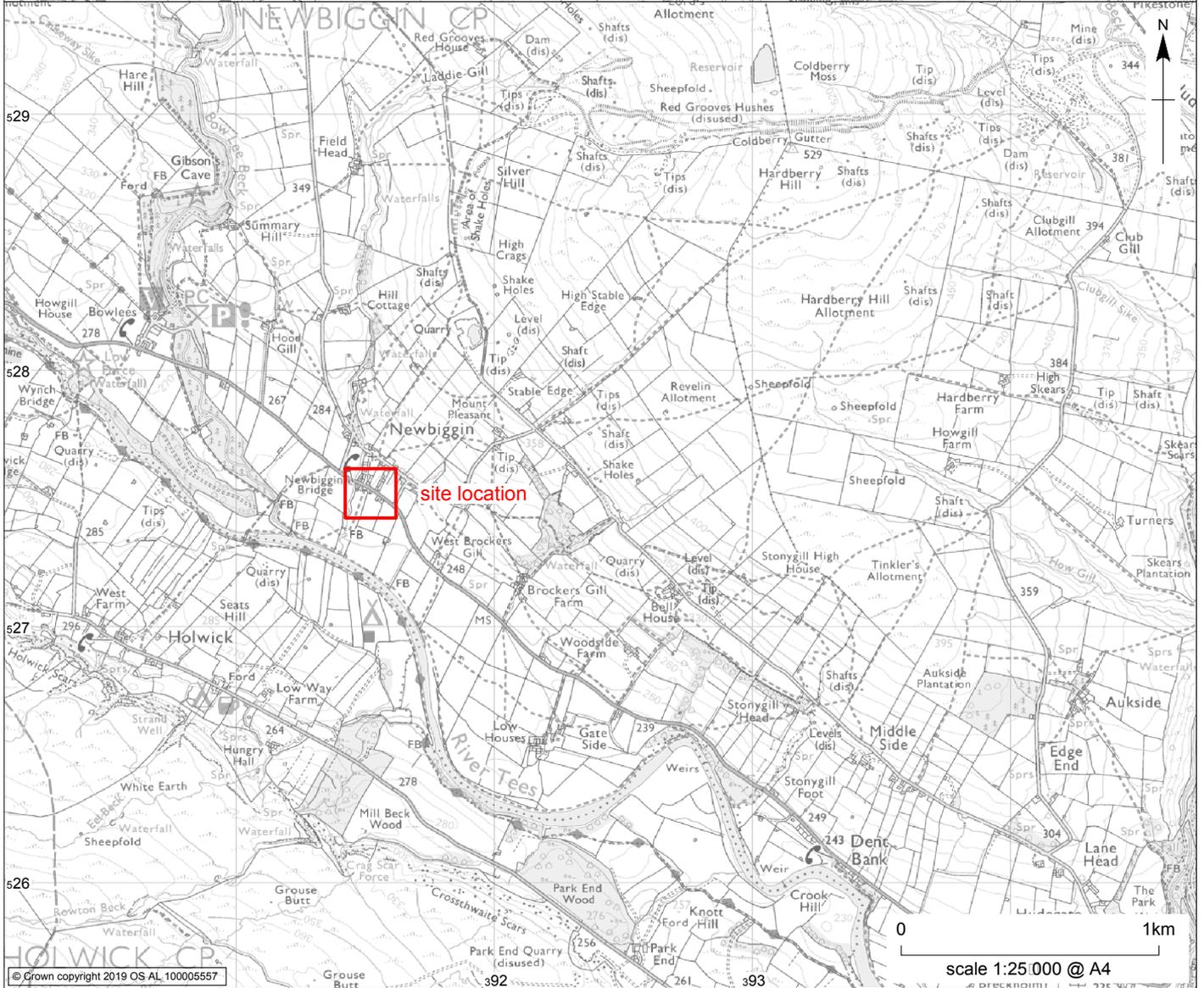
Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2137	side bench	A small bench lines the west side of the forge and may have been used again to hold tools. It is 0.28m wide and 0.47m high and stretches the whole length of the forge (1.34m).	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	
2138	tuyere	A square tuyere (connector for the bellows) lies on the east side of the hearth and is 0.15x0.15m with a central hole used to provide direct airflow. The tuyere connects directly with the bellows located just east of the hearth.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2139 – hood 2151 – bellows	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2139	hood	The hood is a sloping metal structure supported by a wooden beam running along the front of the forge. The metal sheets are held in place by large flagstones that run along the forge walls, sandwiching the hood in place.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2151 – bellows	
2140	west wall	The west wall has lost much of its white-wash, mostly to the north. In the south part of the wall is a window, similar in size to those of the east wall.	2141 – west window	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2141	west window	The west window mirrors those on the east. It is 1.05m wide on the exterior, expanding to 1.28m along the west wall. It spans 1.21m in height with a wooden sill and threshold internally, and a stone lintel and sill externally.	2122 – north window 2123 – south window	
2151	bellows	A large bellows is located between the forge and the east wall. The bellows is approximately 1.5m long and stands 1.45m high. The mechanism used to operate the bellows has been removed.	2131 – fireplace 2132 – chimney 2133 – vent 2134 – side niches 2135 – side vent 2136 – lower niche 2137 – side bench 2138 – tuyere 2139 – hood	

Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2152	extinguisher	A conical extinguisher is located along the north wall and is about 0.5m long.	2110 – north wall	
2153	drill press	A large drill press is located in front of the north window on the table that lines the east wall and is approximately 1m tall.	2120 – east wall 2122 – north window	

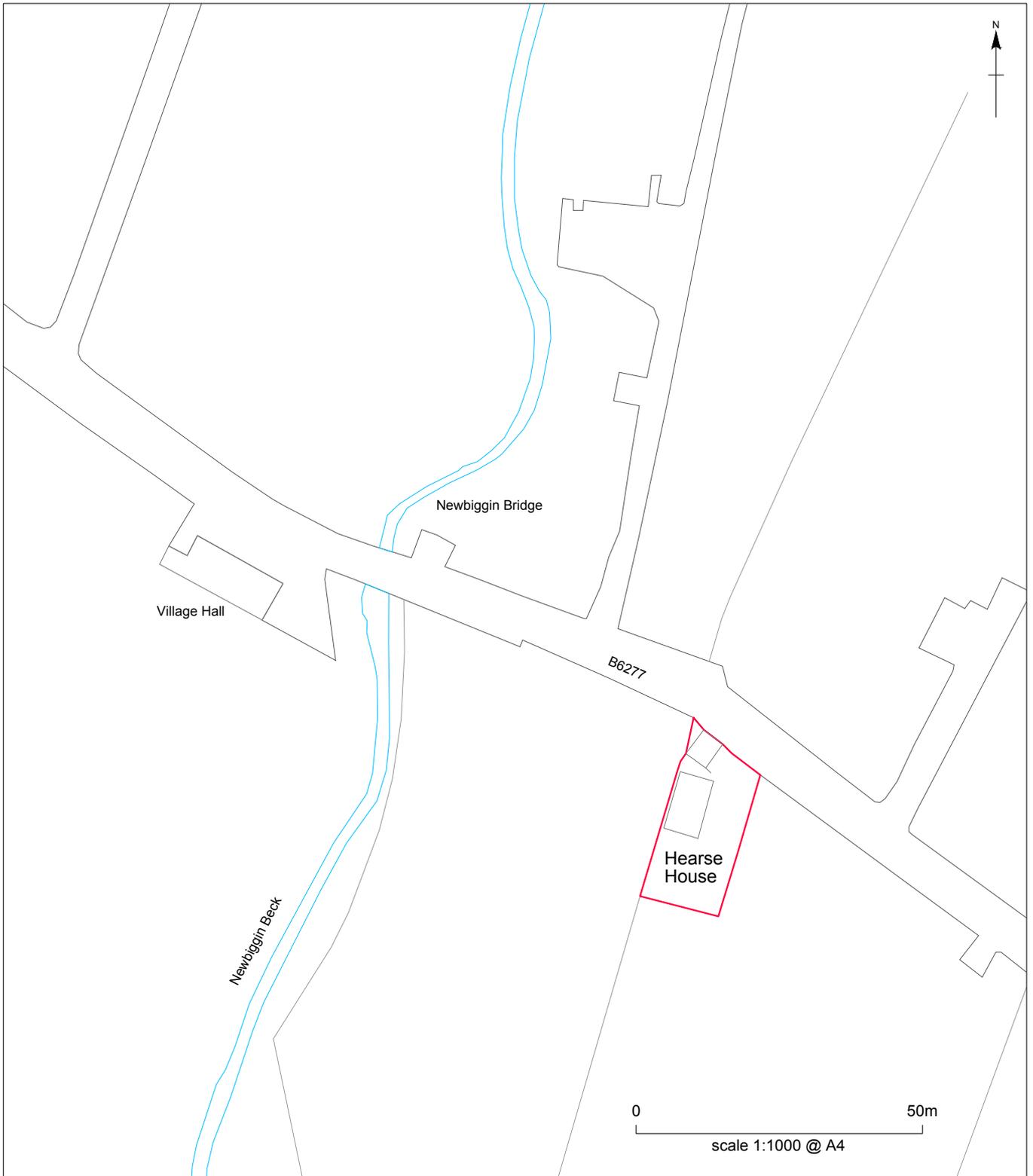
Context	Name	Description	Related Features	Photograph
2154	tools	Old blacksmithing tools stand on the sill or the table immediately in front of the south window. These include a bench vice, punches, hammers, and tongs, among others.	2120 – east wall 2123 – south window	



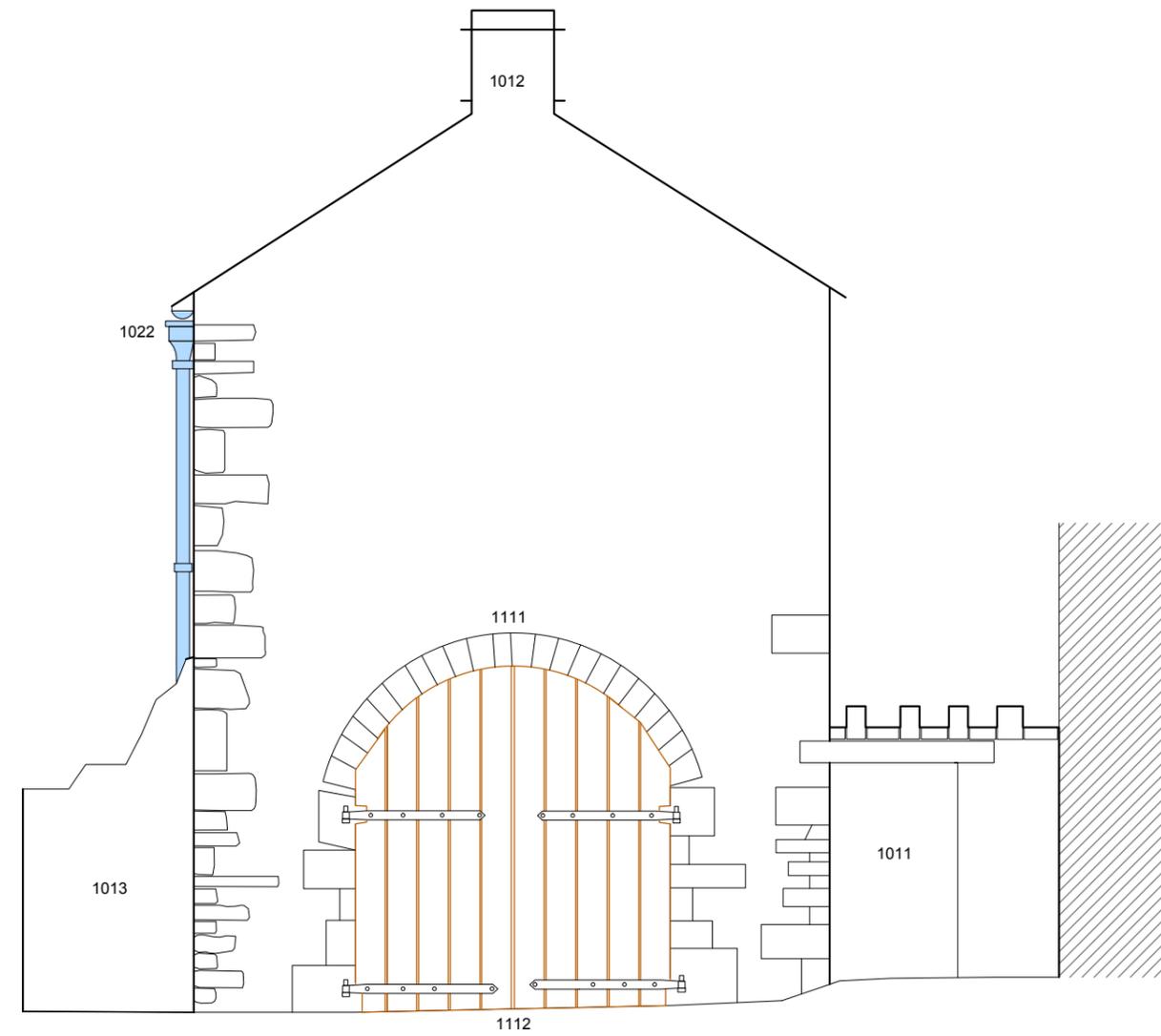
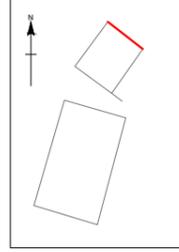
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Newbiggin Hearse House: site location

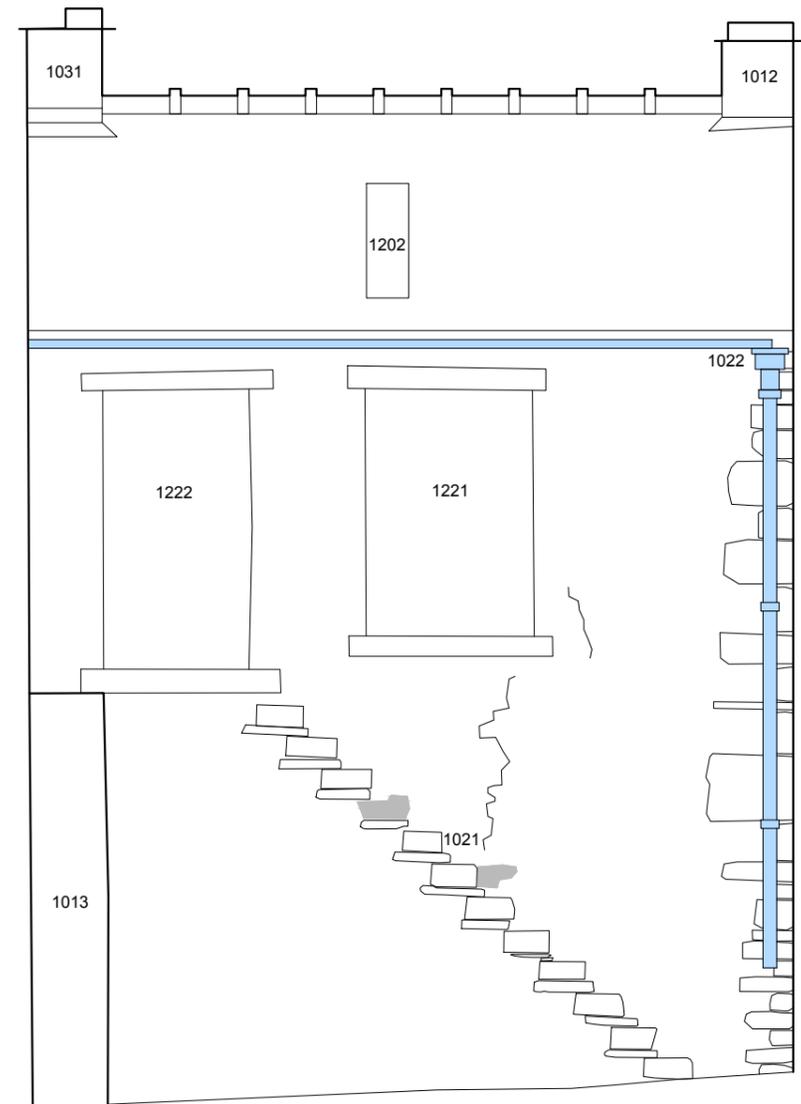
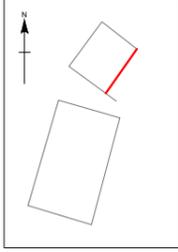
Figure 1



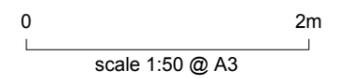
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North-east elevation



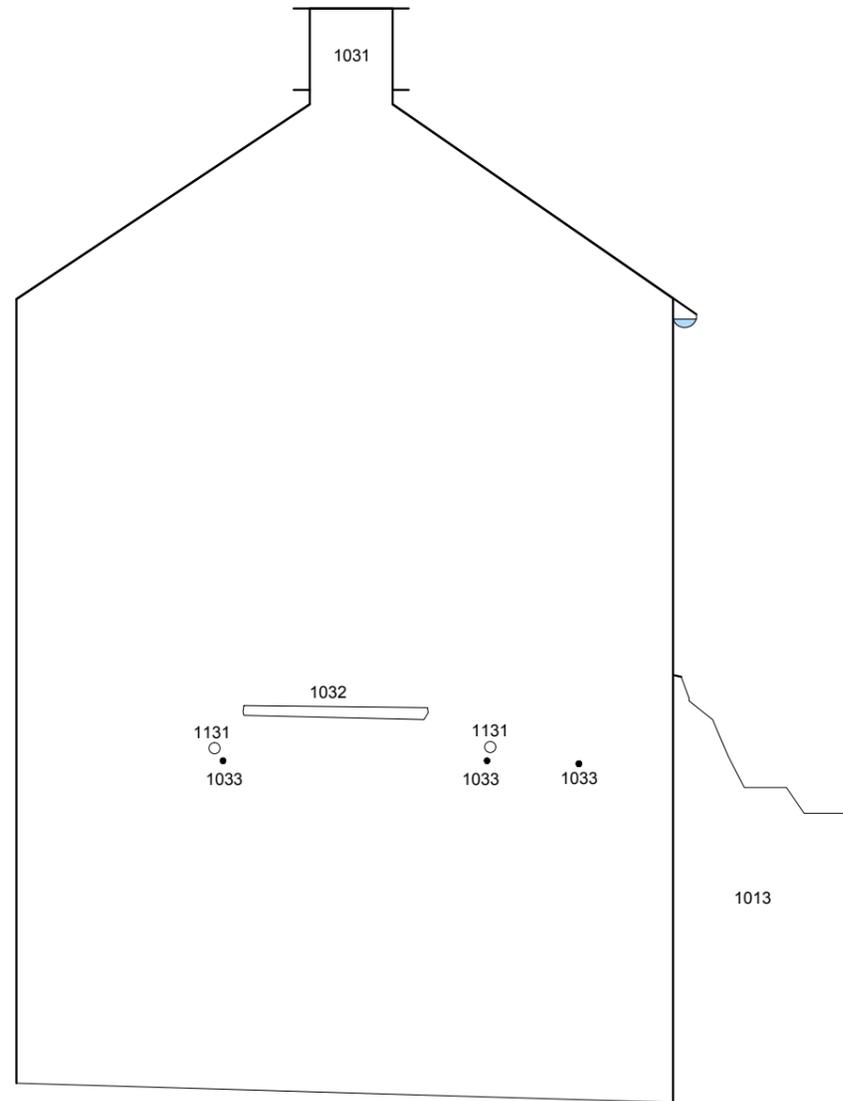
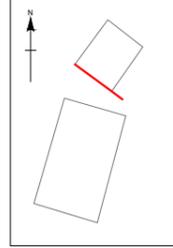
South-east elevation



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 - timber
 - guttering
 - 1211 context number

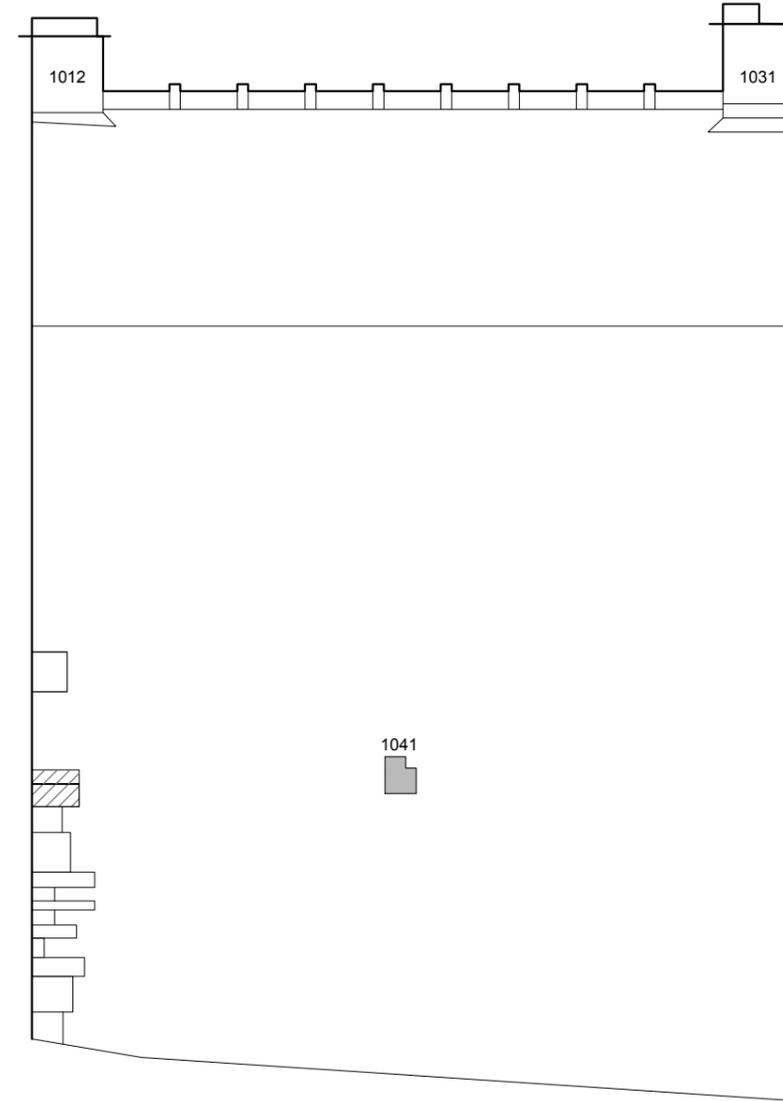
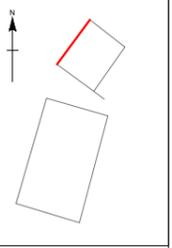


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South-west elevation



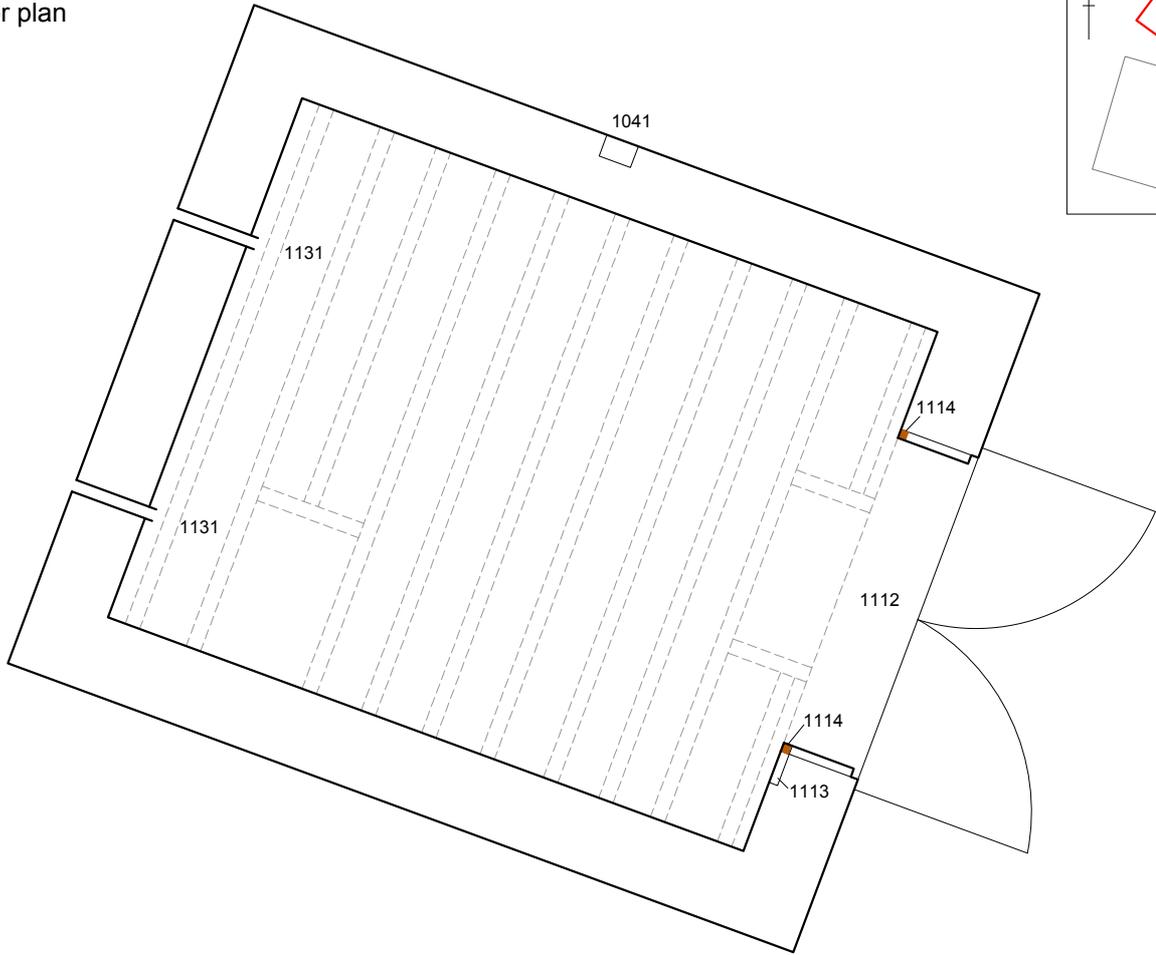
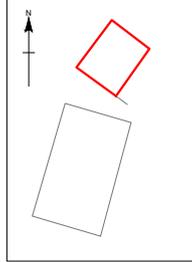
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North-west elevation

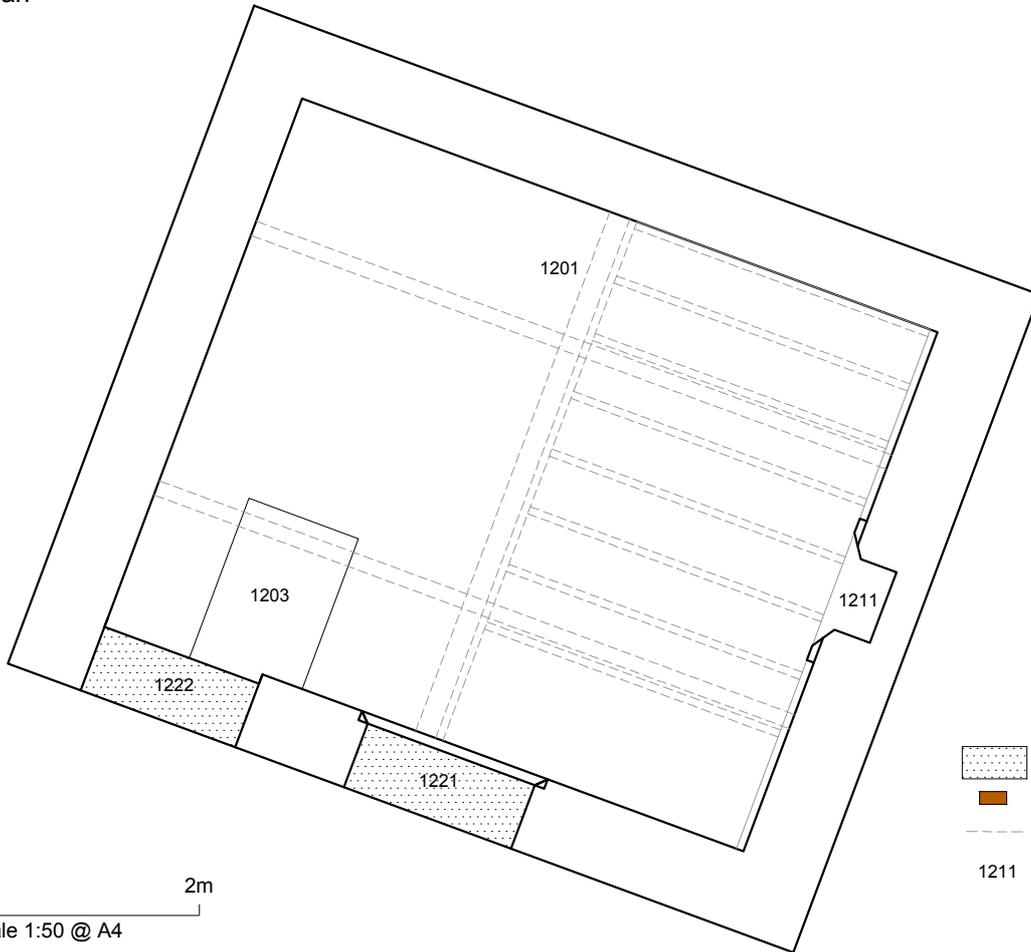


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Hearse House
 round floor plan



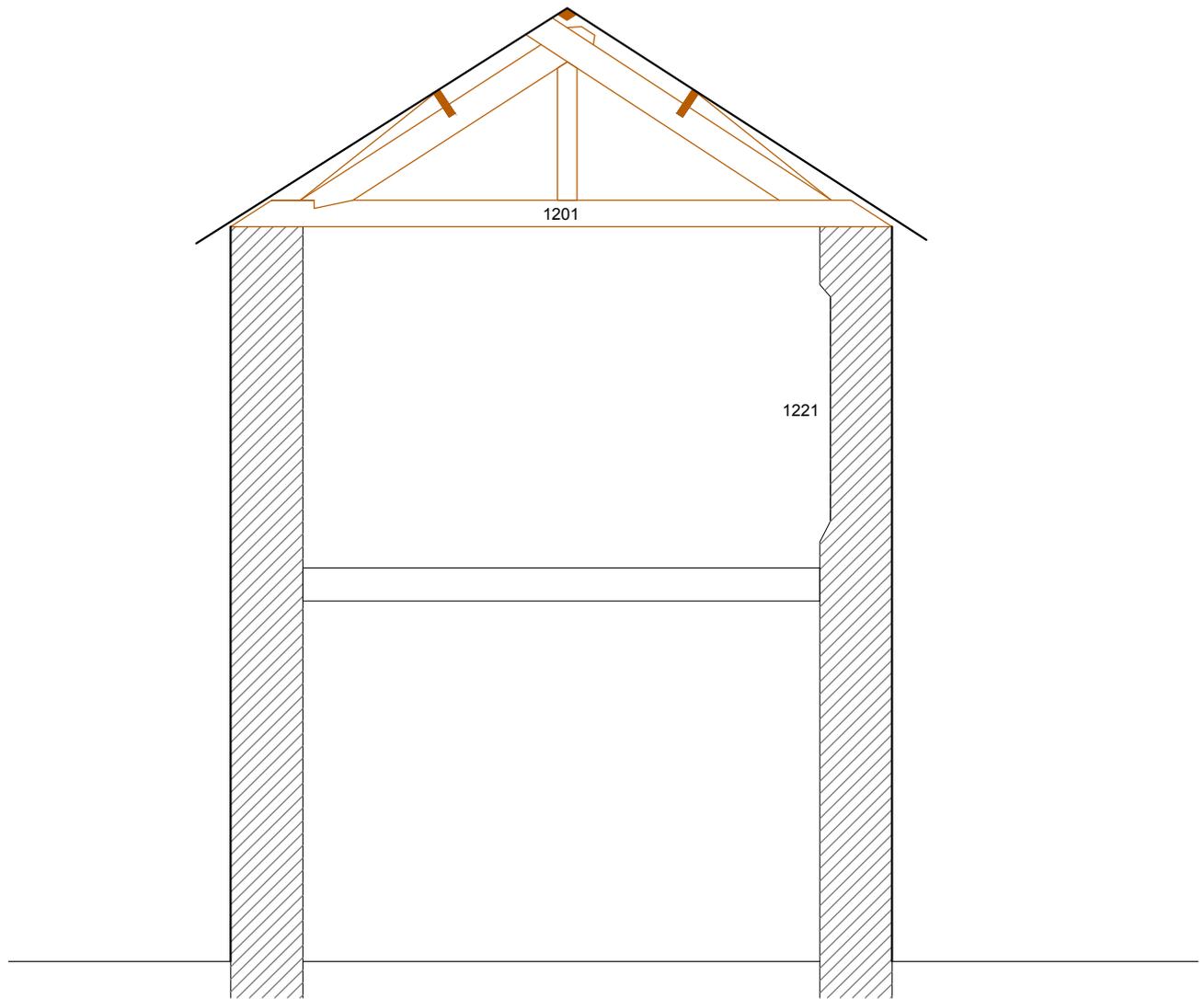
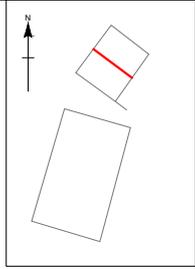
first floor plan



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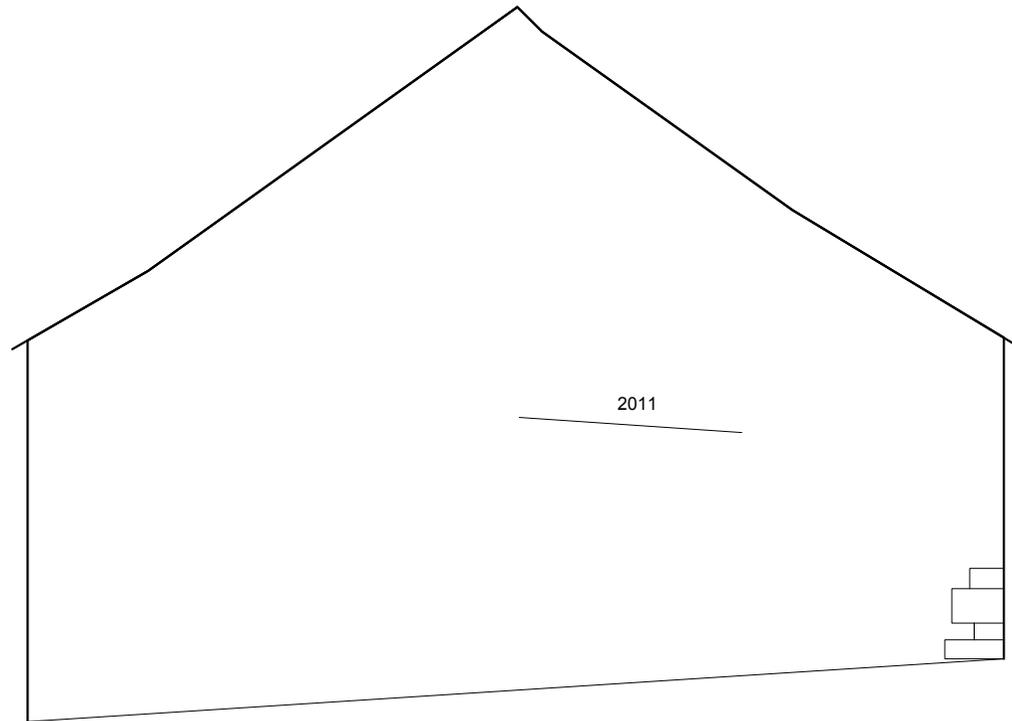
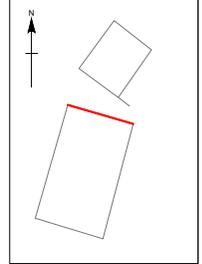
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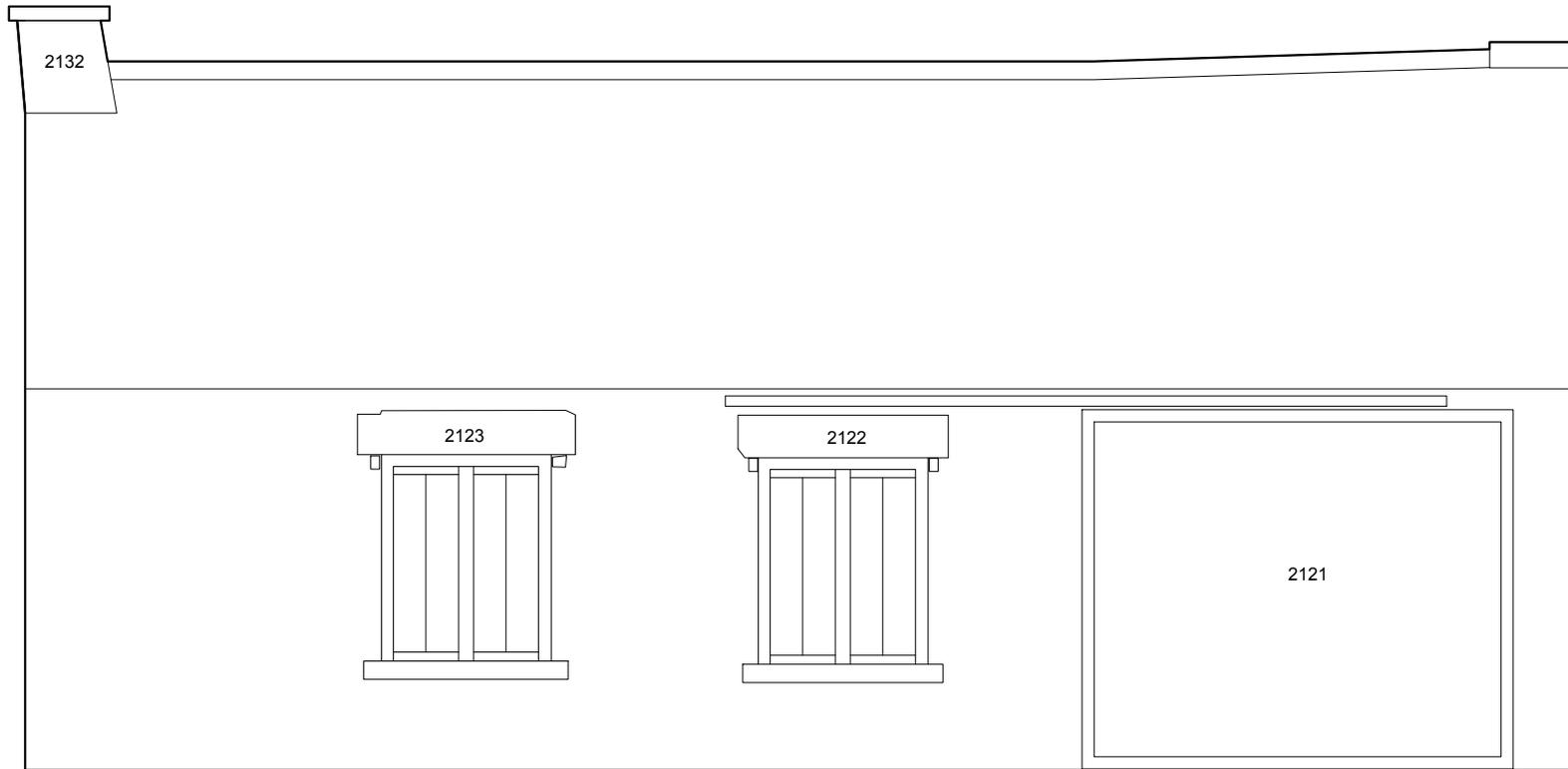
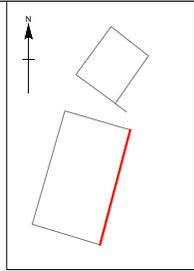
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Workshop
North elevation



Workshop
East elevation

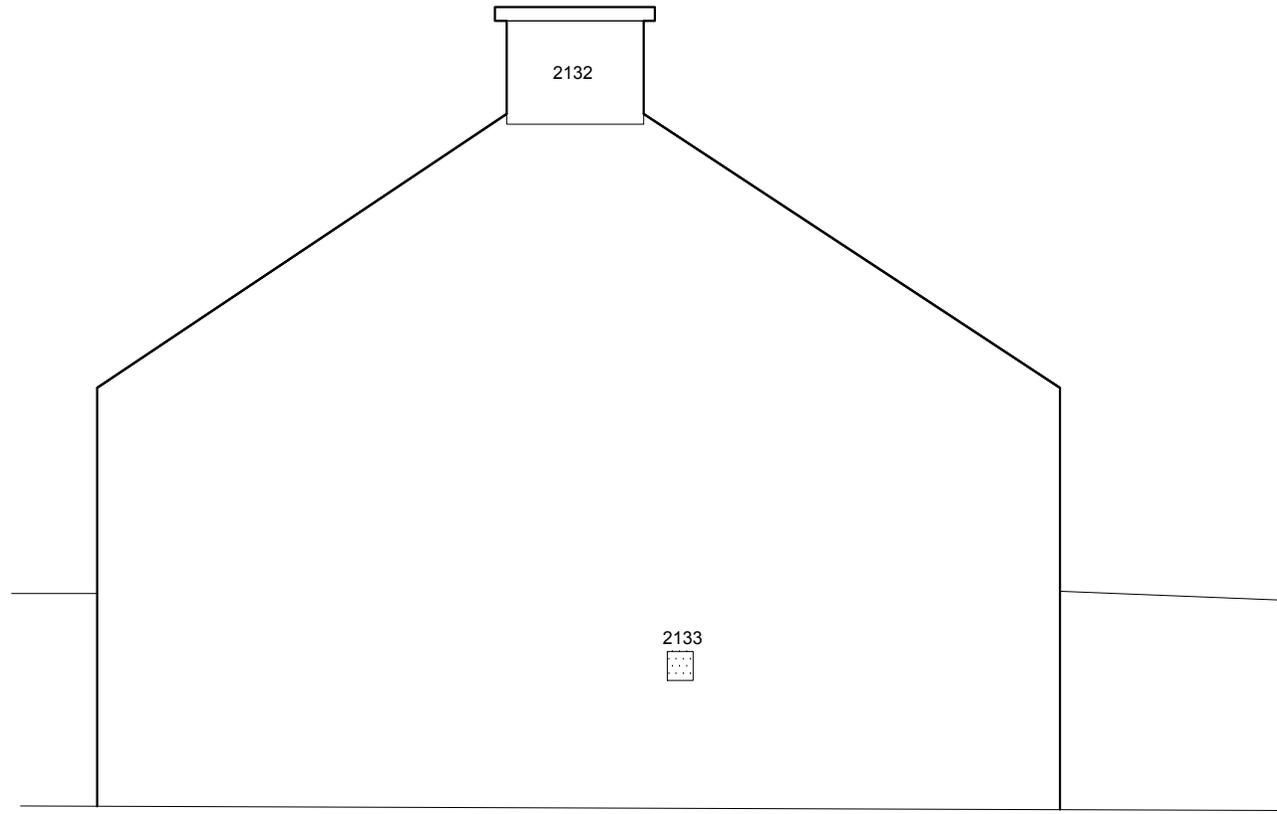
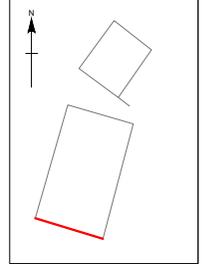


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1211 context number



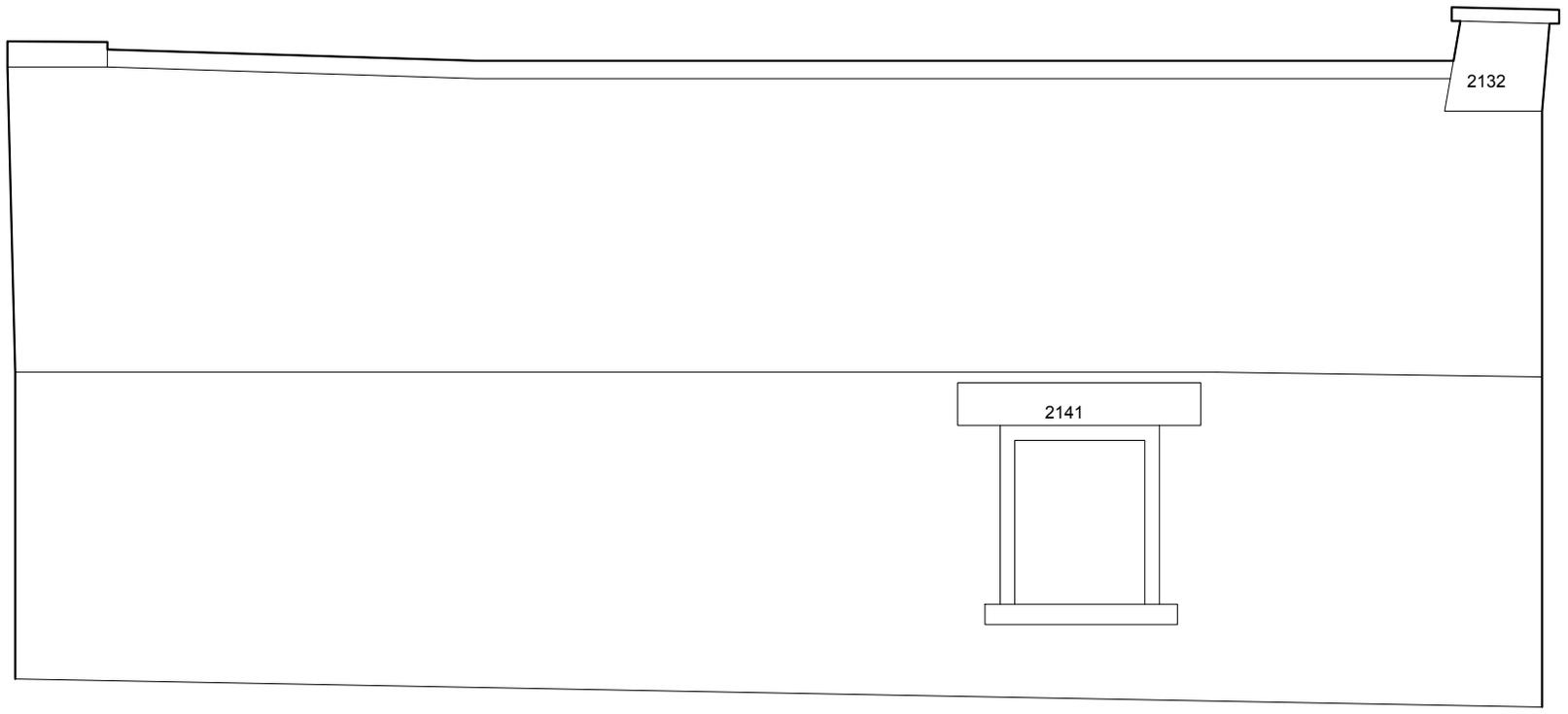
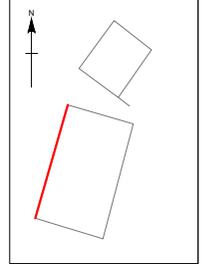
Workshop
South elevation



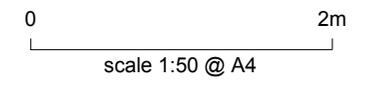
KEY
blocking
1211 context number

0 2m
scale 1:50 @ A4

Workshop
West elevation

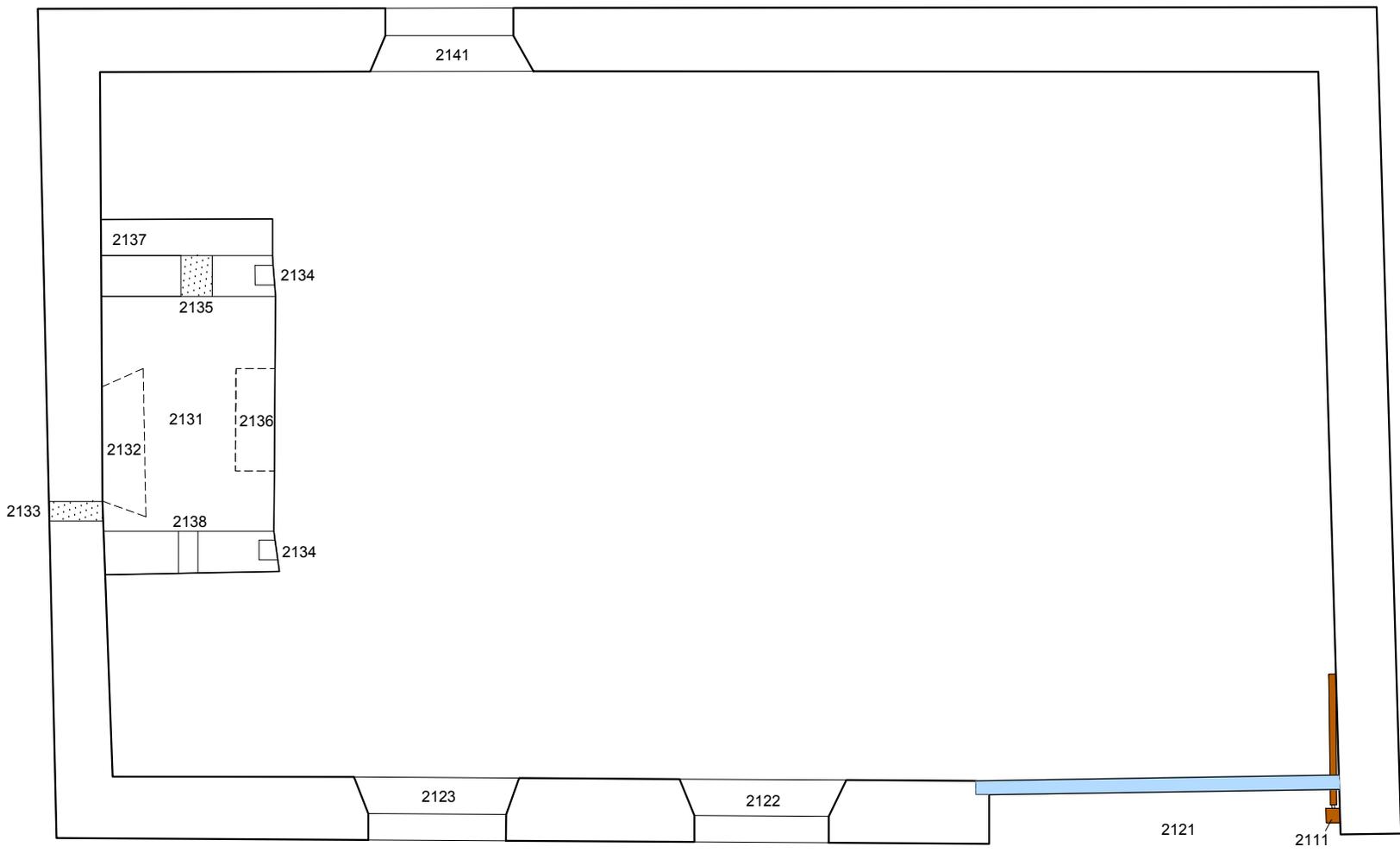
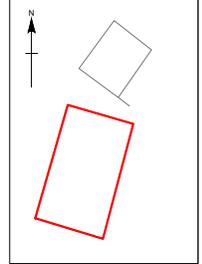


KEY
1211 context number



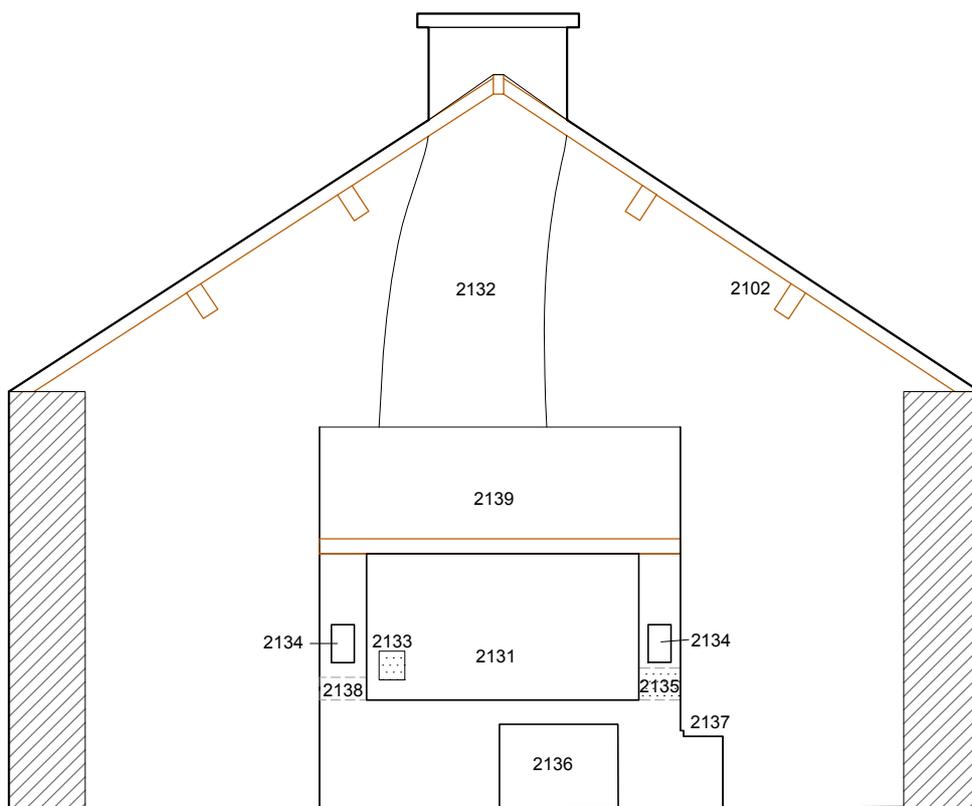
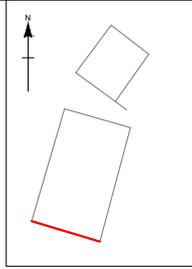
Workshop

□ floor plan



- KEY
-  blocking
 -  timber
 -  guttering
 - 1211 context number

Workshop
Section and forge elevation



- KEY
-  blocking
 -  timber
 - 1211 context number

0 2m
scale 1:50 @ A4