An Archaeological Building Recording at Stublach Grange Farm, Stublach, Cheshire



Stublach Grange Farm

ARS Ltd Report 2010/44July 2010

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Executive Summary

In July 2010 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Storengy UK to undertake an Archaeological Building Recording at Stublach Grange Farm near Lach Dennis, Cheshire, prior to the proposed demolition of the building.

The historic map regression and building recording established that Stublach Grange Farm existed as early as 1836 and went through a number of extensions and modifications into the late 20^{tb} century.

The building had been abandoned for a number of years before the building survey took place. As a result it was in a state of disrepair and some areas on the first floor were unable to be accessed for health and safety reasons.

1 Introduction

Scope of work

- 1.1 Planning consent has been granted for the demolition of Stublach Grange Farm, near Lach Dennis, Cheshire.
- 1.2 The planning reference number for the works is 10/00444/MIN. The planning permission includes a condition which states:

 "No development to which this permission relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of
 - "No development to which this permission relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority".
- 1.3 It was therefore recommended by Cheshire County Council that a building recording to RCHME Level 2 standards be undertaken in order to obtain further information on, and secure a record of, Stublach Grange Farm.
- 1.4 The Archaeological Building Recording has been carried out in accordance with "The Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Building Recording' (Institute for Archaeologists 2008) and a written scheme of investigation approved by the Principal Conservation and Design Officer at Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Location and topography

- 1.5 The study site comprises the farm house at Stublach Grange Farm, Stublach, near Lach Dennis, Cheshire at OS grid reference SJ 711 709 (see Figure 1).
- 1.6 The topography of the site itself is relatively level ground at approximately 40 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

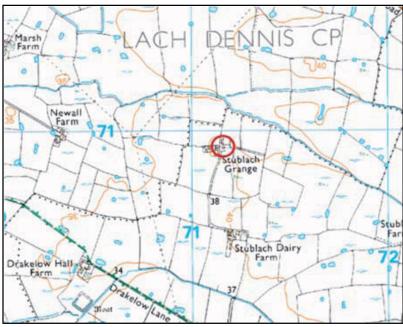
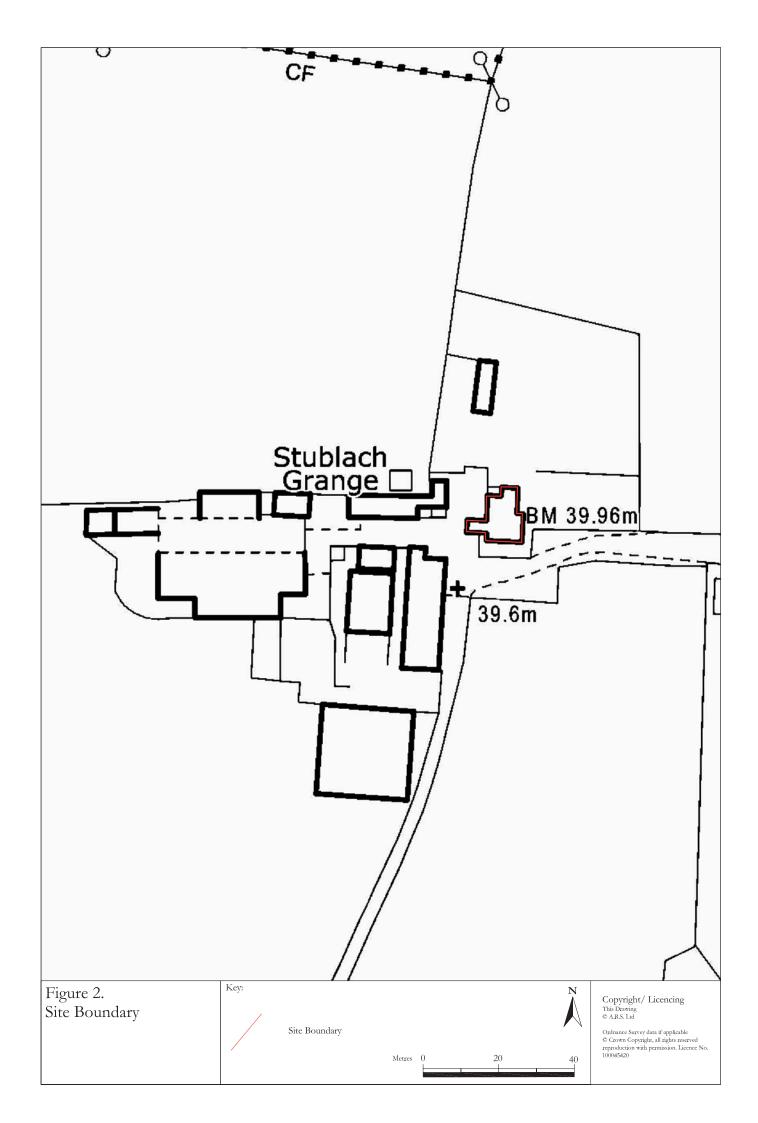


Fig- 1Site location. © Crown copyright 2006. Licence number 100045420.



2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The objective of the building survey was to gather sufficient information to establish the design and layout of the site, the use and range of construction materials, details of structural elements and potential date of the building or elements thereof.
- 2.2 All aspects of the Building Recording were conducted according to the guidelines in 'Recording Historic Buildings' published by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (1996) and 'A Guide to Good Recording Practice' by English Heritage (2006).

3 Methodology

- 3.1 A detailed written scheme of investigation was prepared by Archeological Research Services Ltd. The archaeological building survey was carried out by Richard Smalley and Dan Amat on the 21st July 2010. This consisted of the following:
 - A written record of the buildings was carried out by annotating plans and elevations and by completing Archaeological Research Services Ltd proforma building recording sheets. Descriptions and terms used follow Brunskill (1994 and 2000) and Lynch (1994) wherever possible.
 - A metric survey was undertaken of all three floors using tapes. The drawn survey comprised measured floor plans, elevations and sections.
 - A detailed photographic survey composed of 35mm black and white print (400 Ilford HP5 Plus) and colour slide (200 Fuji Sensia) photographic survey of general exterior and interior views was conducted using a Canon EOS 3000 V SLR camera fitted with a 28-80mm lens and a Canon EOS 3000 V SLR camera fitted with a 35-105mm lens respectively. Moreover, high resolution digital photographs (7.2 megapixels) were also taken using a Sony Cyber-shot camera with a 20.8mm lens. Where possible, photographs included a graduated scale and cameras were mounted on tripods for extra stability. Details of the photographs were recorded on pro-forma index sheets, which included location, subject and orientation. The location and direction of the photographs were plotted on scaled plans.

- 3.2 Documentary research was undertaken by Dan Amat in July 2010 in order to establish the function, dates and sequence of development of the building. Archival research included the consultation of relevant secondary sources pertinent to the study area. The following web sources, which provided information relevant to the study area, were also consulted:
 - Magic Maps: http://www.magic.gov.uk/
 - Archaeological Data Service: http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/
 - British Geological Survey: http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm
 - National Archives online: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/default.htm
 - Cheshire's Tithe Maps online: http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/tithemaps/
 - PastScape: http://www.pastscape.org.uk
 - British History Online: http://www.british-history.ac.uk
- 3.3 The archives at the Cheshire Records Office, Duke Street, Chester were consulted by Richard Smalley. No maps earlier than the tithe map of 1836 existed for the site. A number of documents were viewed relating to the Bloors family who owned land in the Stublach area in the mid 1700s. No mention was made of Stublach Grange Farm in these documents.

4 Results

4.1 Historical background

- 4.1.1 The Roman road known as King Street (A530) runs approximately 2km west of Stublach Grange Farm. This road links the towns of Northwich (Roman *Condate*) and Middlewich (Roman *Salinae*), both of which were highly valued during the Roman period for their salt mines.
- 4.1.2 A Deserted Medieval Village (DMV) is listed as being within 1km of the site of Stublach Grange Farm (www.pastscape.org.uk).
- 4.1.3 Approximately 1km to the south west of Stublach Grange Farm is the site of Drakelow Hall. This site includes the remains of a Medieval manor house, enclosure, fishpond and moat; all predating 1355 (www.pastscape.org.uk).

4.2 Cartographic regression analysis

4.2.1 *Tithe plan of 1836 (Fig. 3)*

The Tithe plan of 1836 represents the area of Stublach Grange as a cluster of four rectangular buildings. The building examined in this report is the smallest of the four buildings and is situated north-east of the other three. From this representation the building does not conform to its current shape, suggesting that the rear (north-south) extensions was constructed sometime after 1836. The field system around the farm is the same as with the current edition OS map with only minor alterations to field boundaries having taken place.

4.2.2 1st Edition OS map of 1854 at 1:2500 (Fig. 4)

This map depicts three buildings occupying the site of Stublach Grange. The house approximately resembles the layout displayed on the modern OS map with the omission of the western garage. The land to the north of the house is illustrated as being a wooded area. To the west there is a narrow rectangular structure which also appears on the modern OS map. South of this building there is another rectangular building but this area is occupied by two barn structures on the modern OS map.

4.2.3 1st Revision OS map of 1893 1:2500 (Fig. 5)

This map shows the house with the same layout and level of detail as the 1st Edition OS map of 1854. The only difference between the two maps is the addition of two more barn structures to the west. These structures also appear on the modern OS map.

4.2.4 2nd Revision OS map of 1906 1:2500 (Fig. 6)

This map contains the same detail as the previous 1st Revision OS map.

4.2.5 3rd Revision OS map of 1924 at 1:10500 (Fig. 7)

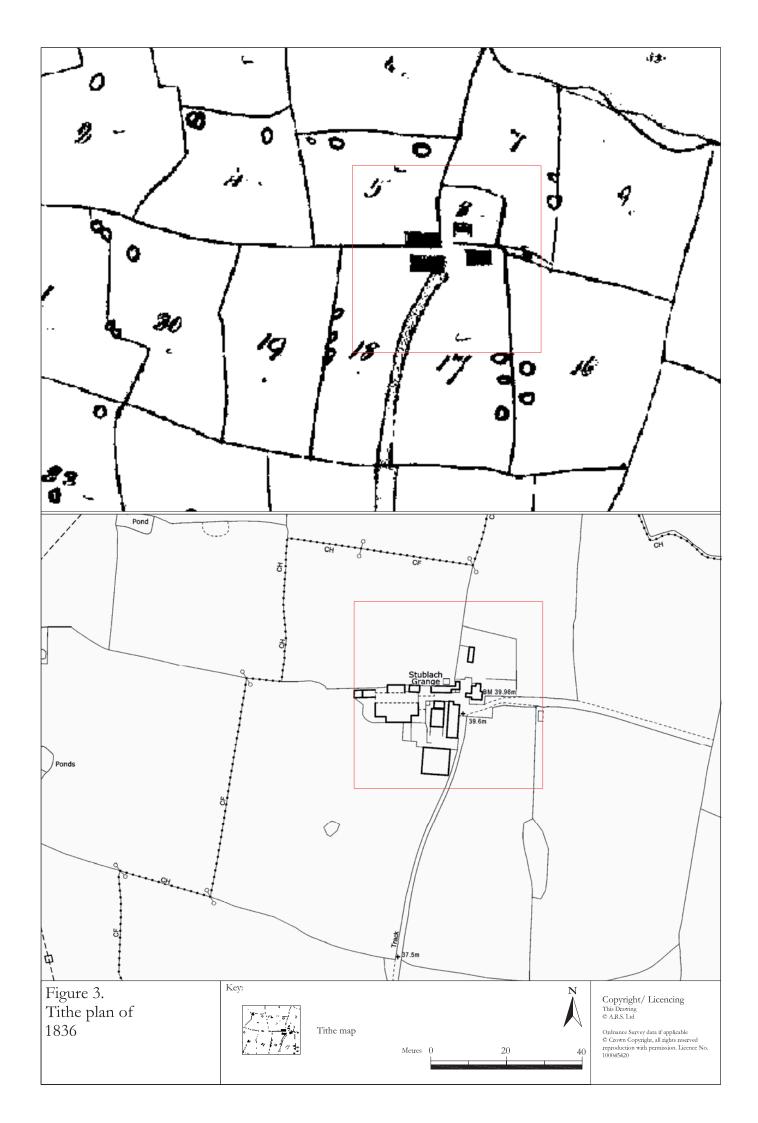
Due to the large scale of this map, when magnified, the detailing of individual buildings is poor. It still can be seen however, that there has been an additional long rectangular building constructed on site close to the barn buildings to the west.

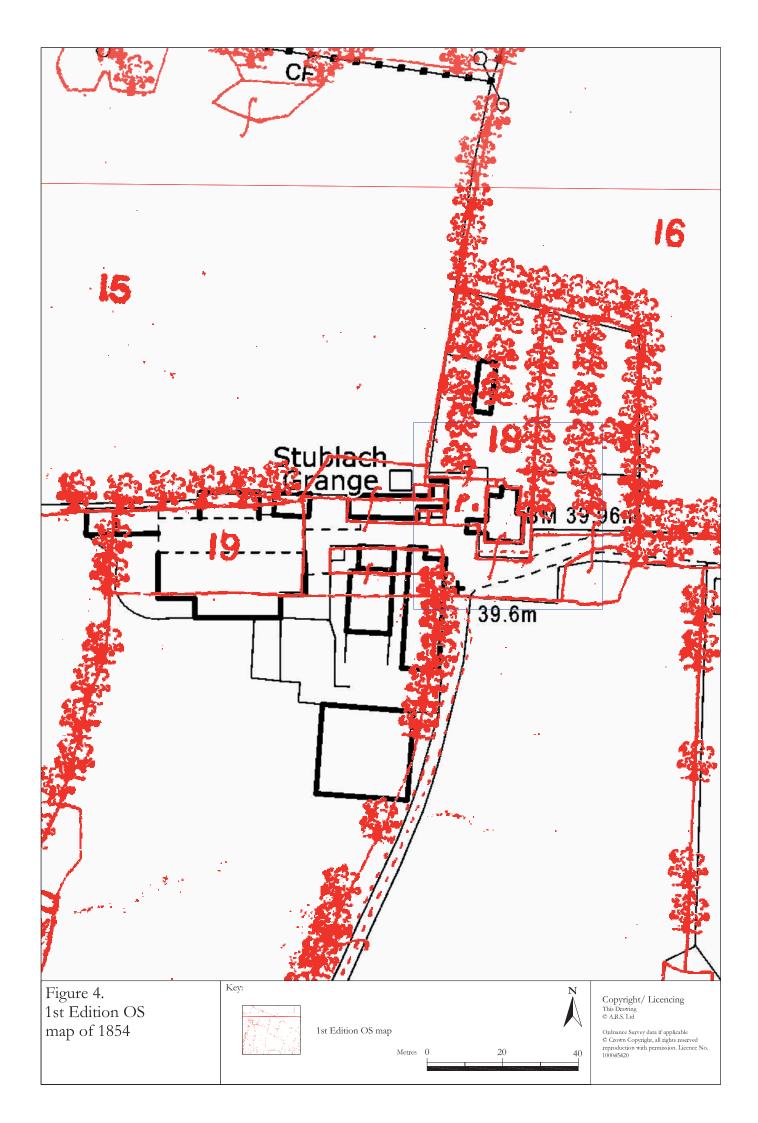
4.2.6 OS map of 1970 (Fig. 8)

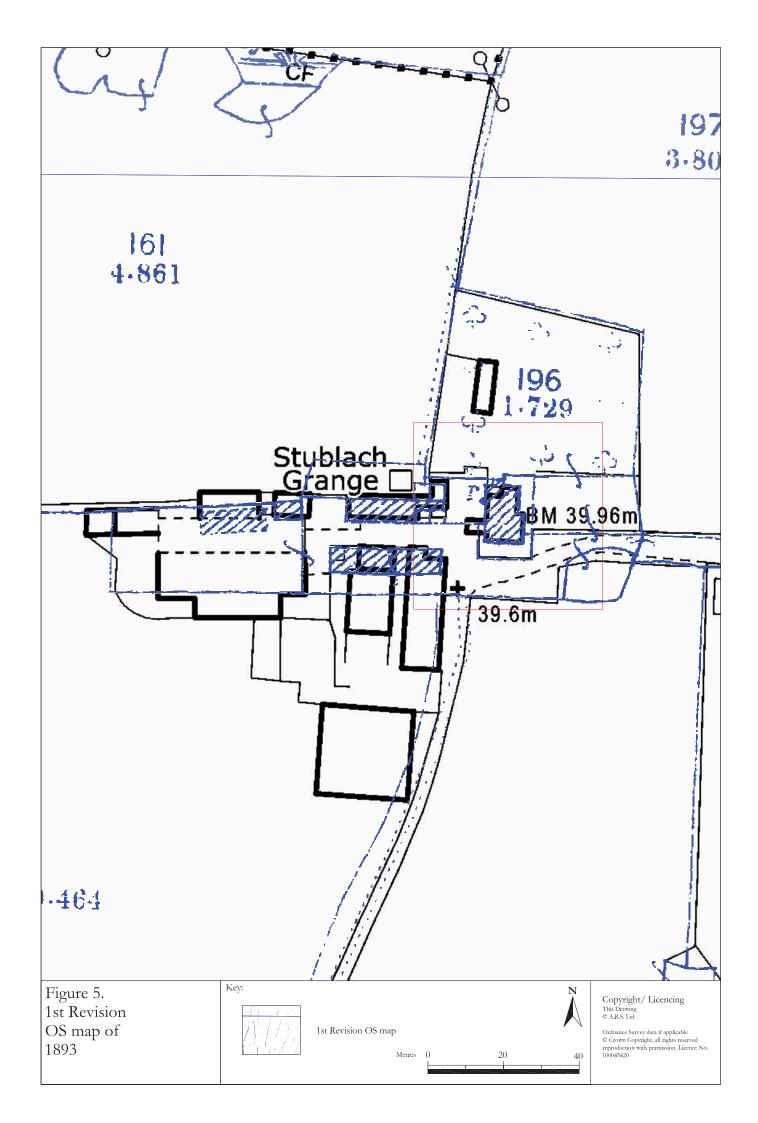
This map fits with the modern OS map, although there are some buildings which appear on it but are not present on the new map. A small barn structure to the north of the house, and a cluster to the south west of the house appears to have been demolished.

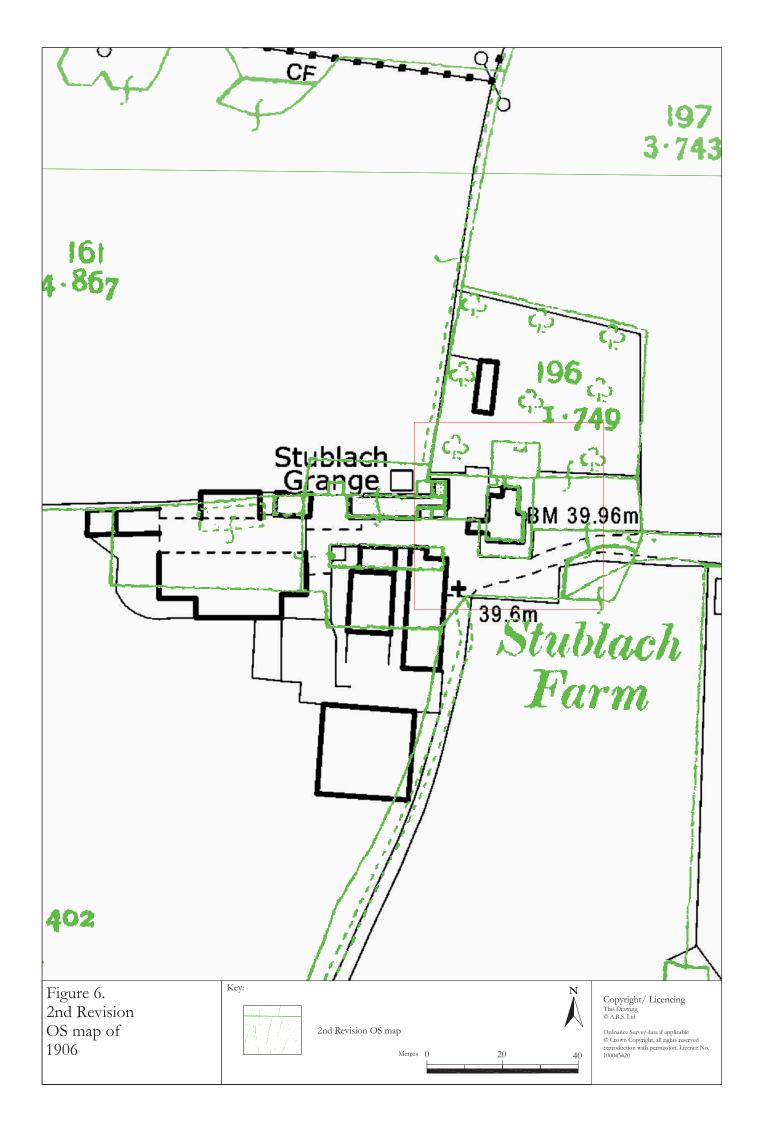
4.2.7 Discussion

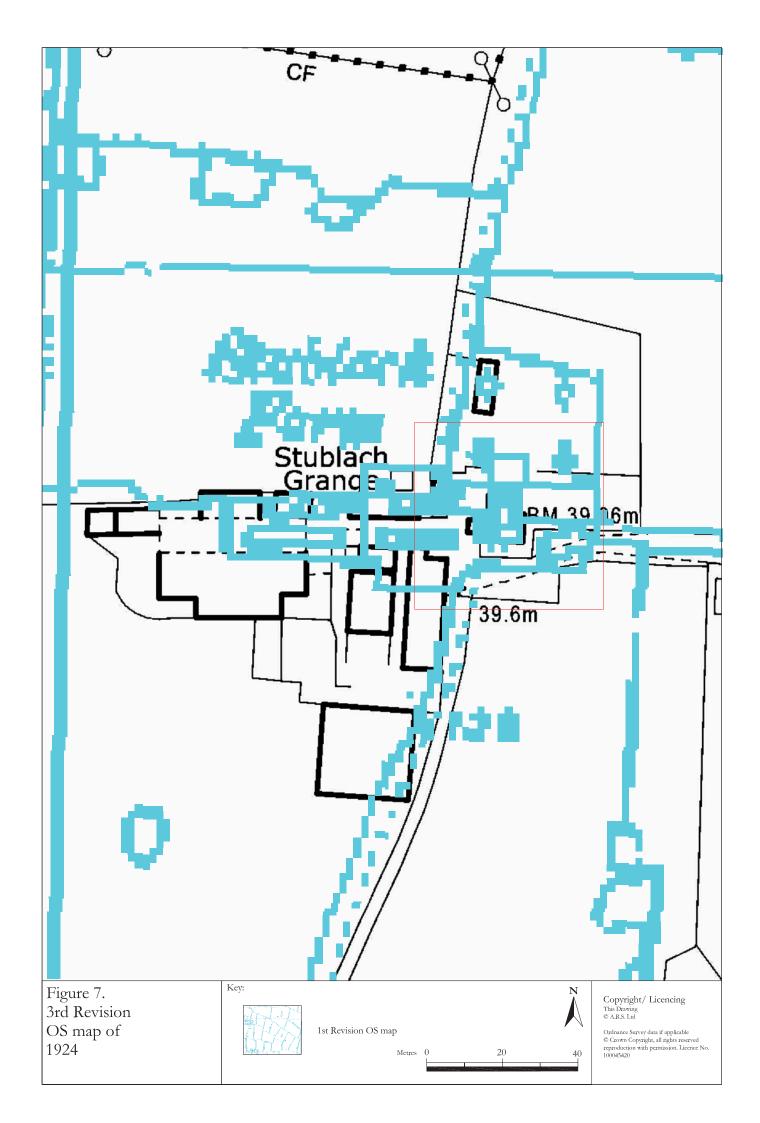
The cartographic regression illustrated the growth and development of Stublach Grange Farm, from the Tithe plan of 1836 up until the current OS map. The extension (north-south) to the farmhouse has been constructed between the production of the 1836 Tithe plan and the 1st Edition OS map of 1854. The garage on the western extension has been constructed after the production of the 3rd Edition OS map of 1924 and before the OS map of 1970. The field structures around Stublach Grange have remained the same throughout the cartography with only minor alterations to internal field partitions.

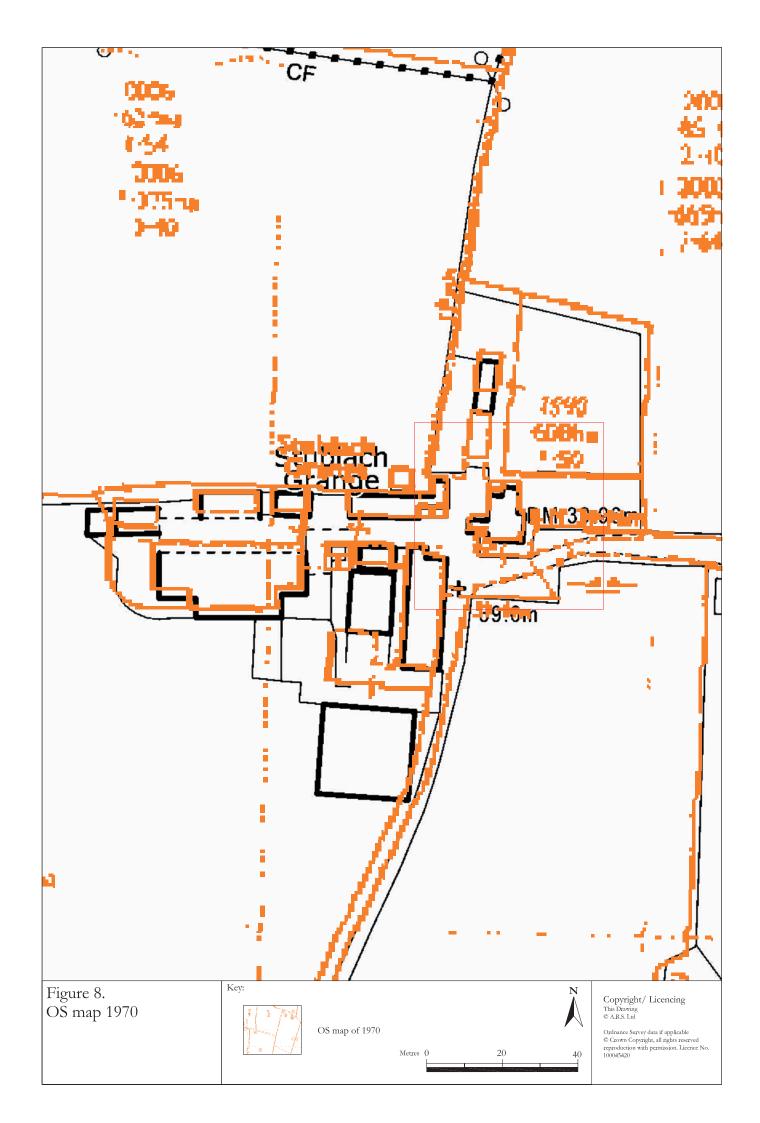












4.3 Building recording

4.4 Exterior

The exterior of the building has many extensions to it. The main farmhouse is a twostorey range of three bays which has been extended to the north with a single-storey pitched structure as well as the addition of various garages, sheds and a modern porch into the kitchen area. The pitched roof of the house and the northern extension consist of slate tiles. The walls are built of red brick. There are two brick chimney stacks at each gable ends and another one over the centre of the northern extension.

4.4.1 South Facing Elevation (Fig. 9, 10 and 11)

The south facing elevation contains five windows and one doorway. Two large windows are situated either side of a central doorway on the ground floor. The windows are both sash design, probably original to the building. Each window opening has a sandstone lintel and cill, although the first floor openings contain brick heads instead. The doorway has a semi-circular arched head built with rubbed bricks and a recessed door jambs and arch *intrados* containing a glazed fanlight of three lights. To the west of this elevation there is the garage extension. Unlike the house this has a corrugated metal roof. This elevation is constructed from large, red sandstone blocks.

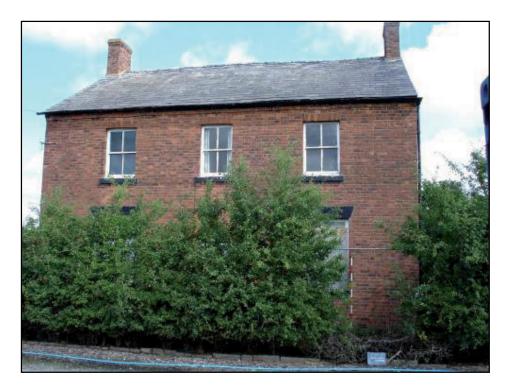


Figure 9- South Facing Elevation







Fig 11- Detail of Garage on South Elevation

4.4.2 West Facing Elevation (Fig. 12)

Unlike the south facing elevation, the walls are rendered with grey mortar. The main farmhouse (southern extent of the buildings running east-west) has four windows, two on the ground floor, one on the first floor and another on the second floor. On the ground floor of this elevation a garage extension is located centrally with its roof sloping down to the north. To the south of the garage is a small window with four glass panes. To the north of the garage (between the garage and porch entrance) there is another small sash window. This window opening has a segmental arched head and sandstone cill. The first floor has one window with three glass panes and a sandstone cill. The second floor also has a single window in the same stile as the first floor. Located centrally on the west facing elevation is a modern entrance porch which leads into the internal kitchen area. The porch is brick built with two large windows, to the north of this is another wood framed window. Further north there is a large wooden double door to an area used as a storage shed. At the very north of this elevation another garage has been added onto the building and consists of a corrugated metal roof and large wooden double doors.



Fig 12- West Facing Elevation

4.4.3 North Facing Elevation (Fig. 13)

This elevation mainly consists of the north-south extension with the exception of the ground floor garage extension. The ground floor consists of one window in the same style as those on the west facing elevation. Above this on the first floor there is another window in the same style.

4.4.4 East Facing Elevation (Fig. 14)

The main farmhouse (southern extent of the buildings running east-west) has three windows, one to each floor. The ground floor window is a long wooden framed window with three glass panes. The first floor has a window in the same style as those to the west and north, with two glass panes. The window to the second floor, again in the same style, has 3 glass panes. The extension to the south (running north-south) has two windows, one to the ground floor and one to the first floor. Both are the same in style to the other elevation having three glass panes each.



Fig- 13 North Facing Elevation



Fig- 14 East Facing Elevation

4.5 Interior: Ground floor

4.5.1 Room 1 (Fig. 15)

This room (formally used as a kitchen) has been re-plastered and remodelled when turning it into a modern kitchen, as such any interesting architectural features it may have had are not present. The original window and frame are still extant but the room has no features of historical or architectural significance.



Fig- 15 Room 1

4.5.2 Room 2 (Fig. 16)

This room, likely used as a scullery, retains the original window frame and small wooden door leading through to the main hallway (Room 7). This room is accessed through an archway from the kitchen.

4.5.3 Room 3 (Fig. 17)

Like the previous two rooms this room has mainly modern features to it. The original fireplace has been replaced with a gas heater with modern surround. This room gives access to Rooms 4, 5 and 7. Room 5 is accessed through an archway.



Fig- 16 Room 2



Fig- 17 Room 3

4.5.4 Room 4 (Fig. 18)

This room was has a window boarded up. Much like rooms 1-3 this room appears to have been modernised to make a toilet room. It has no features of historical or architectural significance.



Fig- 18 Room 4

4.5.5 Room 5 (Fig. 19)

This room contains no features of historical or architectural significance. The wooden framed window to the eastern elevation is not in keeping with the style of the other windows on the ground floor which would imply that it is a later replacement.

4.5.6 Room 6 (Fig. 20 and 21)

Room 6 is accessed through the main hallway (Room 7). This room has been previously used as a children's play room. What is likely to have been the original fireplace is currently boarded up behind a ply-wood screen probably for health and safety purposes. The flooring is covered by carpet. The room retains the original sash windows and frames on the southern extension.



Fig -19 Room 5



Fig- 20 Room 6



Fig- 21 Room 6

4.5.7 Room 7 (Fig. 22)

This is the main hallway/ corridor of the house and gives access to Rooms 2, 3, 6 and 8 as well as containing the staircase to the first floor. Although the flooring has been covered by carpet, the carpet has been pulled away from the wall to reveal the original tiled floor beneath. Although the fanlight of the doorway appears to be original, the door itself is probably a modern replacement.

4.5.8 Room 8 (Fig. 23 and 24)

Room 8 continues with the original tile flooring found in Room 7. There is an original sash window on the southern extension (as with Room 6) and a smaller wooden framed window on the western elevation. The central fireplace has been removed (evidence of the original hearth can be seen in the missing tiles around that area) and replaced with a gas fire. This room retains the original skirting boards, picture rails, and ceiling beam.





Fig- 22 Room 7

Fig- 23 Room 8



Fig- 24 Detail of Tile Floor in Room 8

4.6 Interior: First floor

4.6.1 Room 9 (Fig. 25)

This corridor is split over two levels. The lower level has access to Rooms 10, 11, 12 and 13 while the upper level has access to Rooms 14, 15 and 16 as well as providing staircase access to the second floor.



Fig- 25 Room 9

4.6.2 Rooms 10 – 13 (Fig. 26, 27 and 28)

Room 10 has a wooden framed window and original skirting boards. The floor boards have become rotten due to water leakage from the adjacent boiler system in room 12. It was deemed unsafe to fully enter these rooms but an initial viewing from the doorway revealed that the rooms contained no features of historical or architectural significance. Room 13 is slightly larger that Room 10 but has a smaller wood framed window. Original skirting boards, picture rails and ceiling beams are present within these rooms.



Fig- 26 Room 10



Fig- 27 Room 11 with Room 12 beyond



Fig- 28 Room 13



Fig- 29 Room 14

4.6.3 Room 14 (Fig. 29)

This room has had fitted wardrobes installed either side of the fireplace, which has itself been blocked up. The room retains the original sash windows but the original skirting boards have been replaced.

4.6.4 Room 15 (Fig. 30)

This narrow room is no wider than the original sash window within. A loft hatch in the ceiling provides access to the roof cavity.

4.6.5 Room 16 (Fig. 31)

This room is comparable to Room 14, without the fitted wardrobes. This room however also retains the original skirting boards and picture rail.

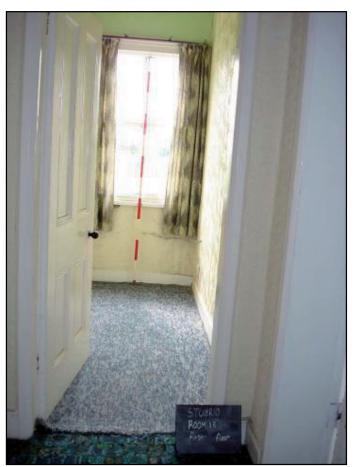


Fig- 30 Room 15



Fig- 31 Room 16

4.7 Interior: Second floor

This floor occupies half of the loft space in this section of the house and is accessed via a small flight of stairs from the first floor. A small corridor links Rooms 17 and 18 to the west and east respectively.

4.7.1 Room 17 & 18 (Fig. 32 and 33)

These rooms are identical to each other. The only exception being the window in Room 17 is slightly lower than in 18. Each room has low sloping ceilings caused by the roof angle. Both rooms are in a very poor state of repair.



Fig- 32 Room 17



Fig- 33 Room 18

5 Conclusion

Although the building has existed on site, at least in part, since around the 1830s, on the whole it contains no features of historical or architectural merit. Externally the south elevation retains its original features, such as the aesthetically pleasing doorway design, and the sash windows of early 19th century date. However, these are the only features of merit. Given the property's extensions and modifications since its initial construction and its rather modest appearance, the property is not of significant architectural or historical value however; the house itself is a common example of a 19th century farmhouse.

There are 13 other farms, some of a similar architectural style, within 2 kilometres of Stublach Grange Farm including: Stublach Dairy Farm, Stublach Farm, Marsh Farm, Newall Farm, Boundary Farm and Drakelow Hall Farm to name but a few. This would suggest that Stublach Grange Farm was part of a wider farming community with a history of around 200 years.

6 Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

- 6.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

7 Statement of Indemnity

7.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

8 Archive Deposition

8.1 A digital and paper archive will be prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data, which will be deposited in a local museum.

9 Acknowledgements

9.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved with the archaeological fieldwork including Joanne Longbottom of Storengy UK and Marie Farrow of Cheshire West and Chester Council.

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APPENDIX I: SURVEY DRAWINGS

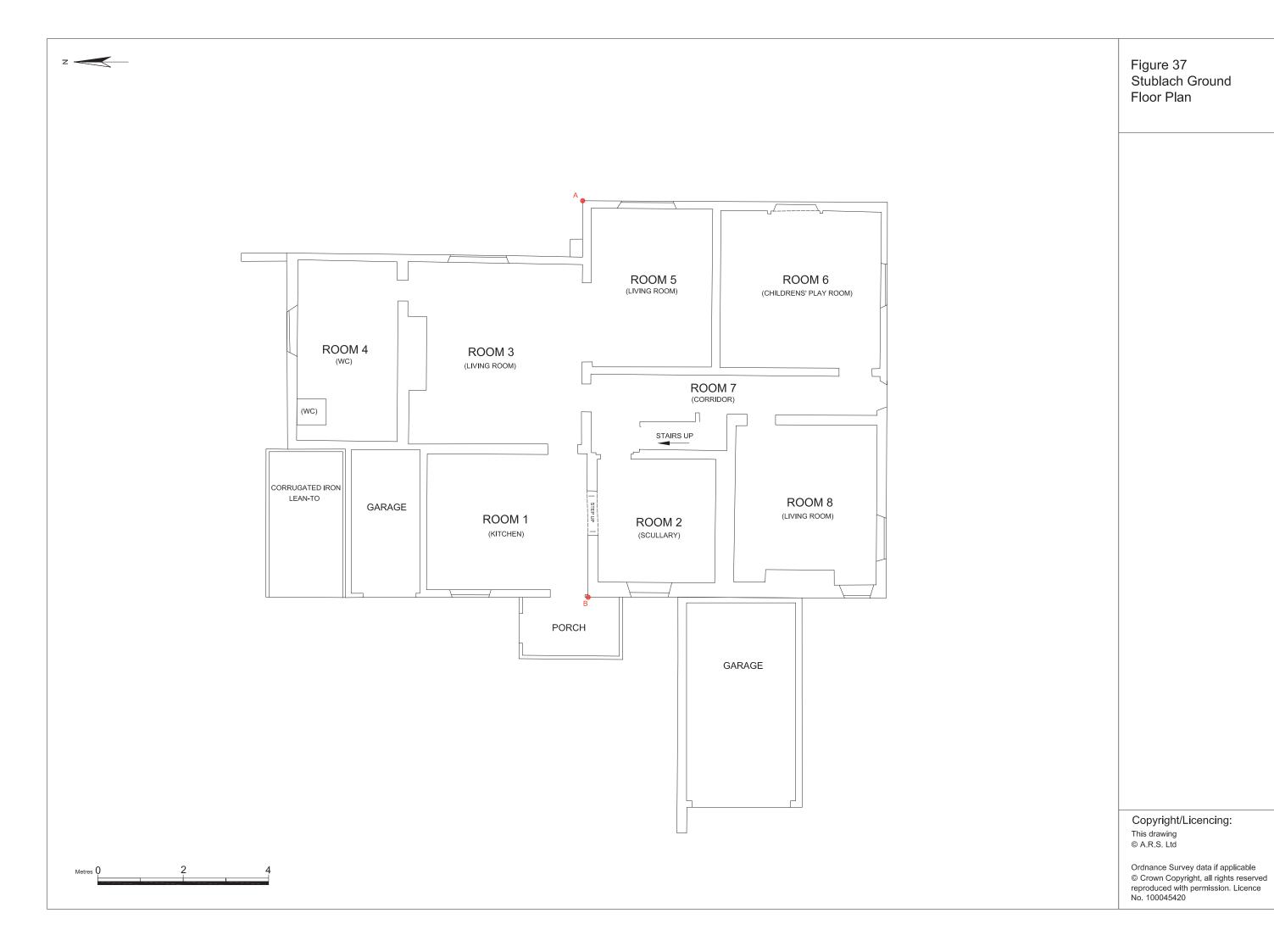


Figure 38
Stublach First Floor
Plan

ROOM 13
(RESPONSE)
ROOM 15
(ROOM 15
(RESPONSE)
ROOM 15
(RESPONSE)
ROOM

ROOM 10

(BEDROOM)

ROOM 16

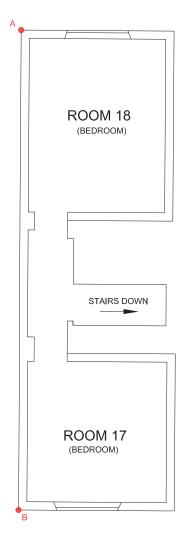
(BEDROOM)

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Figure 39 Stublach Second zFloor Plan



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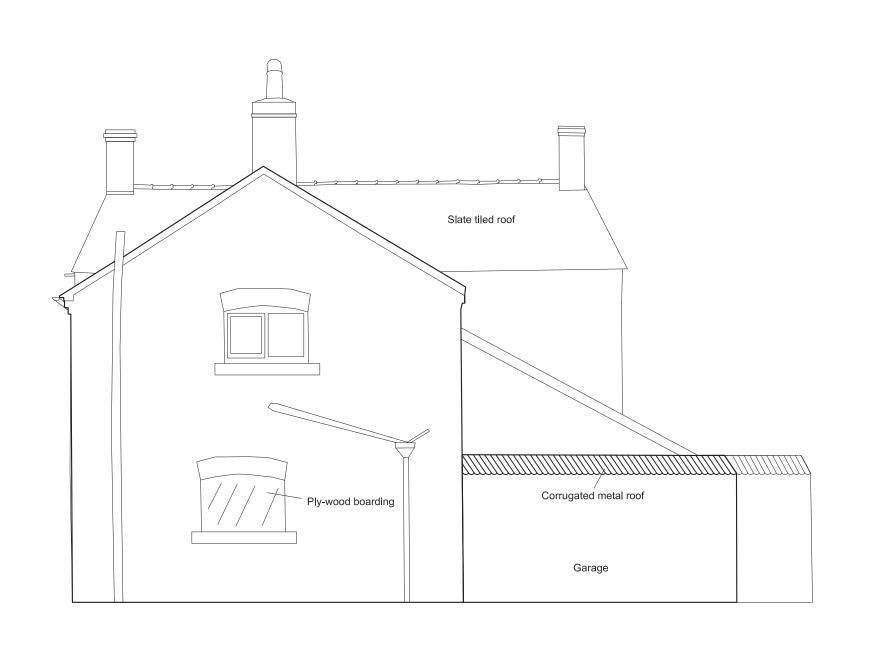


Figure 40 Stublach Farmhouse North Facing Elevation

Key:



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