

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
T G Brown and Son

Byre at Low Shipley Farm
Eggleston
County Durham

archaeological building recording

report 4236
August 2016

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report describes recording work carried out in connection with a planning application for the conversion and extension of a byre to create a cottage at Low Shipley Farm, Eggleston (reference DM/16/00354/FPA). This work comprised a photographic and drawn survey of the building, using existing architects' plans. The works were commissioned by T G Brown and Son and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

The building

- 1.2 This small, simple structure was built before the middle of the 19th century, almost certainly as a byre. It continued in this use until recent times. It has been altered in the very recent past through the refacing and rebuilding of some walls, the creation of new doors, replacement of the roof, and the partly-completed work on the south-west and north-west windows. The building contains no features of great historic or architectural significance. The most notable feature is the semi-subterranean space, perhaps an old midden, at the south-west end.

2. Project background

Location (Figures 1 and 2)

- 2.1 The building is on the north-west side of the steading at Low Shipley Farm, Eggleston, Co Durham. The Ordnance Survey grid reference is NZ 0167 2033.

Development

- 2.2 Planning permission has been obtained for the conversion of the building to a holiday cottage.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the project was to provide a record of the building in its present state. A brief summary of the history of the area is provided as background information. The work required is in line with Level 1/2, as defined in the Historic England document *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*. The regional research framework (Petts & Gerrard 2006) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation with respect to archaeology. In this instance, the scheme of works was designed to address agenda item PM7: North Pennine Dales.

Specification summary

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation provided by Archaeological Services Durham University (ref DS16.252) and approved by the Durham County Council Archaeology Team.

Dates

- 2.5 The building at Low Shipley Farm was examined on 29th July and 18th August 2016. This report was prepared for August 2016.

Personnel

- 2.6 Research and survey work were carried out by Dr Tudor Skinner. This report was prepared by Dr Tudor Skinner and edited by Richard Annis; the illustrations were prepared by David Graham. The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The project archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to the Durham County Record Office in due course. Archaeological Services Durham University is registered with the **Online AccesS** to the **Index of archaeological investigationS** project (**OASIS**). The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3- 259208**.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

Landuse

- 3.1 The building is part of an active farmstead with holiday accommodation. It is surrounded on all sides by grazed pasture.

Site and situation

- 3.2 The building stands at an elevation of about 215m OD on the north-west side of the Low Shipley farmstead (Photographs 1 and 2). The land falls from north-east to south-west across the farm, with a steep drop immediately south-west of the yard

and the building. A small beck flows down to the Tees immediately north-west of the building.

Geology and soils

- 3.3 The bedrock is Stainmore Formation sandstone, which is overlain by Devensian till. There are sandstone quarries a short distance to the north of the farmstead.

4. Historical and archaeological development

- 4.1 Prior to the emergence of High and Low Shipley in the documentary record, a Shipley House near Marwood was noted in 1602 as a prior forfeiture to the Crown (Surtees 1840). The place-name *Shepley* first appears on Saxton's map of County Durham of 1607. It is shown on the north pale of an unnamed deer park, directly north of the larger Marwood Park, both on the north bank of the Tees. This deer park does not appear on any maps after 1722. High and Low Shipley are first referred to in a number of estate plans between 1770 and 1773 (Durham Record Office D/St/P2/1/13, D/St/P2/1/14, D/St/P2/1/15). On two of these plans the Shipleys have been glossed together as 'Sweet Shipley', a toponym associated with an earlier survey commissioned by the Strathmore Estate in 1718 (*ibid.* D/St/P2/5/85). It is likely that Sweet Shipley refers to the former deer park. Two farms are recorded at Shipley in 1638. These belonged to John Raine and Ralph Simpson respectively (*ibid.* D/HH 3/8/5). The latter is of particular note considering the longstanding association between the Simpson family and High Shipley (Keys to the Past D37847). High and Low Shipley are first specifically depicted on a map of County Durham in John Cary's *New and Correct English Atlas* (1787), with the latter shown as a hamlet on the banks of the Tees. The mid-18th-century house at Low Shipley Farm is a Grade II listed building (Appendix 1).
- 4.2 The Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1859 shows the building on the north-west side of the Low Shipley farmstead, with a layout similar to the present arrangement. The map shows two yards on the south-east side of the building; these are probably stock enclosures. They are not visible on the 1899 second edition map but appear on the third edition of 1924. A 1977 map shows a small structure south of the building, facing the stock yards. This has since been removed, as have the enclosures.
- 4.3 There is some archaeological evidence for past activity in and around Low Shipley Farm. Ridge and furrow earthworks were observed in the field directly north of the building in the course of the present survey. Slag heaps have been identified on Shipley Banks to the north-west of the Farm (Keys to the Past D3267). Shipley Banks Quarry itself, also to the north-west, was active prior to 1859 and is still worked on a small scale.
- 4.4 Recent alterations under an existing planning consent include the creation of new doors on the south-east side and the replacement of the original roof covering with profiled steel sheet. At the time of this survey the south-western half of the roof had been partly demolished.

5. The building

- 5.1 The building is a single-storey byre with a gabled roof, its long axis running north-east - south-west, beside a concrete-surfaced yard (Photograph 3). The stumps of several steel posts in the yard mark the position of the latest version of the stock pens beside the byre (Photograph 4). The remains of a narrower concrete path run along the north-west face of the building and a concrete track passes the north-east gable towards a caravan site to the west of the farmstead. The old masonry of the byre is sandstone rubble laid in thin courses with projecting through stones in the gable ends and the internal wall. There are a few hammer-dressed squared stones at the angles and at the foot of the gable slopes. Because the building is at the lip of a steep slope, the south-west wall is much taller than the others.
- 5.2 The blind north-east end (Photograph 5) has three rows of through stones, projecting courses of large slabs that serve to bind the inner and outer faces of the wall together. These are a common feature of vernacular buildings in the region and are also often seen in dry-stone field walls. The roof has been slightly raised by the addition of a course of sloping masonry on the gable; the coping slabs have been replaced on the south-east side. There is a mass of concrete at the foot of the wall near the middle of this elevation, under a wooden pole for an electricity cable (Photograph 6). The foot of this pole is encased in concrete about 1m above the ground. This suggests that there was once a low structure, such as a stand for milk churns, against the middle of the wall here.
- 5.3 The south-east wall has two wide doors (Photographs 3 and 7). These are modern insertions with long sandstone lintels (Photographs 8 and 9). Most of the wall has been refaced at either side of these doors (Photograph 10). At the south end there is an old gate to the field below the farmyard, and a concrete plinth for the small building shown on the 1977 map (4.2, above). This was used as a fuel and oil store. The sandstone gateposts have been cut off at yard level to make a wider opening (Photograph 11).
- 5.4 Most of the tall south-west end of the byre is old masonry, with four through courses (Photograph 12). The whole of the north-west side of this face has been refaced, as has part of the south-east angle (Photograph 13). As at the north end, the roof level has been raised in recent times. The additional course laid on the south-east slope of the gable includes two concrete blocks; there are old coping slabs on the north-west slope. In the gable, a triangle of thin slabs surrounds ten pigeon holes and three stone shelves. Below this, two old timber windows from farm buildings have been inserted into a hole cut into the outer skin of the wall (Photograph 14). The marks of the disc-cutter used to make the opening can still be seen. At the foot of the wall, well below the level of the yard, there is a low opening that reveals a small space under the floor (Photograph 15). This is largely filled with rubbish and its entrance is partly blocked, so it was not possible to examine it thoroughly. The space appears to be partly natural, with a stone outcrop on the north-west side near the entrance. It is L-shaped in plan, with a rear wall of rubblestone and big sandstone lintels to carry the floor above (Photographs 16 and 17). The original function of this small room is unknown; it might simply have been a midden.
- 5.5 The north-west face (Photograph 18) has the only original opening that survives in the byre. This is a door, just north of centre, with dressed sandstone lintel and

jamb. The old plank door has long iron T-hinges hung on external pintles (Photograph 19). South of this door the whole of the wall has been refaced (Photograph 20). There is a ragged gap for a window near the middle of the south room. Work on a similar window has been started in the old masonry to the north of the central door. As with the window in the south-west gable, the outer skin of stone has been cut out but the opening has not been completed (Photograph 21).

- 5.6 The interior of the building is two large rooms, open to the roof, with concrete floors. When the building was examined the south room (Photographs 22 and 23) was partly stripped and the north was in use as a store for farm equipment (Photograph 24). Both rooms have had modern drinking troughs along their north-east walls. These troughs are made from concrete blocks and sections of cut-down ceramic drain pipes. The one in the south room had recently been dismantled, revealing two long iron staples fixed to the walls (Photograph 25). These are common features of old byres; the halters of cattle would be tied to them while the animals were in their stalls. The trough is the only feature to be seen in the north room and the walls are bare stone. In the south room the walls are whitewashed, apart from in the rebuilt section south of the door. The pigeon holes in the south gable can be seen behind a square recess, and there are two rough holes in the wall slightly lower down (Photograph 26). The roof is supported by four common rafter trusses, all of modern machined timber.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This small, simple structure was built before the middle of the 19th century, almost certainly as a byre. It continued in this use until recent times. It has been altered in the very recent past through the refacing and rebuilding of some walls, the creation of new doors, replacement of the roof, and the partly-completed work on the south-west and north-west windows. The building contains no features of great historic or architectural significance. The most notable feature is the semi-subterranean room, perhaps an old midden, at the south-west end.

7. Sources

- Cary, J 1787 *New and Correct English Atlas*. John Cary, London
Lane, R 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. Historic England, Swindon
Petts, D, & Gerrard, C, 2006 *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*. Durham
Surtees, R 1840 *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham, Volume IV*. Nichols & Bentley, London

Cartographic sources

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Saxton, 1607 | <i>Bishopric of Durham</i> |
| Morden, 1722 | <i>The Bishoprick of Durham</i> |
| Cary, 1787 | <i>Durham</i> |
| Ordnance Survey | 1st – 4th editions and modern |

Websites

- www.keystothepast.info
www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk

www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

Appendix: Listing description, Low Shipley farmhouse

Low Shipley Farmhouse

List entry Number: 1159598

Grade: II

Date first listed: 30-Sep-1987

UID: 111421

Details

MARWOOD B 6278 NZ 02 SW (South side, off) 7/57 Low Shipley Farmhouse II

Farmhouse. Mid C18. Coursed sandstone rubble with quoins and ashlar dressings; stone-flagged roof with stone gable copings. 2 storeys, 3 bays. Central boarded door and 4-pane overlight in tooled plain stone surround. Similar surrounds to late C19 sashes in outer bays; flat stone lintel and projecting stone sill to plain narrow sash over door. Roof has moulded kneelers; banded end chimneys. Rear 2-bay 2 storey outshut.

Figure 1: Site location

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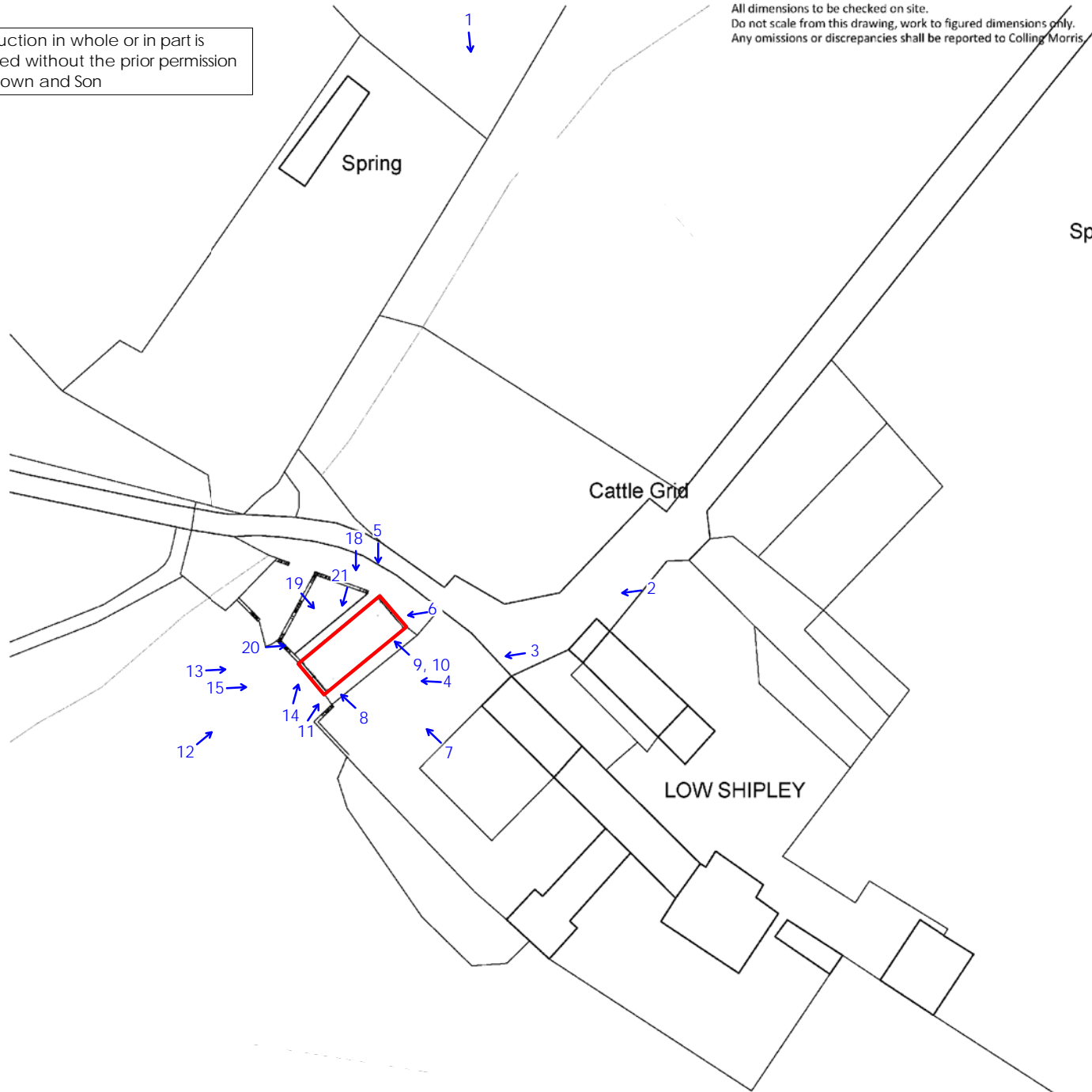


 site location

0 1km
scale 1:25 000 for A4 plot

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All dimensions to be checked on site.
Do not scale from this drawing, work to figured dimensions only.
Any omissions or discrepancies shall be reported to Colling Morris



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
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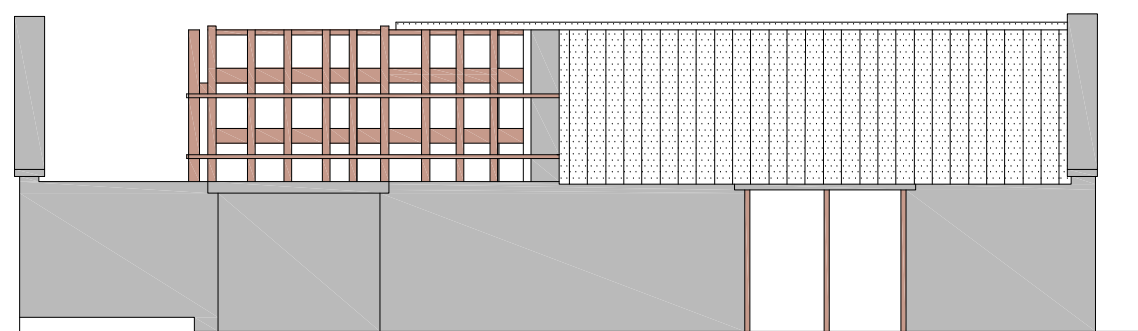
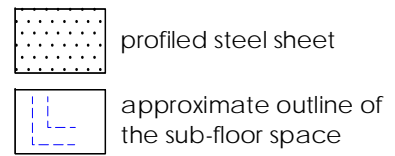
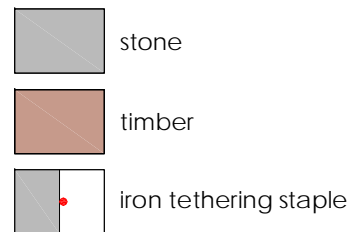
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Figure 2: The farmstead and the building

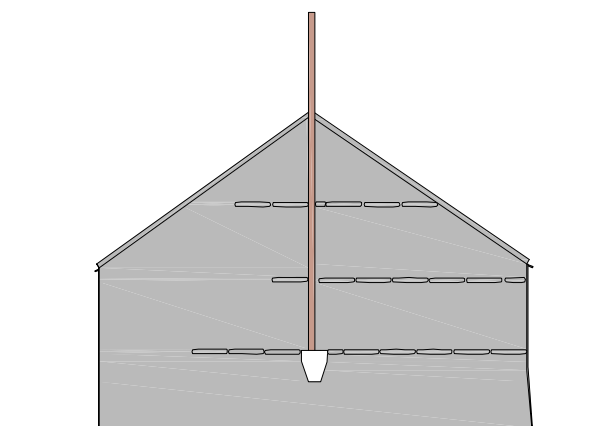


-  the byre
-  location of photographs

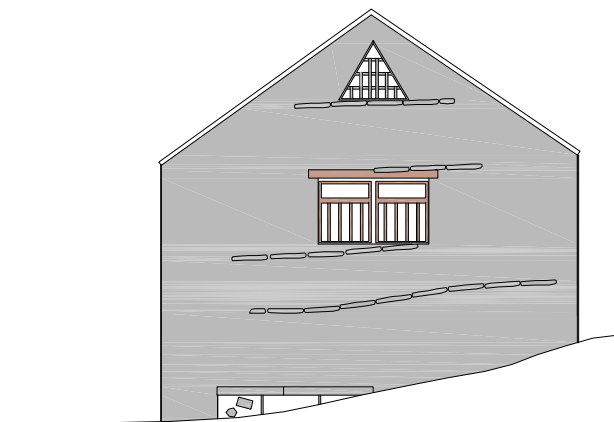




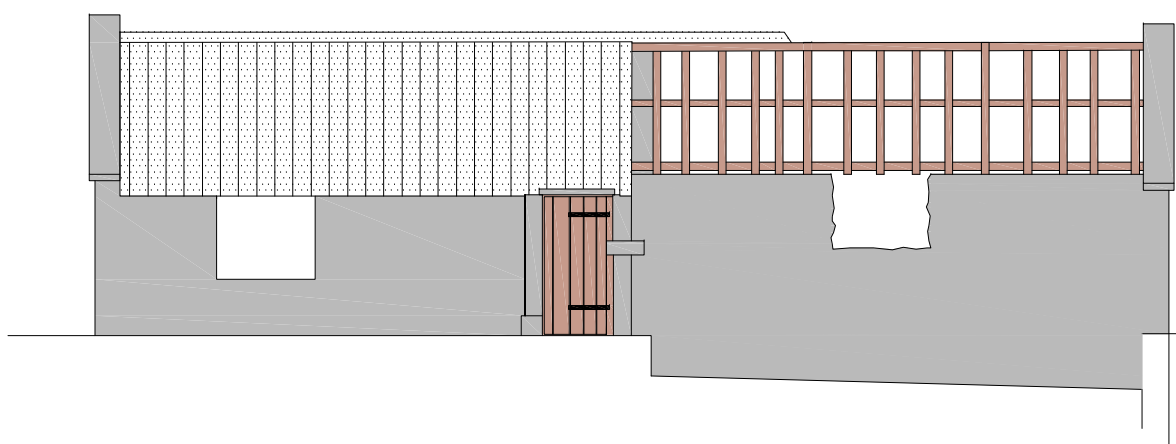
South-east face



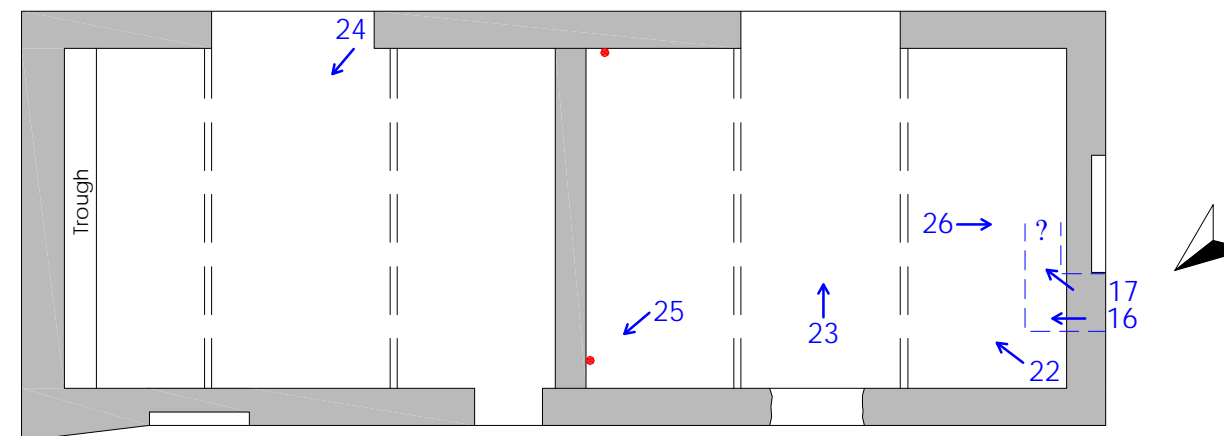
North-east end



South-west end



North-west face



Plan



Photograph 1: Low Shipley Farm seen from the north-east. The byre is the partly-roofed building at the right-hand end of the steading



Photograph 2: The byre seen from the east. The concrete yard in the centre of the picture was formerly divided into two animal pens



Photograph 3: The yard and the south-east face of the building. Stubs of steel posts for the enclosures can be seen in places in the concrete yard



Photograph 4: Detail of two of the cut-off steel fence posts seen near the far door in the picture above



Photograph 5: The north-east end of the building with the attached electricity supply pole. Note the additional course of stones on each slope of the gable



Photograph 6: Detail of the foot of the north-east wall. Note the concrete at ground level and around the bottom of the timber pole



Photograph 7: The south-east face, with the two large modern doors



Photograph 8: The south door in the south-east wall. The masonry to the left of the door has been rebuilt relatively recently



Photograph 9: The north door is also a recent insertion



Photograph 10: The modern masonry beside the door is a good match for the greyer old stonework at the corner of the wall



Photograph 11: The south corner of the building. This is another area of recent rebuilding. Note the cut-down gateposts at the right, beside the former fuel store



Photograph 12: The tall south-west end wall. The window is a recent insertion



Photograph 13 (left): Detail of the south-west end, showing the courses of through stones, the pigeon holes above the recent window, and a large area of rebuilt masonry at the left-hand corner

Photograph 14 (below): Detail of the inserted window, with saw-cut stones against the wooden frame





Photograph 15: The opening to the under-floor room, at the foot of the south-west wall



Photograph 16: The interior of the under-floor room, with what appears to be a natural stone outcrop on the left. A view looking north-east



Photograph 17: Looking around the corner from the entrance of the under-floor room. Note the heavy stone lintels in the ceiling



Photograph 18: The north-west face. Note the central door beside the scale and the recent window in the foreground



Photograph 19: Detail of the door near the middle of the north-west face



Photograph 20: The north-west face. A detail of the re-faced wall and the ragged window opening south of the door



Photograph 21: The incomplete modern window opening at the north end of the north-west face



Photograph 22: Looking east in the south room. The half-pipes in the foreground formed a feeding trough against the far wall



Photograph 23: The door of the south room. The rebuilt wall at the right has been slightly thickened at its head to support the roof truss.



Photograph 24: Inside the north room. The feeding trough can just be seen to the left of the chest of drawers



Photograph 25: An iron tethering staple (centre) attached to the internal wall, near the north corner of the southern room



Photograph 26: The pigeon holes seen from inside the south room, with two rough recesses below