

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES  
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of  
Mr & Mrs Oliver

Former stackyard  
Hart  
Hartlepool

archaeological building recording

report 5448  
January 2021

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## **1. Summary**

### **The project**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological recording project conducted in advance of proposed demolition of agricultural buildings in a former stackyard at Hart, Hartlepool. A photographic and drawn survey of the buildings, using existing architects' plans, has been carried out.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Mr & Mrs Oliver and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

### **The buildings**

- 1.3 The proposed development area is the former stackyard to the south of the old Hart Farm yard and the two buildings that form the south and west ranges of that yard.
- 1.4 The western building is a long narrow modern shed, now used as a garage and to be retained in the proposed development. It is of no historic interest. The old south range is a stone building aligned east/west in two parts. The western element is a byre with a hayloft above; the slightly longer single-storey eastern part is a former barn. A floor slab at the east end is all that remains of a third element of the structure shown on old OS maps. On the site of an old gin-gang there is a wide modern door with a concrete lintel. No evidence of the gin survives.
- 1.5 These buildings were erected at an unknown date between 1770 and 1840. They are typical of small farms of the region and were originally used for housing animals, storing feed and processing cereal crops. In later years the barn was used as an animal shelter and in modern times it was divided up. A gin-gang attached to the barn was removed before the mid-1960s and all traces of its operation have gone.



## 2. Project background

### Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The former stackyard lies to the south of the farmhouse at Hart Farm, on the south side of Front Street at the middle of the village of Hart, Hartlepool. The Ordnance Survey grid reference is NZ 4700 5349. The site covers approximately 960 square metres and the buildings described here cover about 105 square metres.

### Development proposal

- 2.2 Proposals have been drawn up for the demolition of an east/west building, conversion of an adjoining long shed into a garage and the erection of a new two-storey dwelling

### Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the project was to provide a record of the buildings in their present state. 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. The specific research priorities which this project has the potential to address include PMviii: Industrial intensification 1790-1830 and MOiii: Agriculture.

### Specification summary

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation provided by Archaeological Services Durham University and approved by Tees Archaeology.

### Dates

- 2.5 The buildings were examined on 17th December 2020 and this report was prepared for January 2021.

### Personnel

- 2.6 Research, survey and report preparation work was carried out by Richard Annis and the illustrations were prepared by David Graham.

### Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The project archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to Tees Archaeology 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 **archaeol3-411954**.

## 3. Landuse, topography and geology

### Landuse

- 3.1 The former stackyard is near the middle of the village and there are houses to the west, north and east. On the south side fields run up to the A179 Hart bypass. The old east/west range of buildings is disused. The long north/south building at the west end is used as a garage.

### **Site and situation**

- 3.2 The buildings stand at about 76m OD on a site that slopes down towards modern houses on Hart pasture east of the site. The fields at the south side slope steeply up towards the road. Front Street and the buildings of Hart Farm are slightly higher than the stackyard.

### **Geology and soils**

- 3.3 The bedrock is Permian dolostone of the Roker Formation, overlain by glacial Devensian diamicton till (British Geological Survey 2021).

### **Survey conditions**

- 3.4 When this survey was carried out the old stackyard had been cleared and a shallow excavation had been made along the south face of the older buildings. The north face of the block was inaccessible because it is a party wall with another property.

## **4. Historical and archaeological development**

- 4.1 The long history of Hart village has been set out in the Heritage of Hart project report (Horsley 2009) and a desk-based assessment (Archaeological Services 2018); relevant parts of those records are summarised here.
- 4.2 The manor of Hart was purchased by Robert Petrie and John Morley in 1580 and enclosure of the commons probably took place between 1638 and 1725 (Austin 1976). The Tees Archaeology Historic Environment Record includes records of farms and a blacksmith's workshop at Hart in the 17th century. The settlement grew along the main east/west road, now Front Street, with the church and manor house to the north. When the Hart estate was sold in 1770 the sale catalogue listed 15 leasehold farms, four holdings farmed by tenants and 35 cottages in the village (Austin 1976). Hart Farm appears on the 1770 Hart Estate map with a smaller building running south from its west end. The buildings and stackyard under consideration here are not shown.
- 4.3 The tithe plan of 1840 shows the farm as a quadrangle open at the south-west corner. The tithe apportionment records that Hart Farm covered 127 acres 2 roods and 19 perches (51.65ha) and its tenant was Thomas Richardson. The freeholder, as elsewhere in the village, was the Duke of Cleveland.
- 4.4 The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows Hart Farm with a north range, which includes the farmhouse, in the same form as is seen today. At the rear, a narrow east range links this to a three-part building that forms the south side of the yard behind the house; the former stackyard is outside this yard to the south. The larger central section of the three-part building can be identified as a barn because it has a gin-gang attached to its south wall. This arrangement remained unchanged until the Second World War but the gin-house had been removed by the 1960s. Map evidence suggests that the long shed that forms the west range was rebuilt before 1914.
- 4.5 Hart Farm is on Hartlepool Borough Council's Local List. Tees Archaeology's Historic Environment Record entry for Hart Farm, no. 5196, describes it as an 18th-century farmstead. The listed house on the west side of the site, Home Farm, is described as mid- to late 18th-century with later outbuildings at the rear.

## 5. The buildings (Figure 3)

### The stackyard

- 5.1 The proposed development area is the former stackyard to the south of the old Hart Farm yard and the two buildings that form the south and west ranges of that yard (Figure 2). Stackyards were open areas close to the farmstead where, at harvest time, cereal crops and hay could be stacked to await processing. For convenience these were usually close to the barn where cereal crops were threshed and straw was separated for use elsewhere. For a long time threshing was a slow and arduous process carried out by hand during the winter months. After the invention of the mechanical thresher at the end of the 18th century the process was much faster. Early threshers were small machines that were set up in barns and powered by shafts from 'horse engines' or gins in the yard outside. In this region, the provision of a circular shelter, attached to the barn and known as a gin-gang, was quite common. The presence of such a shelter on the old maps of the village show that this is what happened at Hart Farm. By the 1840s mobile threshing machines, towed and powered by steam traction engines, began to displace small barn threshers. Gin-gang structures, which were necessarily strongly built, often remained in used for storage or for housing animals.
- 5.2 Wherever possible, barn threshers were mounted on the first floor so that grain and straw would fall to the ground floor for bagging or storage. On smaller farms where the barn was not large enough to allow this, the thresher might be mounted on a frame so that sacks could be placed under the chutes that delivered chaff and clean grain.

### Materials

- 5.3 The western building is a long narrow modern shed. It is built of concrete blocks and has a monopitch roof. This building is now used as a garage and is to be retained in the proposed development. It is of no historic interest. The old south range is a stone building aligned east-west (Photo 1). It is in two parts. The western element is a byre with a hayloft above; the slightly longer single-storey eastern part is a former barn. A floor slab at the east end is all that remains of a third element of the structure shown on old OS maps. On the site of the old gin-gang there is a wide modern door with a concrete lintel. No evidence of the gin survives. The old barn is almost as tall as the western byre (Photo 2).
- 5.4 The walls of both parts of the old range are built of random or very roughly-coursed rubblestone with occasional cobbles. In the byre, the lower part of the southern angles are made of hammer-dressed stone and the upper parts are brick. Similar brick appears around the hayloft's pitching doors and in the copings of the gables. The roof is covered with concrete tiles. The masonry of the old barn is similar, with brick in an arched door at the west end of the barn and at the south-east angle.

### The byre

- 5.5 The south face of the byre is quite plain (Photo 3). Below the brick copings, the gables are all stone (Photo 4). Beneath the pitching doors, the only openings to the ground floor are three ventilators made from old horseshoe-profile land drain tiles (Photo 5). The gap between the west gable and the modern shed is too narrow to allow the ground- and first-floor doors to be used, so the earlier west range building must have been smaller (Photos 6 & 7). From the outside, most of the east end is hidden but a modern hole and what appears to be a blocked opening can be seen at

first-floor level inside the old barn (Photo 8). The blocked opening is not visible in the byre and it extends above and below the line of the hayloft floor. It may simply have been a recess.

- 5.6 Inside, the byre has lost its stalls (Photo 9). Their position can be seen from the concrete floor drain that discharged into the yard at the north-east corner of the building. The low ceiling is carried on a composite joist supported by steel beams. The east end of the byre is blind and there are no marks of stall partitions in the south wall (Photos 10 & 11). The north wall has two large arched windows to the yard and a wide arched door at the east end (Photo 12). All of these are lined with brick and all have been blocked up.
- 5.7 The floor of the hayloft was too decayed to allow entry but the whole space can be seen from a hole in the wall at the east end (Photo 13). The walls retain some plaster, suggesting an alternative use as a granary, but there are no signs of bins or other fixtures. In order to make the space accessible, the roof trusses have raised collars instead of tie beams and light timbers have been attached as scissor braces (Photo 14). The north wall has small windows under the eaves, closed with shutters (Photo 15); the south has larger pitching doors, as would be expected on the side facing the stackyard (Photo 16).

#### **The former barn**

- 5.8 This lower building has a steeper roof covered with modern tiles over felt sarking, with a small recent pitching door at the west end (Photo 17). All traces of the gin-gang has been removed by the modern door near the middle of the wall. The arched door of a stall or shed at the west has been reduced with later brickwork (Photo 18). Old brickwork forms a diamond lattice ventilator near the east end of the south face, by a large subsidence crack (Photo 19). Inside, the opening has an inserted cement sill; the holes are stuffed with horseshoes, probably from the smithy that formerly stood on Front Street a few metres from this building (Photo 20). At the east end, traces of the third part of the range can be seen. The end of the barn runs into the face of the east range, which has a lower modern roof (Photo 21). Unlike the byre, the gable has tumbled-in brickwork rather than plain stone (Photo 22). Another diamond-shaped ventilator can be seen here, below the roof scar of the eastern building; lower down there is a shuttered window that cuts the whitewashed plaster of the vanished building (Photo 23).
- 5.9 Inside, most of the building is a single room divided by modern concrete-block walls (Photo 24). As in the hayloft, the roof has high collars rather than tie beams. The timbers appear fairly modern. Since there is no trace of a connection with the gin-gang, the roof must post-date the removal of the gin, sometime before 1965. The small shed at the west end has a straight joint in its north wall, probably a door into the yard (Photo 25). A low ceiling here provides a small loft. The fairly recent joists cut across the brick arch in the south wall (Photo 26). There are two small windows or hatches, blocked up, in the internal wall (Photo 27). The north wall has a window and a door to the yard, both blocked up (Photos 28 & 29) and there are more blocked windows in the east end (Photos 30 & 31). The recent blockwork wall here cuts across a feeding trough that spans the width of the wall; this is made of concrete and sections of drainage pipe. The inserted door has a concrete lintel (Photo 32). No evidence of a drive shaft, bearings or machinery was seen in the building. The loft at the west end appears to be a late insertion; the pitching door,

with its cheek of recent brick and asbestos cement board, is certainly not an early feature (Photos 33 & 34).

## 6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The buildings at the former stackyard were erected at an unknown date between 1770 and 1840. They are typical of small farms of the region and were originally used for housing animals, storing feed and processing cereal crops. In later years the barn was used as an animal shelter and in modern times it was divided up. The gin-gang was removed before the mid-1960s and all traces of its operation have gone.

## 7. Sources and references

- Archaeological Services 2018 *Nine Acres, Hart, Hartlepool: archaeological desk-based assessment*. Report **4901**, Archaeological Services Durham University
- Austin, D, 1976 Fieldwork and excavation at Hart, Co. Durham, 1965-1975. *Archaeol Aeliana* Fifth Series, Vol. **IV**, 69-132
- DULASC Tithe map and apportionment: Durham University Library Archives & Special Collections reference **DDR/EA/TTH/1/112**
- Horsley, K, 2009 *The Heritage of Hart Project 2009*. A Historic Environment Survey of Hart, Hartlepool
- Petts, D, & Gerrard, C, 2006 *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*. Durham.

### Websites

[www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk) – British Geological Survey

## Appendix: Catalogue of photographs

The photographs were taken by Richard Annis on 17th December 2020, using a Nikon D3300 camera. Digital filenames are 01 – 34\_Hart\_Stackyard\_5448.

No.	Subject
1	The south face of the buildings, seen from the old stackyard. There was formerly another small building at the east (right-hand) end
2	A view from the south-east side
3	The face of the old byre and hayloft. The tall upper openings were used to pitch hay or straw from carts in the yard
4	The lower pitching door at the south-east corner of the byre is a later alteration
5	Old horseshoe field drains used as ventilators for the byre
6	The narrow gap between the byre and the long modern shed that forms the west side of the farmyard on the far side of the building
7	The west end of the byre. A tall door to the loft is bricked up
8	The east end of the loft, seen from the adjoining barn. Note the blocked opening at the left, which extends below the hayloft floor
9	The byre, with steel I-beams supporting the main joist; at the left is a detached door from a stall. A view looking south-west
10	The interior of the byre seen from the north-west corner. The black bucket is lying in the drain at the back of the stalls
11	The south wall shows no trace of stall divisions and the ventilators between the joists are blocked up
12	The north wall had two arched windows and a wide door from the yard, all now blocked up
13	The hayloft, seen from the east end. The blocked door is the one seen in Photo 7
14	The roof trusses have small scissor braces above the collar beams
15	Small windows in the north wall of the loft
16	The larger pitching windows in the south wall have brick in their jambs
17	The old barn. The gin-gang joined this building where the big modern door is now
18	The barn seen from the south-west. The modern material of the roof is apparent here
19	A large subsidence crack runs across the east end of the south face, above a brick ventilator
20	The inside of the ventilator
21	The east face of the old yard with the end of the barn at the left. In the foreground are the remains of the third cell of the old range
22	The east end of the old barn. The tumbled-in brickwork of the gable is a feature typical of this region
23	Detail of the east end, showing the roof line of the demolished third section above a blocked ventilator like that in Photo 19
24	A view looking east in the old barn. The low walls are modern insertions
25	Looking north into the shed at the west end of the barn. Note the straight joint in the far wall
26	Modern brickwork reduces the size of the old arched door
27	Two small blocked hatches in the wall between the shed and the main part of the old barn. A view looking north-west
28	The western room in the barn, with a blocked opening in the north wall
29	A blocked north door in the middle room
30	A modern trough runs across the east wall of the barn, below a blocked window

No.	Subject
31	Another blocked window in the east end is partly covered by the modern internal wall
32	Inside view of the large 1960s door in the south wall
33	The loft over the shed at the west end of the barn
34	The modern pitching door at the south side of the small loft



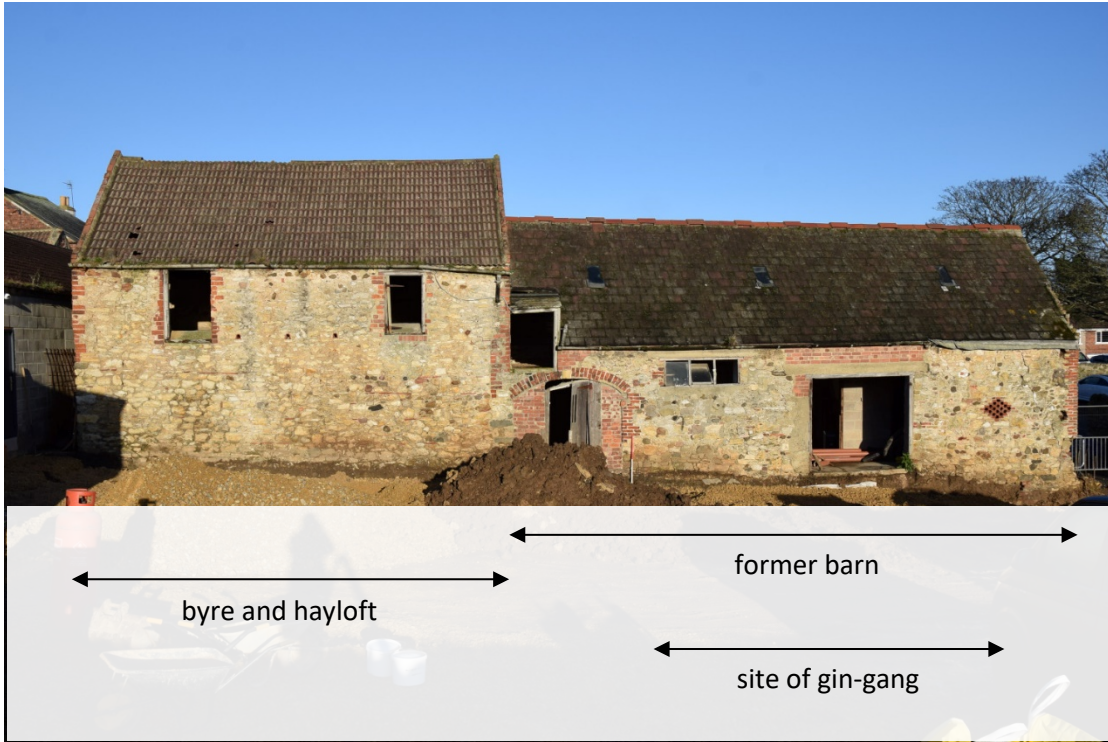


Photo 1: The south face of the buildings, seen from the old stackyard. There was formerly another small building at the east (right-hand) end



Photo 2: A view from the south-east side





Photo 3: The face of the old byre and hayloft. The tall upper openings were used to pitch hay or straw from carts in the yard



Photo 4: The lower pitching door at the south-east corner of the byre is a later alteration





Photo 5 (above): Old horseshoe field drains used as ventilators for the byre



Photo 6 (left): The narrow gap between the byre and the long modern shed that forms the west side of the farmyard on the far side of the building





Photo 7 (left): The west end of the byre. A tall door to the loft is bricked up

Photo 8 (below): The east end of the loft, seen from the adjoining barn. Note the blocked opening at the left, which extends below the hayloft floor







Photo 9: The byre, with steel I-beams supporting the main joist; at the left is a detached door from a stall. A view looking south-west



Photo 10: The interior of the byre seen from the north-west corner. The black bucket is lying in the drain at the back of the stalls





Photo 11: The south wall shows no trace of stall divisions and the ventilators between the joists are blocked up



Photo 12: The north wall had two arched windows and a wide door from the yard, all now blocked up





Photo 13: The hayloft, seen from the east end. The blocked door is the one seen in Photo 7



Photo 14: The roof trusses have small scissor braces above the collar beams





Photo 15: Small windows in the north wall of the loft



Photo 16: The larger pitching windows in the south wall have brick in their jambs





Photo 17: The old barn. The gin-gang joined this building where the big modern door is now



Photo 18: The barn seen from the south-west. The modern material of the roof is apparent here





Photo 19: A large subsidence crack runs across the east end of the south face, above a brick ventilator



Photo 20: The inside of the ventilator





Photo 21 (above):  
The east face of  
the old yard with  
the end of the  
barn at the left. In  
the foreground  
are the remains  
of the third cell of  
the old range



Photo 22 (left):  
The east end of  
the old barn. The  
tumbled-in  
brickwork of the  
gable is a feature  
typical of this  
region





Photo 23: Detail of the east end, showing the roof line of the demolished third section above a blocked ventilator like that in Photo 19



Photo 24: A view looking east in the old barn. The low walls are modern insertions





Photo 25: Looking north into the shed at the west end of the barn. Note the straight joint in the far wall



Photo 26: Modern brickwork reduces the size of the old arched door





Photo 27: Two small blocked hatches in the wall between the shed and the main part of the old barn. A view looking north-west



Photo 28: The western room in the barn, with a blocked opening in the north wall





Photo 29: A blocked north door in the middle room



Photo 30: A modern trough runs across the east wall of the barn, below a blocked window





Photo 31 (left): Another blocked window in the east end is partly covered by the modern internal wall

Photo 32 (below): Inside view of the large 1960s door in the south wall







Photo 33: The loft over the shed at the west end of the barn



Photo 34: The modern pitching door at the south side of the small loft




Figure 1: Site location

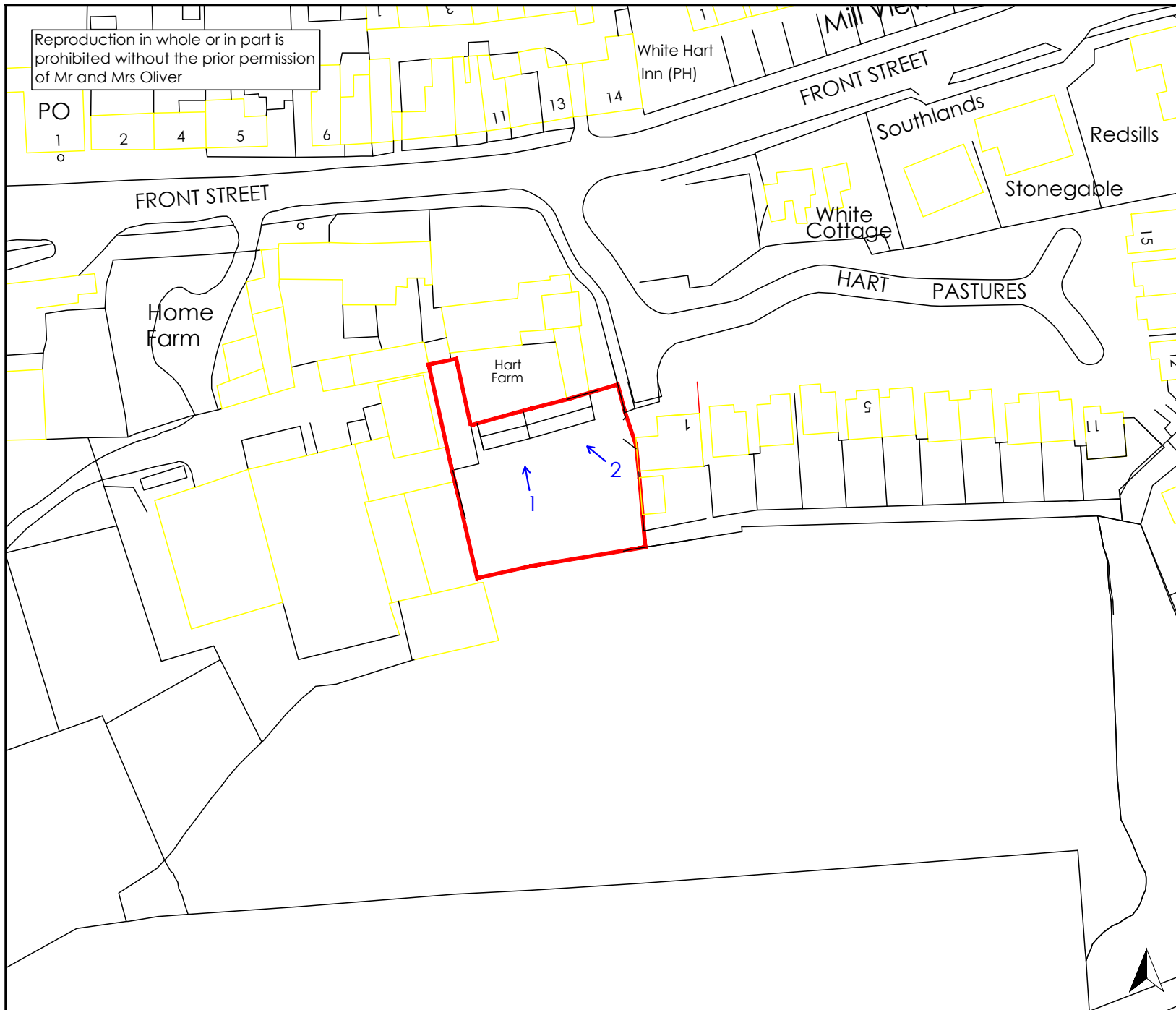
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 site boundary

0  1km  
scale 1:25 000 for A4 plot

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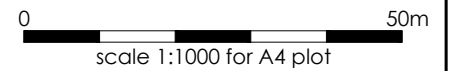
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on behalf of  
Mr and Mrs Oliver

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Hart  
Hartlepool

archaeological building  
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report 5448

Figure 2: The site and buildings



-  site boundary
-  photograph

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
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Former stackyard  
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report 5448

Figure 3: Plans and elevations

0 5m  
scale 1:125 for A3 plot

-  photograph
-  blocked opening

