

# PRIORY CLOSE, CARTMEL, CUMBRIA

## Archaeological Building Recording



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NGR: SD 37930 78801

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## Non-Technical Summary

Prior to proposed alterations to Priory Close, Cartmel, the Conservation Officer for South Lakeland District Council recommended that the building be subject to archaeological recording. The building is Listed Grade II\*, and is believed to contain probable medieval elements, and it was considered necessary to make a record of the building before alteration in order to better understand its historical development and significance. Following the provision of a project design by Greenlane Archaeology the work on site was carried out in October 2013.

Priory Close is situated immediately west of the Cartmel Parish Church, which is the only certain surviving element of the Cartmel Priory, which was established in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is thought to have been substantially reorganised after the late 14<sup>th</sup> century with the buildings described as ruinous, perhaps due to problems with the foundations or due to the Scottish raids that took place in this century. Following the Dissolution much of the former property of Cartmel Priory was acquired by the Preston family, who later became established at Holker Hall, although they sold off a large amount of this in 1610. The property is difficult to identify in documentary sources before the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to a lack of sources using its present name. However, it was possible to extrapolate some information from the known occupiers in 1866, which suggest it comprised two households, one of which could be traced back to John Brockbank in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a wealthy local inhabitant. One part seems to have remained occupied by a number of wealthy people including Francis Webster, son of the Kendal architect George Webster, while the other was occupied by a Robert Bigland, a joiner. The obvious historical and architectural interest of the building has attracted the attention of historians since at least 1928, and a number of accounts of its features and development have been produced, although several of these contain somewhat spurious information and none seem to have involved very detailed examination.

The building recording revealed that the earliest phase of the building is the north end, which is constructed with very thick walls and incorporates a very large projecting fireplace. This is undoubtedly medieval and is therefore likely to relate to the Priory in which case it cannot predate the late 12<sup>th</sup> century. Its function is uncertain although the fireplace indicates that it might have formed a kitchen or bake house, but whether it served the whole priory, just the prior's lodging, or even the guest lodging is not known. A second phase of medieval date, although probably slightly later, is represented by rooms at the south end of the current building, which include an early fireplace with a pointed arch and probably extend into the adjoining building to the south, but also a large dividing wall between the two early phases. This perhaps represents a section of the inner precinct wall of the priory, and this phase perhaps corresponds with the period of reorganisation thought to have taken place at Cartmel Priory from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards. These early sections were subsequently extended by additions to the east and west of the dividing wall, probably in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps after estates were sold by the Preston family in 1610. These additions were then further renovated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the east and west sections probably being connected for the first time, on the upper floor at least, and a new Georgian interior created with panelled room, marble fireplaces, and an elaborate staircase. Minor alterations may have been carried out in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the building was perhaps divided into two properties at this time, although the most substantial alterations after this have been the most recent phase of modernisation, which has led to the loss of original floor surfaces on the ground floor, renewal of the back stairs, and other damaging changes.

The building represents a significant structure in Cartmel as it obviously contains a considerable amount of medieval and later fabric. Earlier accounts of its development and the complex documentary sources have confused its story to some extent, but further investigation into the neighbouring buildings and scientific dating of elements such as the timber would be essential. It is recommended that should any proposed development lead to significant areas of early fabric being exposed, for example through the removal of large areas of wall plaster, that further archaeological recording be carried out in order to enhance the understanding of the building.

## **Acknowledgements**

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Lisa Clarke for commissioning the project and providing information about the building, and Campbell Driver Partnership Limited for providing the as existing drawings of the building. Additional thanks are due to the staff of the Cumbria Archives Centre in Barrow-in-Furness (CAC(B)) for their assistance with accessing the archives.

The desk-based assessment and building recording was carried out by Dan Elsworth and Tom Mace who co-wrote this report. The illustrations were produced by Tom Mace and the report was edited by Jo Dawson. Dan Elsworth managed the project.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Prior to proposed alterations to Priory Close, Cartmel, Cumbria (NGR SD 37930 78801), the Conservation Officer for South Lakeland District Council recommended that the building be subject to archaeological recording. Greenlane Archaeology was approached by Lisa Clarke (hereafter 'the client'), to carry out an archaeological building recording in order to provide the necessary information. In response to this Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design for an English Heritage Level 2/3-type survey to provide a detailed record of the building, as well as providing outline information about its development, form and function (English Heritage 2006). The work was carried out in October 2013.

1.1.2 The building is Listed Grade II\*, and is believed to contain probable medieval elements that were reconstructed in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and added to in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (English Heritage 2013; *Appendix 1*).

## 1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The site is fairly centrally located within the village of Cartmel, less than 100m to the west of the Priory (Figure 1). The Priory, which is visually prominent in the landscape, formed the hub around which Cartmel developed and the village, which is described as 'exceptional' and 'largely unspoilt', is now protected by Conservation Area status (Countryside Commission 1998, 73). Cartmel is situated approximately 3.5km north-west of Grange-over-Sands to the south of the South Cumbria Low Fells on the northern side of Morecambe Bay (Countryside Commission 1998, 69; Ordnance Survey 2008).

1.2.2 Cartmel is situated on the junction of a complex series of solid geology comprising Bannisdale Slates of Silurian age and carboniferous limestone, covered by thick glacial debris, including deposits of cobbles, pebbles and sandy material (Mitchell 1990, 43; Moseley 1978, plate 1). The site is located to the east of the River Eea, at approximately 30m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2008); the underlying solid geology in the catchment area to the west of the River is mainly slate, but to the east the deposits are mostly limestone, and deposits of alluvium (soft peaty and clayey soils) are likely to be present closer to the River (Mitchell 1990, figure 2; 1992, figure 1). The River itself was doubtless an important influence on the sourcing of construction material in the area most notably that used in the construction of the Priory (Mitchell 1992, 72-73).

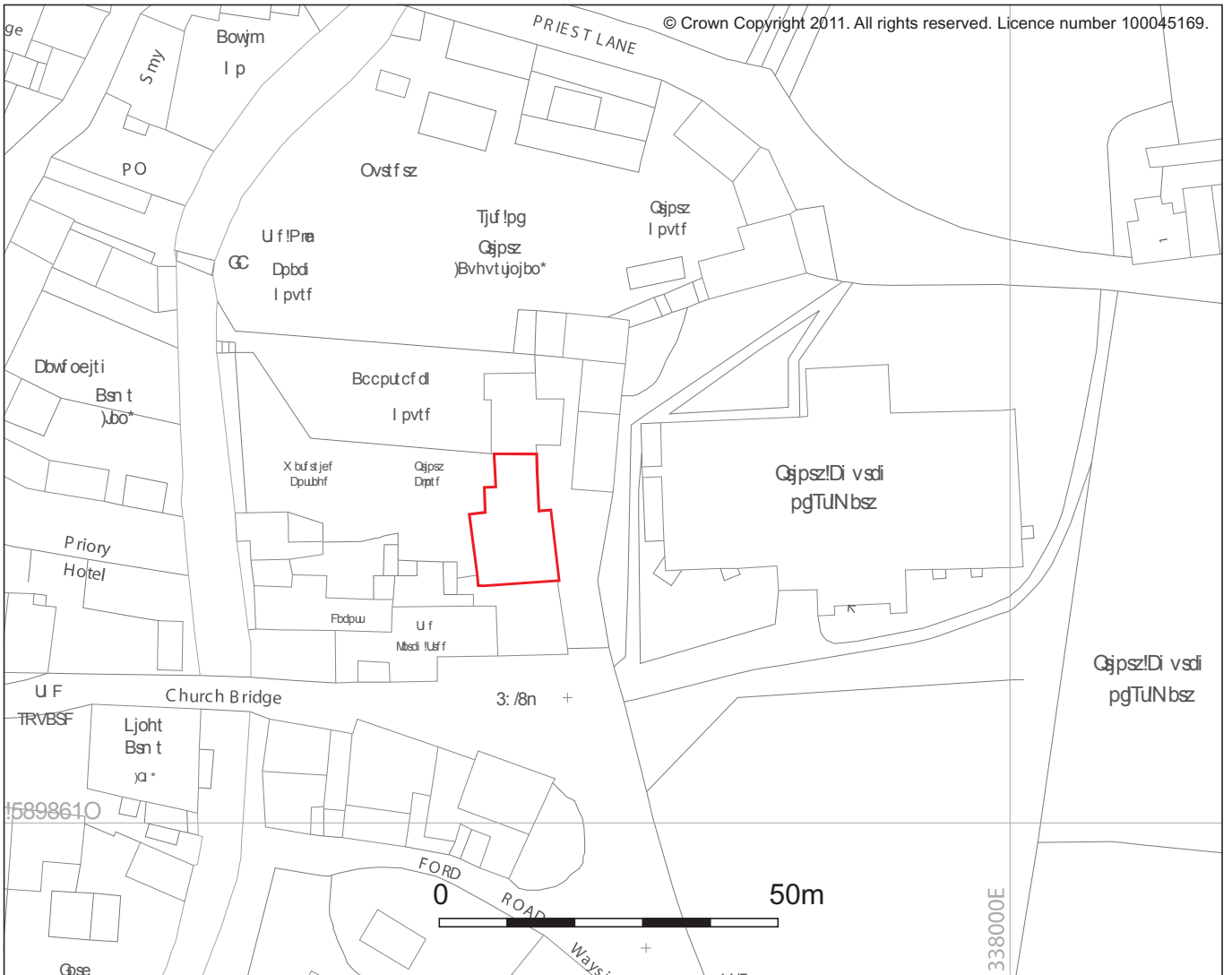
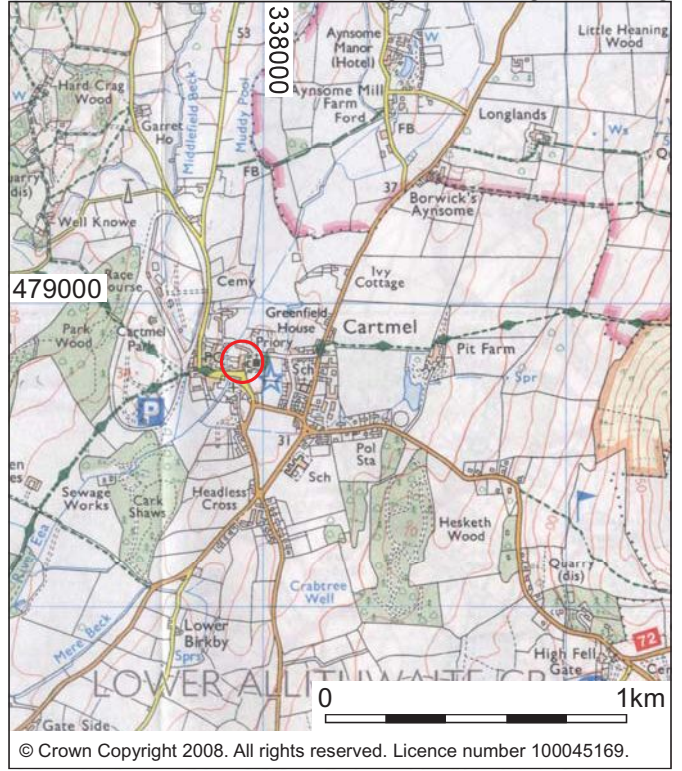
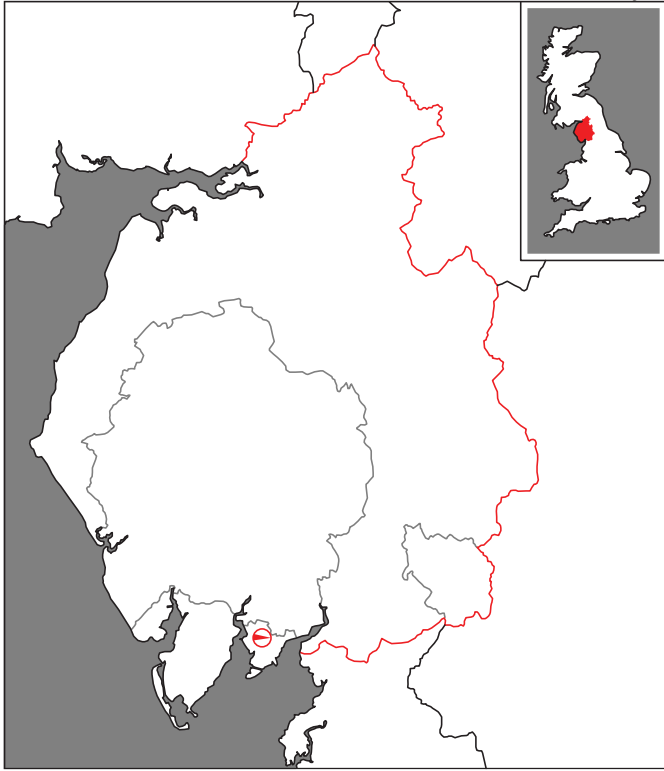


Figure 1: Site location

Client: Lisa Clarke

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprised three separate elements intended to provide a suitable record of the structure, in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006) and the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a). In addition a desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the project design and IfA guidelines (IfA 2008b) prior to the building recording, and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

### 2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 Information was gathered from the following locations:

- **Cumbria Archive Centre, Barrow (CAC(B))**: this was visited in order to examine early maps of the site and other primary sources as well as secondary sources such as trade directories in order to identify information about the development and use of the building;
- **Client**: information about the building was obtained verbally from the client;
- **Greenlane Archaeology library**: additional secondary sources were used to provide information for the site background.

### 2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 The building recording was carried out to English Heritage Level-2/3 type standards (English Heritage 2006), which provides a relatively detailed record of the building, as well as outline information about its development, form and function. The recording comprised the following elements:

- **Written record**: descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs**: photographs in both 35mm colour print and colour digital format were taken of the main features of the building, its general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remaining photographs are in the project archive;
- **Drawings**: drawings were produced by hand-annotation of printed plots of 'as existing' architect's drawings provided by the client's architect. In addition, a cross-section was produced by hand. The drawings produced ultimately comprised:
  - i. a plan of each floor at a scale of 1:100;
  - ii. a cross-section at a scale of 1:50.

### 2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design and current IfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness on completion of the project. Three copies of this report will be provided for the client, as required, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a digital copy of the report will be provided to client's agent and the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER) in Kendal and a digital record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

### 3. Desk-Based Assessment

#### 3.1 Map and Image Regression

3.1.1 **Introduction:** early maps of the area tend to be relatively lacking in detail and are certainly not specific enough to be useful in understanding the development of the property. The earliest useful maps are therefore only from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is no tithe map as the area was not subject to tithe, having formerly belonged to Cartmel Priory.

3.1.2 **Enclosure map, 1807:** (CAC(K) WPR 89 Z3 1807): this map clearly shows the row of buildings to the west of the Priory albeit in a simplified way (Plate 1). The segment set back to the west near the north end of the block is apparent.

3.1.3 **Ordnance Survey, 1851:** this plan is also detailed enough to show the general arrangement of buildings forming the block including Priory Close (Plate 2).



Plate 1 (left): Extract from the Enclosure map of 1807 (CAC(K) WPR 89 Z3)

Plate 2 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1851

3.1.4 **Ffoliott, 1854:** this is essentially the same as the earlier map. It is at a more usable scale but does not provide much additional information (Plate 3).

3.1.5 **Ordnance Survey, 1890:** this is probably the first map to accurately show divisions within the row of buildings (Plate 4). Priory Close straddles the east/west division just north of centre where the row of buildings is stepped back to the west.

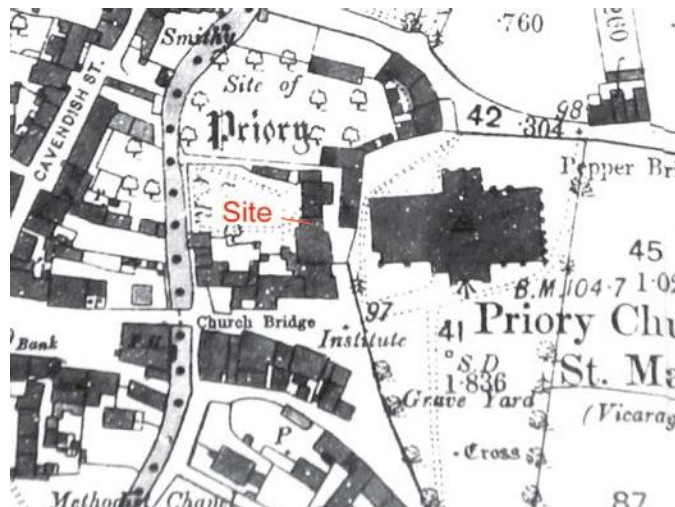
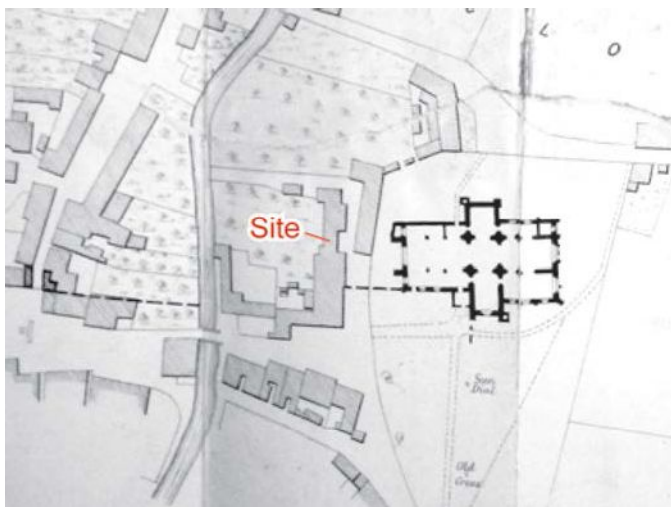


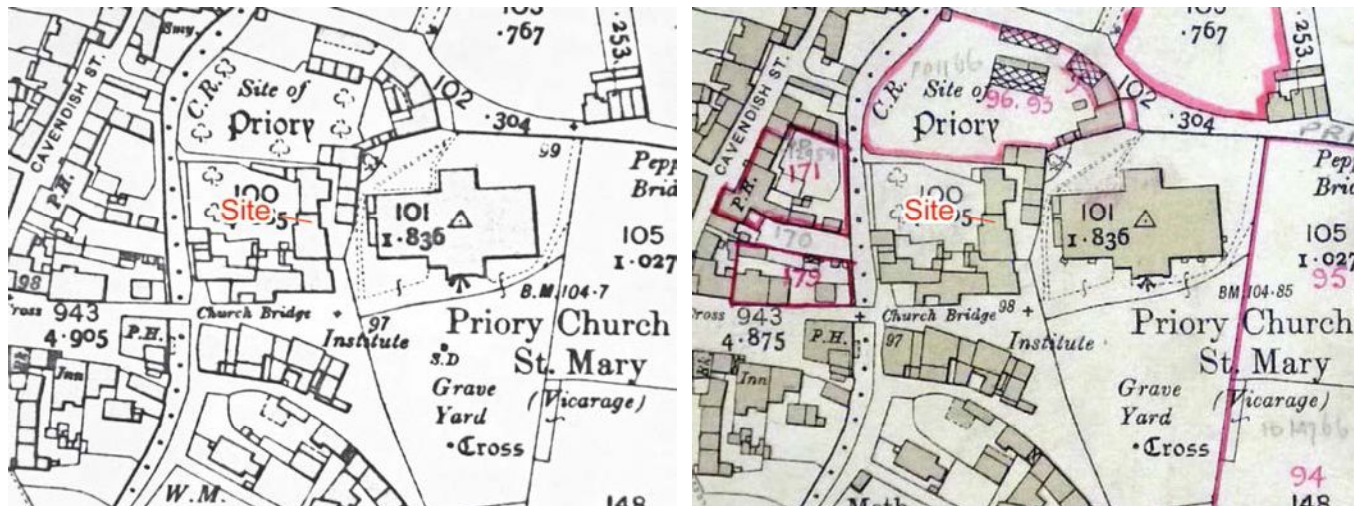
Plate 3 (left): Extract from Ffoliott's map of Cartmel from 1854



**Plate 4 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1890**

3.1.6 **Ordnance Survey, 1913:** this provides much the same information as the previous map (Plate 5).

3.1.7 **Ordnance Survey, 1933:** this shows essentially the same information as the previous maps (Plate 6). Elsewhere on the plan the numbering for the rating valuation of 1910 is marked on the map, but the rating valuation is incomplete for Cartmel and does not include the site (CRO(B) BT/IR 1/2, 1910). This would normally provide details of the owner and occupier.



**Plate 5 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1913**

**Plate 6 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1933**

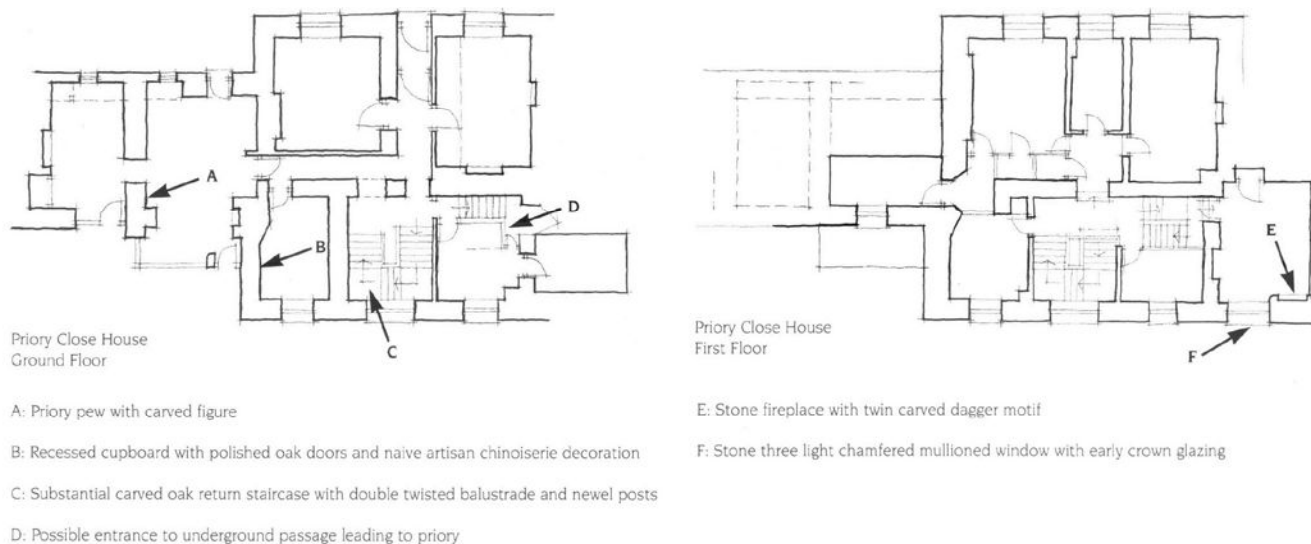
3.1.8 **Photographs and plans, 1999:** the investigation of the building in 1999 included two photographs of the rear (west) of the building (Plate 7 and Plate 8) and plans of the ground and first floors (Plate 9). These essentially show that this side of the building is little changed since then, although it has been re-rendered.



**Plate 7 (left): The rear (west) elevation of the house in 1999 (CVS and RBPT 1999, 11)**



**Plate 8 (right): Detail of the mullion window and round chimney at the south end of the west elevation of the house in 1999 (CVS and RBPT 1999, 11)**



**Plate 9: Floor plans of Priory Close from 1999, showing features of architectural interest (CVS and RBPT 1999, 9)**

## 3.2 Site History

**3.2.1 Introduction:** while the village of Cartmel has a very ancient history, with activity in the general area extending into the prehistoric and Roman period, the core of the village is based around the 12<sup>th</sup> century priory. Priory Close is considered to comprise medieval elements (English Heritage 2013) and as a result only information that specifically relates to Priory Close from the medieval period and later is included in this section.

**3.2.2 Cartmel Priory:** the origins of Cartmel Priory are potentially very early, with a reference in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, compiled in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, stating that 'the land that is called Cartmel and all the Britons in it' was given by Ecgrith, King of Northumbria, to St Cuthbert in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century (Crowe 1984, 61; Dickinson 1991, 9). There has been some discussion over whether this suggested there was an existing monastic community in the area at this time, although not necessarily located in the vicinity of the present village, although the fact that Cartmel is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as 'Cherchebi', which is later recorded as Churchtown indicates that there was as a minimum already a church in existence before the current one (Crowe 1984, 61) and later references also demonstrate the existence of a place of worship by the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century (Dickinson 1991, 10). The medieval priory of Cartmel was established in c1190 (Dickinson 1980, 11) by William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke from 1189 to 1219 (Dickinson 1991, 10), with a charter being granted by the future King John in his capacity of Lord of the Honour of Lancaster (Dickinson 1980, 11). The priory was established according to the rules of St Augustine, with its first brethren acquired from the priory of Bradenstoke in Wiltshire (Dickinson 1991, 10). Such 'Austin canons', as they were known, were primarily concerned with a regular programme of communal worship beginning very early in the morning, but were not as strict as some other contemporary orders (*ibid*). The priory at Cartmel soon acquired other properties and land in the area so that by the 14<sup>th</sup> century it held several outlying granges (*op cit*, 14-18), with a particularly important one at Frith Hall probably associated with a grant of fishing rights; elements of Frith Hall still stand to the present day (Greenlane Archaeology 2011). Details about the development of the buildings within the priory are relatively limited, although there are a number of records of visitations by heads of the order describing periods of decline in the standards of the canons of Cartmel, but the priory survived all of these despite at least one of these describing buildings falling into disrepair (*op cit*, 25-28).

**3.2.3** However, records do show that by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century elements of the priory buildings were in desperate need of repair (it has been suggested that their poor condition was a result of Scottish attacks in the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century: Curwen 1920, 112), and evidence from within the building has been interpreted as showing that a massive scheme of rebuilding and reorganisation was carried out, including the replacement of the original nave of the church and moving the cloister and its associated

buildings (probably including the prior's lodgings, which is potentially of particular relevance to Priory Close) from the south side of the church to the north (Dickinson 1991, 30). Such a move seems to be extremely unusual, possibly unique, and was seemingly carried out because of the poor condition of the foundations of the original buildings although the evidence for exactly what occurred relies largely on the architectural style of the various phases of building visible in the extant church (*op cit*, 31; Dickinson 1945, 57-66). However, it has also been argued that a combination of factors including the damage caused by the Scottish raids and the need for better security but also the need to keep an increasingly large congregation separate from the canons were probably also influential in these alterations (Taylor 1955, 22). The area to the south was subsequently used for a burial ground for the local population (Dickinson 1991, 31). In the years leading up to the Dissolution Cartmel was again accused of a number of misdeeds, although some of these charges may have been over exaggerated (*op cit*, 32). The swift events that brought about the Dissolution of all of the monastic houses in England from 1535 onward were, ironically, particularly useful in recording their holdings at that time. At Cartmel the names of the canons are listed, as are the details of the staff that the priory employed (*op cit*, 34). Monastic houses were typically viewed differently in the North West compared to other parts of the country and had a more important role in the local community and aiding travellers so there was considerably more opposition to their closure, with this leading to considerable disturbance in Cartmel in which a number of canons and laymen were tried and executed (*op cit*, 35). Nevertheless, the priory at Cartmel was eventually closed and its properties quickly sold off, the majority eventually coming to the Preston family (*op cit*, 36), although it has been stated that '*The whole of the domestic buildings, with the exception of the gateway and one or two small buildings, were pulled down completely*' (Curwen 1920, 114). However, the priory church, which was also used by the local population as a parish church, was allowed to stand and even saw some restoration between 1615 and 1618, funded by the Preston family (Farrer and Brownbill, 1914, 259; Dickinson 1991, 37).

**3.2.4 Priory Close – previous work:** Priory Close has attracted the attention of local historians since at least the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, although the accounts are largely confused and contradictory, with considerable amounts of hearsay and it is apparent that even more recent investigations have been relatively limited and filled with speculation. The earliest account (originally published in 1928) to apparently mention Priory Close in detail gives the following account:

*'Tradition says this was where the Prior dwelt, and there seems to have been an underground passage out of Priory Close into the Church. A late owner said that her mother, then a girl, explored the passage and came up some steps into the Church near one of the pillars in the Nave – unfortunately which pillar it was she unable to remember, but the Choir who were having a choir practice fled, thinking that she was a ghost! In the Attics of Priory Close may be seen Tudor work, the "Cock Loft", and the old steep Thatching Beams which supported the former thatched roof. There is a most beautiful old black-oak staircase with wide shallow steps and banisters which have the alternate double twist; the floors are in many cases of black oak. Near the former entrance to the underground passage is a small dark room which has a walled-up window quite near to the ground'* (The Womens' Institute Cartmel Branch 1980, 5).

This provides a great deal of apparently dubious information, which no subsequent accounts are able to prove or disprove, although some repeat it. A slightly later account of a visit of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society only mentions the same 'fine old oak staircase' (Anon 1929, 330).

**3.2.5** A later history of Cartmel also specifically mentions Priory Close, and gives a more sensible interpretation, stating that it: '*retains a considerable amount of medieval masonry, including a fifteenth-century fireplace and a large chimney. The Canon's bakehouse, brewery or kitchen may have been here*' (Taylor 1955, 23). The most substantial consideration of the property has been provided by JC Dickinson, who initially commented:

*'Few of the houses call for special mention. If at the Dissolution some rich man had acquired the prior's house (Priory Close) as quite often happened elsewhere, we might well have it still intact. But no-one seems to have wanted it until the late seventeenth century, by which time*

*the original roof and its timbers had gone. But at this time, someone not short of money (possibly one of the Biglands) re-furbished it, providing inter alia the magnificent oak staircase still intact and a large corner cupboard. A Georgian owner imposed the present façade on the house which, like its neighbours on either side, retains much walling likely to date from monastic times. The house on the north probably provided accommodation for horses on the ground floor and travellers above it, and contains a small door of medieval date.’ (Dickinson 1980, 82).*

He also later gave a much more substantial description of the whole Priory Close area:

*‘Nearby, outside the western side of the churchyard, is now a smallish two-storey building which is almost certainly all of post-Reformation date and has very recently been refurbished. West of it is a longish narrow yard, till recently all cobbled, which has towards its south end a gateway marked Priory Close. This is almost certainly in a very ancient position, and marks the original boundary between the private grounds of the priory and the outside world. Along the western side of this yard runs a long building which, together with the adjoining wing at its southern end, forms a large and important unit. Its walls have been given very post-medieval doors and windows. There is no doubt that this L-shaped building was originally built as a single unit in medieval times – probably the first half of the fifteenth century, as part of the very extensive architectural reorganisation which followed the re-building of the cloister on a new site. Although the medieval windows are no longer visible, traces of them may yet exist beneath the roughcast. Most of the medieval walling and parts of the old roof timbers and floors yet remain; in post-Reformation times the interior here was extensively modernised.*

*The eastern wing is now dominated by a central section having a lofty front which was probably extended to its present height in Georgian times. Its central passage has a very spacious room on either side and is doubtless of medieval origin, as are the stairs to the upper floor behind it, but it is quite impossible to decide the extent of medieval work yet remaining. This area probably provided the accommodation for high ranking guests such as bishops, archdeacons and nobility such as the Harringtons. It is adjoined on the north side by a small modest set of rooms which may be the much altered prior’s apartments and are notable for having retained on the first floor a small stone doorway with pointed head, certainly of late medieval date, which is the only one known of this antiquity in Cartmel; the door is sill in use, but what was probably the circular stair which led up to it has gone. The northern end of the range has been very extensively altered at various times and presents an archaeological puzzle. Further south, the corner area at the junction of the two wings of this block is now a shop and has been very extensively altered in modern times. The present entrance here, which faces south, until comparatively recently led to a narrow passage, in both of whose side walls were not very large doors. That on the east side led to what was probably a sizeable living room, remains of whose substantial fireplace and chimney are visible from outside.*

*The range extends westwards by what was probably a separable element. It has its own door, and is of three storeys. Inside there happily yet remain in situ two pairs of the tall crutches used in a few other medieval dwellings elsewhere in the village. Parts of the floors here consist of 3ins thick boards almost certainly of medieval date. In the north wall of this block are four small oblong windows set in ascending heights and now blocked up, which probably provided light for a small but now vanished stair. We can only guess who used this living space, but some of the numerous servants of the priory and attendants of major guests may well have done so. The land adjoining this wing on the north may have been used for stabling, stores and a yard’ (Dickinson 1991, 103-104).*

3.2.6 More recently the building was briefly recorded as part of a millennium project carried out by the Cartmel Village Society and an account published with plans and photographs (see Section 3.1.8 above). The account states:

*‘Priory Close House is a Grade II\* traditionally built two storey house with a roughcast render covering random rubble stone walls and a slate roof with diminishing courses. The roof structure is of substantial medieval timbers forming purlins, rafters, tie beams, collars and*



*rafters supporting battens and roof slates. The house is believed to have been the medieval Prior's lodging and gate house which was believed to have been constructed early in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The two storey front façade has five bays with sash windows with glazing bars, and an entrance with bracketed canopy and fielded panel door with overlight.*

*The house has a wide variety of windows or "fenestration" including a medieval four light chamfered wood mullioned window within the attic, Georgian eight over eight sliding sash windows and Victorian six over six sliding sash windows with horns... There is also a stone three light chamfered mullioned window with early cylinder glass, and a substantial 56 pane stair window with fixed glazing. This wide variety of window detailing illustrates the range of fenestration from the medieval period through the Georgian period with sash windows with their delicate glazing bars, to Victorian sashes with their characteristic "horns".*

*Internally, the house has a rich variety of historical and architectural features. Within the roof space, the room partitions are stud and plaster with mouldings on some vertical and horizontal studs. It is reasonable to assume that these timbers were reused either from the Priory precinct following the Dissolution, or from another part of the building following substantial alterations during the early 1600's. There are various fireplaces to both ground and first floors, including a stone fireplace with triangular head and carved twin dagger motifs, either side of the fireplace. The front sitting room has a Victorian marble fireplace with reproduction cast iron grate, and the second sitting room has a carved wood fireplace with Victorian appearance and what would appear to be earlier white slip tiles, with four blue and white painted tiles with ships motifs and a single central tile with two male figures. These tiles have a Flemish appearance. The rear dining room has an attractive corner fireplace with cast iron basket grate, and an interesting recessed cupboard with polished oak doors and twin fluted pilasters, and broken segmental pediments with dentiles. The interior of this cupboard is painted with black paint over a lighter brown, finish illustrating [sic] Oriental scenes in a naïve artisan chinoiserie style.*

*The staircase is a substantial carved oak return staircase with heavy carved double-twisted balustrade and newel posts.*

*The ground floor second sitting room has an unusual alternating oak and pine floorboard pattern forming an attractive double hexagonal pattern, and bolection moulded panelling with dado rail and cornice.*

*The kitchen has a substantial stone fire surround with massive chimney breast and chimney above, fitted oak benches with decorated acanthus leaf decoration and mouldings with a carved male figure, and it is believed to have been salvaged from a pew in the in the Priory. Also in the kitchen, an exposed stone wall corner shows substantial stone quoins, which indicate an earlier external wall of the building has been incorporated into the house.*

*There is believed to be an underground passage to the Priory Church, the entrance of which was at the bottom of the secondary stairs, although this area has been filled in with concrete in the past.*

**Interpretation** *The house is believed to have been the medieval Prior's lodging and guest house, and it is understood to have been substantially reconstructed in the early 1600s' following the Dissolution of the Priory. The architectural evidence within the building does appear to confirm this. For example, within the roof space, it is clear that the roof structure was substantially rebuilt and raised by approximately three feet. Substantial early medieval trusses remain, although these have been superseded by less substantial later principal rafters, purlins and common rafters. It also appears the building extended to the west, again from evidence within the roof space. The room partitions within the roof are stud and plaster with re-used vertical and horizontal studs with mouldings, and it is possible these were salvaged from either the subject building or another building within the Priory complex. Similarly, the attic window and timber mullion points to the early origins of the building' (CVS and RBPT 1999, 11 and 12).*

3.2.7 The Listed Building details consider parts of Priory Close to be possibly medieval, with early 17<sup>th</sup> century reconstruction and later sections dating to c1740 (English Heritage 2013; see *Appendix 1*).

3.2.8 **Priory Close – early history:** details of the early history of Priory Close are relatively sparse, in part because it is not certain what name it was known by before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As has already been stated (see *Section 3.2.3* above), following the Dissolution much of the former land and property of Cartmel Priory was acquired by the Preston family who later established themselves at Holker Hall. On 16<sup>th</sup> May 1610 they sold a vast amount of this property including a ‘*messuage and garden within site of the priory, called the Great House or Guest Stable*’ (France 1950, 8) and it is conceivable that this is what is now Priory Close, although Dickinson suggests that this was near the present Cavendish Arms (Dickinson 1991, 108). Following this date there is no evident way in which the history of the building can be traced in the available documents until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A later abstract of title recites an indenture of 1741 between John Brockbank, described as of Brasenose College, Oxford, MA (he is perhaps also the same John Brockbank who gave considerable sums of money to local charities for the poor and for the school; Anon 1852, 7-9), selling property in Cartmel to Christopher Wilson of Bardsea for £700 (CAC(B) BDHJ/402/5/31 1853). The sale does not seem to have gone ahead, however, and by 1745 the money had not been paid and Brockbank had in fact borrowed a further £300 from Wilson and was using the property as security on the loan (*ibid*). Ultimately it appears that this property, which was occupied by multiple parties, was split up and sold off, part of it eventually passing to a surgeon named John Gardner, from whom it passed to his wife Eleanor in 1814 and onto their daughter Elizabeth (CAC(B) BSUDU/C/Box 3/4/1 1848). She married John Blackburn, who was declared bankrupt in 1848 (*ibid*) and this is presumably the same John Blackburn listed in the directory of 1866 (see *Section 3.2.8* below). A John Blackburne, a retired woollen draper is listed in Cartmel in the census for 1861 (RG 9/Piece 3165/Folio 9/Page 5 1861). The other named owner in 1866, Robert Bigland, is more problematic. As he is described as a gentleman it might be assumed he is a member of the Bigland family of Bigland Hall, but there does not seem to be a Robert in the family at that time (see Stockdale 1872, 503) although he could have been from a minor branch of the family. Nevertheless, the census of 1851 (HO 107/Piece 2274/Folio 166/Page 10 1851) and 1861 (RG 9/Piece 3165/Folio 20/Page 7 1861) lists a Robert Bigland, a joiner and carpenter in Cartmel, although no specific address is given and he is not apparently living close to John Blackburn(e). It is stated in *The Websters of Kendal* that Francis Webster, son of the architect George Webster, died at Priory Close in 1872 (Martin 2004, 99). It is apparent from the 1871 census that he was indeed living there with his family by this date (RG 10/Piece 4238/Folio 23/Page 10 1871), although again the property is not named and it is not known when he first started living there although it must have been after 1866. This census return also shows that Robert Bigland was living in the adjoining property.

3.2.9 **Priory Close – later history:** documentary sources relating to the later history of the property become more readily available only in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century – a list of certain occupiers is presented in Table 1, but this is based on sources that specifically name ‘Priory Close’. The earliest use of that name that could be identified is only in 1866, when both Robert Bigland and John Blackburn, both described as gentlemen meaning they are independently wealthy, are recorded as living at Priory Close, although presumably in separate dwellings (Mannex and Co 1866, 448). Using these names as a source it has been possible to work backwards and produce the details presented in *Section 3.2.8* above. Details of later occupants begin with a prenuptial agreement between Elizabeth Rudge of Priory Close, spinster, and her future husband John MacFarlane, of the Army Commissariat Department (CAC(B) BDHJ/425/6/9 1876). However, although she apparently owned it her sister Margaret is recorded as the head of the household in the 1881 census, although Elizabeth, her husband John, and their family, are also there (*Appendix 2*), and Margaret is listed there in 1882 (Mannex and Co, 1882, 329). It is possible that John and Elizabeth never permanently lived at Priory Close as when John died in 1894 he is said to be living at Kents Bank (CAC(B) BDHJ/425/6/2 1894). Elizabeth’s will of 1883 does not provide any useful detail about the property but indicates that it was to be left to her sister Margaret after the death of her husband, demonstrating that the Rudge family certainly owned it at this time (CAC(B) BDHJ/425/6/3 1883). From estate papers belonging to Margaret Rudge it is apparent that both she and her sister were independently wealthy and held considerable sums of money in shares and bonds; Margaret is listed as having been born in Pontnewnidd Trevethin on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1844 but her will, dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 1919, describes her as of St Mary’s Lodge, Cartmel while the later probate of 1924 lists her as being at

Amherst Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (CAC(B) BDHJ/118 1844-1924). The Rudge family had clearly given up their interest in Priory Close before 1910 because the rating valuation of that year lists it as belonging to John Allen Noble and occupied by William Storey for Mable Routledge (CAC(B) BT/IR/1/2 1910). The census entries for 1891 and 1901 show that the property was not occupied by the Rudge family then either so they may have given it up even earlier (see *Appendix 2*). Indeed, while the census for 1891 does not list Priory Close, which might indicate it was unoccupied, in 1901 it was clearly being run as a form of lodging house by Mary Ellen Lummie (see *Appendix 2*), something which continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

3.2.10 By at least 1920 it was being occupied by Emma Ladd Blagden, a widow, previously of the Rectory, Newton Longville, Bletchley, in Buckinghamshire (CAC(B) BDTB/Wills Box 5/108 1920). It is apparent that Emma Blagden owned Priory Cottage nearby by at least 1922 as she was letting it in that year (CAC(B) BDTB/216/6/20 1922) but the schedule of owners states that she acquired Priory Close from John Noble in 1926 (Client 1952). Other documents also show that she was in fact living in Priory Close prior to purchasing it and raised £1100 to do so, at which time there is a reference to duties payable on the death of Robert Bigland that might still be outstanding (CAC(B) BDTB/SP 4/64 1927-1928), perhaps suggesting that the Bigland family had at some point had an interest in it. By 1929 'Priory Close Cottage' seems to have passed to Agatha Grace Blagden, who was letting it in that year (CAC(B) BDTB/52/204 1929) and in 1933 she is granted power of attorney over Emma Ladd Blagden's affairs (CAC(B) BDTB/35/8/3 1933). Emma Ladd Blagden died in 1936 and the property was conveyed to her relatives of whom Agatha Grace Blagden and Winifred Mary Blagden, both of whom are described as spinsters and landladies, occupied Priory Close, although they clearly owned many of the adjoining buildings, including the 'Corner House' to the north, which they let in 1941 to a Jeremiah Murphy, analytical chemist (CAC(B) BDTB/44/49/1 1941-1942). Amongst the correspondence relating to this are letters relating to the property and the difficulties they were having with Mr Murphy as a tenant. Writing to their solicitor, Mr Butler, on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1942, Agatha states *'When we bought this place, we pulled down all the shabby old buildings in it & in the space created by that, Miss Whitaker made a garden & the Mackereths used to sit out there. When the Murphys came I pointed this out to them, explaining that it was a land & the entrance to our own orchard & garden, down which manure(?) etc must collect. We have also used it as an entrance when we did not want people coming through the house to the garden'* (CAC(B) BDTB/44/49/1 1941-1942). A sketch plan with the letters shows that the buildings pulled down were to the north-west of Priory Close, and they can be seen on the early mapping between 1851 and 1933 (see Plate 5 and Plate 6). There was clearly some disagreement regarding this access as during a charity event held by the Blagdens Mr Murphy complained and blocked the entry: *'Except for having their washing there (which is perfectly right) they do not use the bit of ground that is theirs at all & with two years neglect & the fall of part of the wall on it, there is practically no garden left. They have access to the land from their wash house, but no windows over it, except the staircase & one attic... I hardly think it would have happened with a landlord... we have been pretty good friends, though nothing will induce him to pay his rent on the day – it is generally a week or ten days late, & we have set it down to Irish lawlessness'* (*ibid*). It is clear the situation was not quickly resolved as Agatha contacted her solicitor two days later asking him to write to Murphy after, having decided not use the lane *'for fear of any rudeness being shown to our visitors...[he] told me I should "Dam well not do it" & when I told him he ought to apologise for swearing at me [he] said he had not done so'* (*ibid*). Agatha Grace Blagden died in 1947 (CAC(B) BDHJ/163 1947) and the property was then acquired by Eric Townson from Winifred Mary Blagden in 1952 (Client 1952).

Date	Name
1866	Robert Bigland/John Blackburn
1876	Elizabeth Rudge
1881-1894	Margaret Rudge
1901	Mary Ellen Lummie and guests
1910	William Storey for Mabel Routledge
1920-1933	Emma Ladd Blagden
1941-1947	Agatha Grace Blagden and Winifred Mary Blagden
1947-1952	Winifred Mary Blagden
1952	Eric Townson

**Table 1: Recorded occupiers of Priory Close 1866-1952**

### 3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The lack of early sources referring to the property by its current name and the confusion in the available documents makes identifying the owners and occupiers difficult, which in turn makes finding specific information about the building also difficult. The earliest reference to Priory Close is only 1866, and this gives both Robert Bigland and John Blackburn at that address, which allows some attempt to be made in tracing the earlier occupiers. However, this is confused by the property evidently being subdivided and it is clear that the name 'Priory Close' covered several separate dwellings that may have originally been one much larger one. It is therefore difficult to be certain whether it was Robert Bigland or John Blackburn (if indeed it was either) who were living in the current property, although both could have been living in separate parts of it. It is not until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that more details become available, but even these provide little information specifically about the property. It is likely, however, that a larger property that became known as Priory Close that belonged to John Brockbank by at least 1741 was split into at least two parts before 1866, one occupied by Robert Bigland, the other by John Blackburn, Francis Webster, and then Margaret Rudge and her descendants. Whether these two parts are represented in the current building and so were later reunited or whether one of the two parts is now what is described as Corner Cottage to the north is difficult to ascertain.

3.3.2 The previous investigations and descriptions of the building, while useful in some areas, generally only serve to confuse matters, adding a considerable amount of speculation about the building based on limited evidence, and even including very spurious accounts of limited historical validity.

## 4. Building Recording

### 4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 The property is aligned approximately north/south and when viewed from the east comprises effectively two adjoining blocks (Figure 1 to Figure 3). The main part of the house is at the south end where the property juts out to the east. The building is set over two storeys plus an attic in both parts, although only in the main part do all three floors form part of the property, and there are separate properties adjacent to the north and south, although there is some overlap between the rooms in these properties and Priory Close.

4.1.2 The building has a grey slate roof with chimneys on the north end of the south block and the north end of the north block, with ceramic pots, and there is a large chimney to the west with a round stack. The main part of the house has a moulded stone gutter to the south and the rest of the guttering is plastic. Externally the building is roughcast rendered to the east although the main part also has an ashlar stone plinth and string band. The majority of the downstairs rooms have a modern concrete floor and the skirting has been removed for this purpose and a substantial amount of plastering and modernising with electric spotlights and stud walling has already been carried out inside, especially on the first floor. Upstairs has mostly timber floorboards although these two have been replaced in places with modern chipboard.

### 4.2 External Detail

4.2.1 **East elevation:** the south end of the elevation, corresponding to the main part of the house, has an ashlar plinth which continues either side of the central ground floor doorway (Plate 10 and Plate 11). The doorway has a square stone surround on projecting bases and supports a canopy with an ovolo-moulded edge on scrolled brackets. It houses a modern six-panel bevel raised and fielded door with a geometric overlight with fluted band below. There is a 16-light, sash window, with no horns and a stone sill forming a narrow band, either side of the door at this level and three windows in the same style on the first floor, centred over the door. The first floor windows use the string course as a sill, which returns to the west, along the north elevation (see below). The north end of this elevation is plain, with a raised block at the junction, which is roughcast and topped with slate (Plate 12). The doorway north of the junction has a chamfered and rebated stone surround and heavy corbels support the stone canopy above, which is in poor condition but roughly moulded (Plate 13). The six-panel door is again bevel raised and fielded. The top two panels are glazed and the two at the bottom are truncated by a horizontal batten suggesting it has been reused. The window above this and to the north on first floor level has a four-light hinged casement and there is another small single-light hinged casement window to the north of this on ground floor level with a concrete sill. There are a further two ground floor windows to the north, one a tall, eight-light window with a slate sill, the other a four-light window with a stone sill located beyond a slight step in the wall and actually part of the adjoining property.





Plate 10 (left): South end of the east external elevation



Plate 11 (right): Door to ground floor Room 2



Plate 12 (left): North end of the east external elevation



Plate 13 (right): Door to ground floor Room 4

4.2.2 **West elevation:** the west external elevation has been recently re-rendered in roughcast concrete. Starting at the north end, this elevation has two 12-light windows on the first floor, the north one is sash and the south one is hinged, both with stone sills (Plate 14). The ground floor has a four-light window with a large projecting block of masonry of unknown purpose below and a 15-light door to the south. To the south of this the elevation projects to the west to form the base of a large fireplace to which a mono-pitch outshut has been added, extending it to the north. This has two multi-light windows and a timber column at the corner and a door to the south with four panels and four glazed sections. The elevation returns again to the west to the south of the door and there are sash windows on the ground and first floor at the north end of this section (Plate 15 and Plate 16). The window at first floor level is a 16-light sash with horns, whereas the one on the ground floor is a 12-light casement. There is a split plank and batten door to the south of this on the ground floor with plain surrounds below a massive stair window. All the



windows have stone sills. At the top of the gable is a small eight-light window, formed by two four-lights. At the south end of the elevation on the ground floor is a three-light stone mullion, each section of which is split in three with timber casements (Plate 17). Above this is another 12-light sash window with no horns and there is a further three-light mullion with a drip mould over the neighbouring outshut to the south (Plate 18). The neighbouring property to the south has at least four mullions, most with rough stone slate drip moulds.



**Plate 14 (left): North end of the west external elevation**



**Plate 15 (right) Central section of the west external elevation**



**Plate 16 (left): South end of the west external elevation**



**Plate 17 (right): Window at the south end of the west external elevation**



**Plate 18: First floor and neighbouring property to the south**

4.2.3 **North elevation:** the gable of the south section of the property stands clear of the lower north end of the building. It is mostly plain and roughcast with a tiered chimney, with stone coping, and a small four-light timber mullion attic window the timber lintel of which has been exposed (Plate 19).

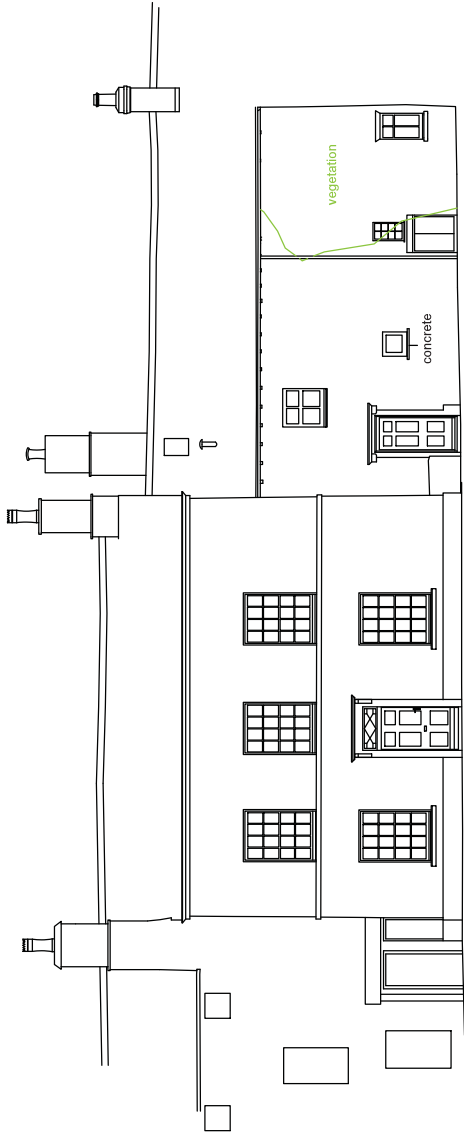
4.2.4 **South elevation:** the east side of the south elevation is visible with the chimney from the adjoining property abutting. The south elevation is rendered apart from the string course, which continues from the east elevation (Plate 20).



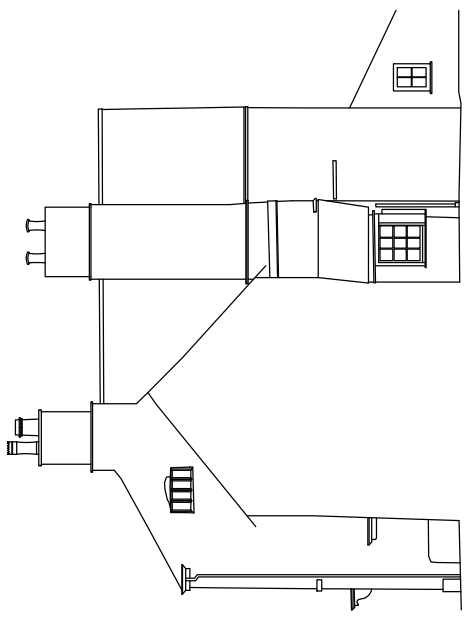
**Plate 19 (left): North external elevation**

**Plate 20 (right): South external elevation**

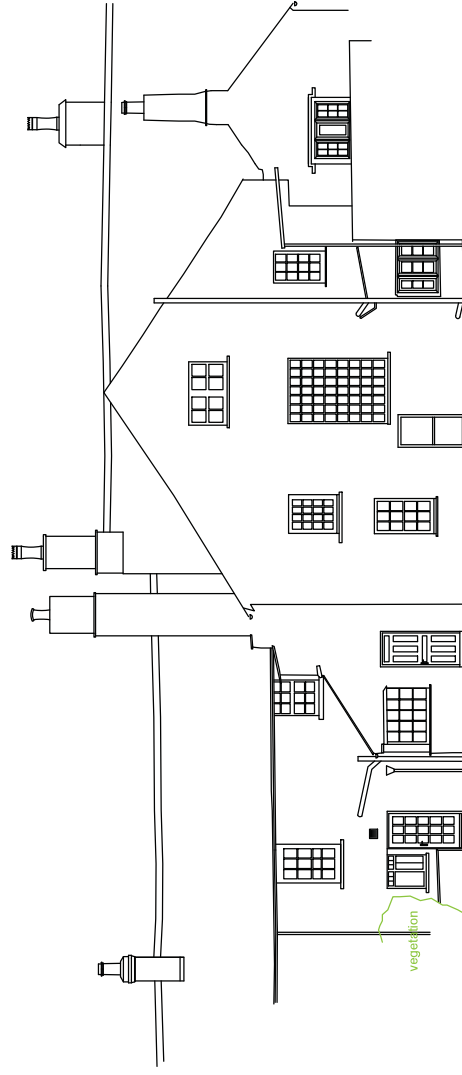




EAST EXTERNAL ELEVATION

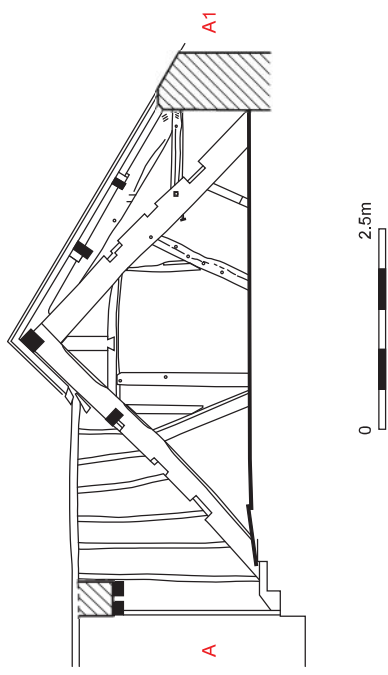


NORTH EXTERNAL ELEVATION



WEST EXTERNAL ELEVATION

CROSS-SECTION A-A1



Key:  cross-sectional timber  cross-sectional wall

Figure 2: External elevations and cross-section A-A1

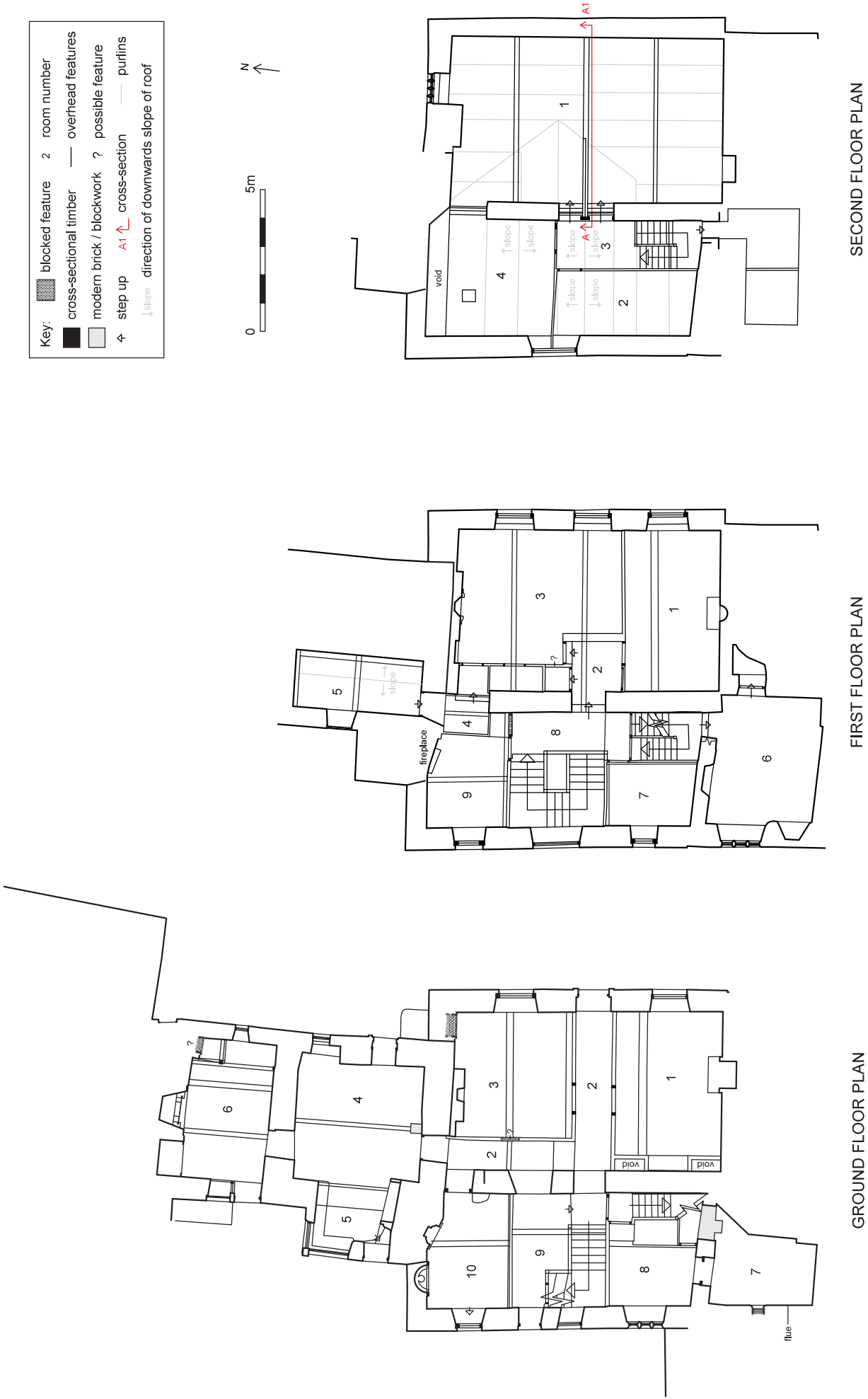


Figure 3: Floor plans

### 4.3 Internal Detail

4.3.1 **Ground Floor, Room 1:** this room has had a modern concrete floor put in and as a result the skirting and such has been lost. Any wallpaper has been removed and the walls are plastered. The plaster ceiling has a moulded cornice and a single east/west beam with moulded edges (Plate 21). The north elevation is a stud partition with a central doorway with an ovolo-moulded surround. There is a central window on the east elevation with splayed jambs to the floor and moulded panels and shutters (Plate 22). The south elevation has a central fireplace with a square marble surround but it is plain internally (Plate 23). It has a slate hearth which is possibly modern as it has sawn edges. A stud wall sits proud of the masonry wall along the west elevation which has remnants of plaster on the north side of the main wall behind. There is a central round-headed alcove in the stud walling which has scars for two shelves and a decorative strip below with a shelf with scrolled side pieces and moulded edge *in situ* and a later cupboard with two doors below and ducting for pipes contained within (Plate 24).



Plate 21 (left): Beam and cornice in ground floor Room 1

Plate 22 (right): Window in the east elevation of ground floor Room 1



Plate 23 (left): Fireplace in the south elevation of ground floor Room 1



Plate 24 (right): Alcove in the west elevation of ground floor Room 1

4.3.2 **Ground Floor, Room 2:** this room is L-shaped and forms a corridor connecting Rooms 1 and 3 on the ground floor to the other rooms to the north and west (Figure 3). It has a modern concrete floor and again the skirting, etc., has been removed. It has a plaster ceiling with cornice in the main east/west section, between Rooms 1 and 3, whereas the north/south section has modern plasterboard in the ceiling, where it is unfinished, and an east/west beam running into Room 3. The walls are plastered and painted. The east/west section has doors to the north and south, both with moulded surrounds (Plate 25) and the six-panel door to the east leads outside. This door has two massive hinges, the upper hinge attached below the top two panels and over-light (Plate 26). There is a round-headed arch at the west end of this section, which leads to the stairs in Room 9 (Plate 27). A similar arch leads to the north. The east side of this section of the corridor is mostly modern plasterboard whereas the west side is partially exposed stone with a large window reveal with a thick plank sill and chamfered timber lintel and splayed jambs (Plate 28). There is a butt joint to the north of this and a further one below that, perhaps two former openings, and there is a reused piece of chamfered stone (probably a fragment of mullion window) in this section of the wall. To the north of this is a doorway to Room 10 with a round head and a bolection moulded surround with a two-light door. At the north end of the corridor there is a doorway to Room 4 with a two-panel door on H-shaped hinges.



**Plate 25 (left): Door to ground floor Room 3 from Room 2**

**Plate 26 (right): Door to outside from ground floor Room 2**





**Plate 27 (left): Arches at the end of the east/west section of ground floor Room 2**

**Plate 28 (right): Window reveal in the west elevation of the ground floor corridor (Room 2)**

4.3.3 **Ground Floor, Room 3:** this room has a modern concrete floor and plaster ceiling with cornice and a very plain east/west beam. The walls have remnants of panels with a moulded top rail extended into entablature over the fireplace on the west side of the north elevation (Plate 29). It is panelled but the surround has been removed leaving the Delft tiles and metal hearth surround. The associated white tiles are clearly late (possibly 20<sup>th</sup> century) and set in concrete on machine-made red brick. The quoined end of the building to the north is visible in the elevation to the east of the fireplace and there is a blocked aperture (possibly a window) to the east of this with a timber lintel and quoined jambs (Plate 30). There is a central window on the east elevation with splayed jambs to the floor and some panelling left and a recess for shuttering (Plate 31). The south elevation is plain apart from the central doorway with moulded surround and a panel over and a six-panel door with brass fingerplate and lock and there are two moulded rails attached on the on south side. The west elevation is plain, with lath and plaster behind the panels, and the central part possibly has a door with the latch still *in situ*, although this was obscured by a stack of timber.



**Plate 29 (left): Fireplace in the north elevation in ground floor Room 3**

**Plate 30 (centre): Blocked feature and quins at the east end of the north elevation in ground floor Room 3**

**Plate 31 (right): Window in the east elevation of ground floor Room 3**

**4.3.4 Ground Floor, Room 4:** this room has a concrete floor and plasterboard ceiling with exposed east/west beam and joists, all of which are hand-finished. The walls are mostly plastered except on the east side of the north elevation. The north elevation has a doorway on the west side, extending to the ceiling, although the upper part has been infilled with timber over the timber lintel, which is probably reused (Plate 32). There are quins exposed on the east side, all of which are ashlar dressed stone and probably medieval. The east elevation has a small window on the north side with a modern casement and shutters in a larger opening (possibly a doorway) with very heavy timber lintels and infilled above with timber (Plate 33). There is a doorway to the south of this with a panelled door and moulded surround. The door is six-panel, ovolo-moulded, the top two of which are glazed, and it has very long hinges. The south elevation has a concrete block stub wall below the beam (Plate 34). The wall to the east slopes in at the top and there is a very plain two-panel door to the west with a plain surround and moulded rail. The west elevation is open to Room 5 below a large arch (Plate 35; see *Section 4.3.5*).





**Plate 32 (left): Door and quoins in the north elevation of ground floor Room 4**

**Plate 33 (right): East elevation of ground floor Room 4**



**Plate 34 (left): South elevation of ground floor Room 4**

**Plate 35 (right): Ground floor Room 5 from Room 4 to the east**

**4.3.5 Ground Floor, Room 5:** this room is effectively part of Room 4, extending it to the west. It has a concrete floor and modern plaster walls. The ceiling is plastered and slopes down in the north-west corner. Above this a section is exposed showing the angle of the original chimney flue, which is partially infilled on the north side where the outshut roof has been added. The walls of the outshut also have a modern plaster finish and there is a bench built into the north-west corner (Plate 36). The original construction comprises two thick planks on simple uprights, one stop chamfered the others with chocks or angled braces, on top of which are further thinner timber planks. The backing is a mix of panelling, mostly moulded and set below the windows with three carved panels which were clearly not original to it. One of the decorative panels has leaves and a wheel motif, another has leaves and berries, and the last one has a figure perhaps holding flowers (Plate 37 to Plate 39). The north elevation is plain apart from a large nine-light sash window on the west side with no horns. The remainder of the elevation is covered by the bench. The east elevation is open to Room 4 below a large arch (Plate 35). This was originally the opening to the fireplace; Room 5 is essentially inside this large fireplace. There is AGA stove on the east side of the south elevation set in a stone fire surround. The door on the south side of the west elevation is

a modern four-panel door below four lights with square surrounds (Plate 35). To the north of this is a masonry pillar and north of this is a 15-light fixed casement window with a shelf over (extending to the north) and the bench set below the sill (Plate 36).



Plate 36: North-west corner of ground floor Room 5



Plate 37 (left): Carved bench panel with leaves and wheel motif



Plate 38 (centre): Carved bench panel with leaves and berries



Plate 39 (right): Carved figurative bench panel

4.3.6 **Ground Floor, Room 6:** this room has a concrete floor and a plasterboard ceiling with three north/south beams and east/west joists from the room above exposed. The two beams to the west are stop-chamfered and the one to the east is reused. This one also has a short section of stud walling added below and incorporates a chipboard/timber stud construction in the north-east corner with plasterboard sides to the south and east (Plate 40). There is possibly an infilled opening inside this on the north side, where there is a timber lintel. Elsewhere the walls all have a modern plaster finish and concrete skirting. The north elevation has a built in cupboard in a large recess on the west side with three shelves inside, two-panel doors, and moulded surround (Plate 41 and Plate 42). The central fireplace on



the north elevation has a hand-finished beam and angled inside and includes two pieces of reused dressed masonry in the sides (Plate 43 and Plate 44). The base of the fireplace is concrete, the front grill is iron, and the side columns are stone, some of which is dressed, and the iron crane survives. The east elevation has a central window, with a modern eight-light casement, the lintel for which extends to the north, suggesting it may originally have been larger (Plate 40). The south elevation is mostly plain, although a piece of stud walling extends down the wall on the east side. The door to the west has a timber lintel. Most of the west elevation is taken up by a large opening incorporating the doorway on the south side, with a modern 15-light door, and the window to the north (Plate 45). The window to the north has a hand-finished timber lintel over and is supported by an upright post. It has two main lights (one of which is divided into two by a vertical iron bar), below two sets of three-lights. The central pane of the three to the right has 'W Newe' or 'W Newb' and '1854' scored into it (Plate 46). There is a modern aluminium sink below and chipboard side unit sat on modern bricks to the south side and a concrete sill below the window.



**Plate 40: East elevation and cupboard in Room 6 on the ground floor**



**Plate 41 (left): Cupboard in the west side of the north elevation of Room 6 on the ground floor**

**Plate 42 (right): Cupboard with the doors open in Room 6**



**Plate 43 (left): Fireplace on the north elevation of Room 6 on the ground floor**

**Plate 44 (right): Reused stone inserted in the east side of the fireplace in Room 6**



**Plate 45 (left): West elevation of Room 6 on the ground floor**

**Plate 46 (right): Name and date cut into glass in Room 6 on the ground floor**

4.3.7 **Ground Floor, Room 7:** this room has a raised plywood floor and the ceiling is very low. There is a massive chamfered north/south beam on the east side and sawn joists supporting the floorboards above. The walls are rough and finished with plaster and paint. On the west side of the north elevation in a chamfered surround is a very early plank door with crossed battens on hung strap hinges, although the east plank is now detached (Plate 47). To the east is a blocked opening with a chamfered timber lintel. The opening is blocked with concrete blocks and there is a projecting block stub wall. The east elevation is stud walling, angled to the north-east to meet the north side of the opening, and there is plasterboard boxing at the south end. The south elevation is plain. The west elevation has a hole gouged out on the south side below the ceiling, presumably forming a flue for a modern boiler or stove and connecting to the chimney above, and there is a small alcove fireplace in the centre, presumably an earlier fireplace, which has been partially blocked with stone and plastered over (Plate 48).



**Plate 47 (left): North elevation of Room 7 on the ground floor**



**Plate 48 (right): Fireplace in the west elevation of Room 7 on the ground floor**

4.3.8 **Ground Floor, Room 8:** the floor is concrete and there is no skirting. It has a plasterboard ceiling with a north/south beam on the east side, finished with plaster and running into the structure supporting stairs in the south-east corner. The cupboard below the stairs reveals that while the steps are a modern structure, the superstructure below is constructed from hand-finished timber and much earlier. The walls are modern plaster and plasterboard although the north elevation is a modern covering of an earlier stud wall and the east elevation is again a mix of old and new stud walling. The door on the north side of the east elevation has an ogee-moulded head and square surround and an early, four-panel, raised and fielded door with later hinges, but the iron pintels for earlier hinges are present (Plate 49). The doorway in the south side below the stairs has a plain square surround and iron pintels (Plate 50). The early plank and batten door, presumably for this doorway, was loose in the cupboard. The south elevation is plain apart from the central door, which has a plain hand-finished square surround and a plank door on strap hinges (Plate 51). The hole knocked in the west side suggests the south wall is butting the west. The west elevation is plain apart from the three-light stone mullion window, each section divided into three, with plain rhomboid mullions (Plate 52).





Plate 49 (left): Door at the north end of the east elevation of ground floor Room 8



Plate 50 (right): Cupboard beneath the stairs and loose door in ground floor Room 8



Plate 51 (left): Door in the south elevation of ground floor Room 8



Plate 52 (right): Mullion window in ground floor Room 8

4.3.9 **Ground Floor, Room 9:** this room contains the main stair (ascending to the west) and back stair (to the south). It has a concrete floor and red quarry tiles on the north side (visible in Plate 53) and flags in the north-west corner and a flat plaster ceiling and plastered walls. The back stairs are modern timber whereas the main stairs are original (currently covered with hardboard). The main stairs have a moulded handrail, the newels are square with flat tops, and the balusters are turned and twisted with urn bases and square tops (Plate 53 and Plate 54). The north elevation is plain. The east elevation has a wide window on the north side with a rough timber lintel as in Room 2 (see *Section 4.3.2* above; Plate 55) and the door to the south of this has a round head. The doorway to the stairs in the south elevation has a

moulded surround but the elevation is otherwise plain. The west elevation is dominated by the stairs and a massive 56-light window above the landing to the first floor (see *Section 4.3.18* below). The four at the bottom right are tilting and there are shutters for the lower part. There is a small cupboard below the stairs on the west side with a beaded plank and batten door and the door to outside at the north end of the west elevation is a split beaded plank and batten door.



**Plate 53 (left): Main stairs viewed from the ground floor**

**Plate 54 (right): Detail of the main stairs**



**Plate 55: Window reveal in the east elevation of ground floor Room 9**

**4.3.10 Ground Floor, Room 10:** this room has a concrete floor and plastered ceiling. There is a north/south beam and joists exposed, which are hand-finished, and the walls are plastered. The north elevation has an alcove in the wall, which is rounded in plan and has a rounded top, into which is set a cupboard, painted internally with oriental scenes (Plate 56 and Plate 57). The cupboard has two doors with moulding and surrounding fluted columns and broken pediment entablature with denticular



decoration. The pediment is clearly not original and the fluting is probably not either. To the east the wall turns slightly and there is a fireplace with a timber moulded outer surround around a beaded stone inner surround and with an iron hob grate decorated with urns of flowers (Plate 58). The east elevation is plain apart from a two-panel door, now glazed, in a moulded surround, and a large boulder in the footing (Plate 59). The south elevation is a stud wall with lath and plaster over earlier beaded studs visible where the skirting has been removed (Plate 60). The west elevation is plain apart from a central 12-light sash window with horns and splayed jambs to the floor with recesses for shutters and panelling and a moulded surround (Plate 61). 'Margaret Lewthwaite 1967' is scratched into one pane.



**Plate 56 (left): Cupboard in the north elevation of ground floor Room 10**

**Plate 57 (right): Cupboard with the doors open in ground floor Room 10**



**Plate 58 (left): Fireplace in the north elevation of ground floor Room 10**

**Plate 59 (right): Door in the east elevation of ground floor Room 10**



**Plate 60 (left): Earlier beaded studs in the south elevation of ground floor Room 10**



**Plate 61 (right): Sash window in the west elevation of ground floor Room 10**

4.3.11 **First Floor, Room 1:** this room is finished with plaster and has modern spotlights in the ceiling. The floor comprises fairly broad east/west timber floorboards and there is skirting throughout. There is an east/west beam across the north side of the room with painted cornicing around the beam and along the top of the walls (Plate 62). The walls appear recently plastered and are plain. The north elevation has a door to the west side with moulded panels and a moulded surround (Plate 63). The east elevation has a central 12-light sliding sash window with a deep timber sill and moulded surround (Plate 64). The south elevation has a central cast iron fireplace with a decorative marble surround and a stone hearth (Plate 65). The west elevation is plain.



**Plate 62 (left): Beam and cornice in first floor Room 1**



**Plate 63 (right): Door in the west elevation of first floor Room 1**



**Plate 64 (left): Sash window in the east elevation of first floor Room 1**



**Plate 65 (right): Fireplace in the south elevation of first floor Room 1**

4.3.12 **First Floor, Room 2:** this approximately square room has been recently plastered. It has east/west timber floorboards and an east/west beam across the ceiling, which has presumably been reused as it is notched on the north side. The ceiling is otherwise plastered and plain with modern spotlights inserted. There is a locked door on the west side of the north elevation to a small cupboard which was inaccessible (Plate 66). The door to the cupboard matches those to Room 1 to the south and Room 3, immediately to the east. There is some decorative panelling between the cupboard door and the door to Room 3, with moulded panels and a plain timber surround and a moulded top edge. There is a step into Room 3 to the north. The east elevation is plain. The south elevation has a door to Room 1 to the east side and another door the same to the west, although the one to the west is blocked with lath and plaster on the inside of Room 1 and is not visible from Room 1 (Plate 67). The west elevation is plain with skirting and has a large opening with a rounded top through to the stairway and landing. There are two steps down to the landing from in Room 2.





**Plate 66 (left): North elevation of first floor Room 2**

**Plate 67 (right): South elevation of first floor Room 2**

4.3.13 **First Floor, Room 3:** there are three east/west beams across this room with the north beam only visible to the west side of the fireplace. The central beam is ovolo-moulded along both sides, although the moulding stops short of the east elevation (Plate 68). The south beam is probably reused as it has seven trapezoid notches in the north face and the chamfered edge ends ahead of the east elevation. The ceiling has a modern plastered finish with spotlights and the walls are plastered. The north elevation has a central cast iron fireplace with marble surround and is stepped out to the south round the fireplace (Plate 69). There are east/west floorboards to the north side of the room and modern panels to the south. The east elevation has two large 12-light timber sliding sash windows with timber casements and timber sills which are set back slightly and moulded surrounds (Plate 70). The south elevation is plain with skirting and there is a door to Room 2 to the west side where the elevation steps out (Figure 3). The west elevation is stepped to the east at the south end around Room 2. There are two doors with panelling to the north end, one to a cupboard and one to Room 4. Panelling with decorative moulding surrounds both doors from the floor to waist height and the moulding suggests there was a third door at some point at the south end (Plate 71). The cupboard on the west side of the room was plain inside, although the east/west beam from inside the room extends across it and it extends above the locked cupboard to the south (which would otherwise have been accessible from Room 2) and above the archway to Room 4 to the north.



Plate 68 (left): Central beam in first floor Room 3



Plate 69 (right): Fireplace in the north elevation of first floor Room 3



Plate 70 (left): Windows in the east elevation of first floor Room 3



Plate 71 (right): Doors and panelling on the west elevation of first floor Room 3

4.3.14 **First Floor, Room 4:** this room has an irregular shape. It is plastered and finished with spotlights in the ceiling and has skirting along the north, east and west elevations and part of the south elevation. There is a north/south beam across the ceiling and the east/west floorboards have been replaced with modern panels from the top of the stairs. There are two steps down from Room 3 to the east. The north elevation has a large opening to Room 5 and is splayed on the west side only. The east elevation has a door to Room 3 with a plain surround a small timber upright to the south side near the stairs. The south and west elevations are both plain.

4.3.15 **First Floor, Room 5:** parts of the trusses are visible to the north and south with post/struts and purlins visible and the elevations are painted and plastered between the timber structure. The cross beams overhang slightly into the room and there is a central east/west beam across the room with a metal bracket below the south end and notches along the top edge that has also been scored repeatedly on the underside. The ceiling is pitched and slopes down to the east and west. The walls are plastered and plain and the room has a modern finish throughout and is plumbed at the south end on the east elevation (Plate 72 and Plate 73). There is no skirting. The south elevation opens to Room 4 on the west side. The west elevation has a top-opening hinged six-over-six light timber casement window with wide splayed jambs and two broad timbers for a sill. The lintel is plastered over internally.



**Plate 72 (left): North elevation of first floor Room 5**

**Plate 73 (right): South elevation of first floor Room 5**

4.3.16 **First Floor, Room 6:** Room 6 sits lower than the rest of the first floor between two levels at the south end of the property. The ceiling is modern plasterboard with spotlights fitted and the floor has north/south aligned timber floorboards. There is some exposed stonework in the north elevation although there is also some modern brick and concrete above the doorway (Plate 74). There is a large alcove to the west side with splayed jambs and concrete over the surrounds and lintel with a plain timber sill. The modern timber door frame to the east has a concrete lintel and brick rebuild and concrete above. To the east side of this there are largely neatly dressed ashlar stone quoins, which suggest this was the end of an external wall at some point. This wall, which extends into the stairway to the north, has had moss or lichen growing on it which was still present in the corridor (see *Section 4.3.18* below). The stonework of the east elevation appears to butt this wall to the north, but the rest of the east elevation is plastered to the south. To the north side the east elevation steps up to an old plank and batten door with old hinges and handle and a timber lintel and there is another step into this oddly shaped cupboard which has four plain timber shelves in the north side and a curling south wall (Plate 75; Figure 3). The south elevation is stepped and angled slightly but plain and plastered. The west elevation has a large painted decorative stone fireplace to the south side with raised daggers carved into it (one either side of the splayed opening) and a chamfered surround and pointed arch top (Plate 76). To the north of the fireplace is a large stone mullion window with window seat and splayed jambs the glass for which has been replaced with two single-glazed six-light fixed timber casements either side of a single-light side-opening hinged timber casement, all of which appear fairly modern (Plate 77).





Plate 74 (left): North elevation of first floor Room 6

Plate 75 (right): Cupboard in the east elevation of first floor Room 6



Plate 76 (left): Fireplace in the east elevation of first floor Room 6

Plate 77 (right): East elevation of first floor Room 6

4.3.17 **First Floor, Room 7:** this room has a north/south beam along the east side and joists to the room above left exposed in the ceiling. The gaps are plastered and painted with spotlights inserted in between. The south elevation has exposed stonework, but there are no obvious blocked features. The west elevation has stud partitioning partially completed across the elevation and there is a 12-light timber casement sliding sash window with splayed jambs and a very modern timber surround above a stone sill (visible from the outside) to which older moulded panel doors have been reattached (Plate 78). An east/west beam is visible along the top of the north elevation although the rest of the elevation is hidden by modern boarding screwed to the stud partition wall and a toilet is fitted to the west side. Within the timber uprights of the partition wall to the east here is a two-panel door with a vent, the handle for which

is on the outside (Plate 79). The wall is lath and plaster between the timber uprights to the north/south beam above.



**Plate 78 (left): Window in the west elevation of first floor Room 7**

**Plate 79 (right): Door in the east elevation of first floor Room 7**

4.3.18 **First Floor, Room 8:** this forms the corridor and landing on the first floor. It has north/south timber floorboards and is plastered and painted throughout and has a plain skirting board. The elevations are plain. The north elevation looks to have had two doors to the north at the top of the stairs originally within a single moulded surround, but the one to the east is now blocked and modern skirting runs across its base. The remaining door to the west has a moulded panel door with possibly the original handle. The east elevation is plain and steps up to Room 2 through a thick archway with a rounded top. There are two plain timber door frames to the back stairs to the south end of this room but no doors. The ceiling is lower at the south end of the room in line with the north wall of room 7 on this floor. The main stairs are to the west. The stairs have a curved moulded top rail and decorative twisted-effect and turned balusters (Plate 80). The west elevation is dominated by a large 56-light (seven columns of eight) metal casement window with a broad and deep timber sill and covered lintel, which has been plastered (Plate 81). There are panelled shutters for the bottom five rows of windows. Beyond the doors to the south the back stairs lead to Room 6 through the door to the west and then to the ground floor and to the second floor through the door to the east. The stairs are modern, with older square newels, and the balusters are hidden (Plate 82). The walls are mostly plastered and painted and have a plain skirting although the stonework is exposed in the east side, where the quoins are visible at the south end. Moss or lichen remains on this elevation, suggesting it was originally an external wall (Plate 83).





Plate 80 (left): Stairs viewed from the landing on the first floor (Room 8)



Plate 81 (right): Window above the stairs, viewed from the first floor



Plate 82 (left): The back stairs



Plate 83 (right): Quoins in the stonework and moss or lichen at the south end of the back stair outside first floor Room 6

4.3.19 **First Floor, Room 9:** Room 9 has a similar finish to Room 7 on the first floor. There is a square-cut north/south beam across it, not obviously reused, the joists are visible above and the rest of the ceiling is plastered and painted with spotlights inserted. The north, east and west elevations are plastered and plain with a plain skirting attached. There are north/south floorboards with a hearthstone to the east side of the north elevation but the fireplace is now blocked and the rest of the elevation is otherwise plain. The east elevation is plain and has a small alcove with a plain timber surround to the south side and the east/west beam continues across the space. This alcove is plain inside with skirting which continues

across the blocking apparent in the south side (this was originally a door visible from Room 8). The south elevation has an east/west beam above the timber uprights which are painted and plastered in between and there is no skirting along this side (Plate 84). The door to Room 8 to the east side is a moulded panel door with a plain surround. The west elevation has a 16-light sliding sash window with plain surround (Plate 85).



Plate 84 (left): South-east corner of first floor Room 9

Plate 85 (right): West elevation of first floor Room 9

4.3.20 **Second Floor, Room 1:** remnants of timber floor boarding remain but elsewhere this is replaced by chipboard. The room is open to the roof with three east/west trusses across it, each a tie beam type (Plate 86 to Plate 92). All of them clearly originally had wind braces and angled braces between the beam and principals and probably a king post fixed between the collar and junction of principals. Only the central truss retains the latter features whereas the others retain the wind braces. The purlins and wind braces are cut through on the central truss to allow access to the two doorways to the west, and there is a stud wall built onto the truss dividing the room into two with extra timbers attached to the truss suggesting this perhaps originally extended across the whole room (Plate 93 and Plate 94). The east side has been raised in height and extra timbers have been added to raise the roof line (Plate 95). Timbers in the east wall are perhaps the original wall plate. The trusses are stop chamfered at the joints and have carpenter's marks I to III scored at the collar junction. The walls have remnants of plaster in most places, although the north is finished with lime wash. Apart from the timbers built into the wall forming the old wall plate the east elevation is plain. The north elevation has a central chimney stack, evidently part of the wall (Plate 96), and a four-light timber mullion window to the east with octagonal mullions and a rough timber lintel and sill plank (Plate 97). The south elevation is fairly plain with the letters 'DB' scratched into the plaster on the east side and a very large scar to the west of a fitting in the plaster with worked timber *in situ* (Plate 98 and Plate 99). The alcove to the west side has a timber lintel and a sill below the floorboards hidden by rubble (Plate 100). The back is lath and plaster with one rough shelf attached with very neatly dressed quoins on the west side. The west elevation has a piece of dressed sandstone on the south side with an angled piece coming from it, possibly part of an arch or window. To the north of this the double doorway either side of the central truss has a heavy timber lintel and there are two steps down to Room 3 to the west. The wall from this point to the north has a step at the top (Plate 101). The north door has neat quoins in the north jamb and both have remnants of very square plain surrounds and formerly hung doors evident from the pintels. The north end has a large opening filled with a modern timber stud wall and with a beam across it with 'principal' running between the spine wall and main wall to the north; the beam is heavily worn.





**Plate 86 (left): West end of the north truss in second floor Room 1**



**Plate 87 (right): East end of the north truss in second floor Room 1**



**Plate 88: Top of the north truss in second floor Room 1**



**Plate 89 (left): Centre truss in second floor Room 1**



**Plate 90 (right): Top of the centre truss in second floor Room 1**





**Plate 91 (left): East end of the south truss in Room 1, second floor**



**Plate 92 (right): West end of the south truss in second floor Room 1**



**Plate 93 (left): Wind braces cut through to the west, second floor Room 1**



**Plate 94 (right): Partition wall above the centre truss, second floor Room 1**



**Plate 95 (left): Raised section on the east side of second floor Room 1**



**Plate 96 (right): North elevation of second floor Room 1**



**Plate 97: Mullion window in the north elevation of second floor Room 1**



**Plate 98 (left): The south elevation of second floor Room 1**



**Plate 99 (right): Graffiti to the east side of the south elevation of second floor Room 1**





**Plate 100 (left): West side of the south elevation of second floor Room 1**



**Plate 101 (right): North end of the west elevation of second floor Room 1**

4.3.21 **Second Floor, Room 2:** the east/west purlins are visible and the roof slopes towards the north and south as shown on the plan. The walls are plastered and painted between the exposed timber uprights (Plate 102). There is a doorway at the north end of the east elevation and a four-light top-opening hinged timber casement window with splayed jambs at the north end of the west elevation, possibly with a stone sill, although this is painted over and the sill is covered also. There is pipework along the west elevation and timber stud is part finished along the east and south side of the room.



**Plate 102: East elevation of second floor Room 2**

4.3.22 **Second Floor, Room 3:** this is the second floor landing. The walls are painted and plastered between various elements of the timber structure which are exposed. The south elevation, above the stairs, and the south end of the east elevation is exposed stonework apart from the brick rebuild around the door in the south elevation (Plate 103 and Plate 104). This plank and batten door has a modern timber frame and opens to a void with a modern finish. The walls inside are plastered with boxing on the north side and skirting board throughout. The floors inside are modern plywood floorboards and the truss is exposed but clad with timber. At the north end of Room 3 is a doorway with a slightly mismatched

moulded frame, with 'private' daubed in paint on the top part, but there is no door (Plate 105). In the east elevation there are steps either side of the central truss which partitions Room 1 to the east, leaving two doorways below a heavy curled timber lintel with cuts for uprights to each side and a larger central post. The roof slopes down to the north and south away from this central post but the doors and post to the north side are missing. The south elevation is open to the stairs. The west elevation is plain and has a low door on the north side and there are modern plywood floor panels throughout (Plate 106).



**Plate 103 (left): South end of second floor Room 3**

**Plate 104 (right): Door to the void at the south end of second floor Room 3**



**Plate 105 (left): North end of second floor Room 3**

**Plate 106 (right): Door at the north end of the west elevation of second floor Room 3**

4.3.23 **Second Floor, Room 4:** the roof slopes as shown on the plan, there is a modern two-light metal hinged casement skylight to the north side, and the ceiling is painted and plastered between the roof purlins (Figure 3). There are modern plywood floorboards throughout. There is a void behind a modern partition to the north side of the room with pipework along the back wall. There is a large opening at the north end of the east elevation with part of a truss visible but the south end is plain (Plate 107). There is a doorway to the landing at the east side of the south elevation, with pintels attached but no door (Plate 108). The rest of the elevation is plastered and plain. The pipework and modern partition continues unfinished along the west elevation from the north elevation and there is a top-opening four-light hinged timber casement window to the south-end with splayed jambs (Plate 109). The rest of the elevation is again plain.



**Plate 107 (left): North end of the east elevation of second floor Room 4**

**Plate 108 (right): Door in the south elevation of second floor Room 4**



**Plate 109: West elevation of second floor Room 4**



## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Phasing

5.1.1 **Introduction:** the building clearly retains much of its original fabric but has also undergone a number of alterations and modifications. In total, five phases of development were identified.

5.1.2 **Phase 1 (earlier medieval):** the removal of the panelling in Room G3 has clearly revealed the relationship between two of the major sections of the building, and shows that the north end (comprising Rooms G4-G6) is probably the earliest section of the building. This generally has noticeably thick walls compared to other areas, although the east wall of G6 is thinner, perhaps indicating the position of an earlier doorway that has now been blocked up. This structure includes a large fireplace on the west side with a massive masonry arch, which is very much in the style of that found in the remains of Frith Hall (Greenlane Archaeology 2011). It is possible that this building extended further to the north, although the property on that side is more likely to be a later addition, and it is apparent that it continues into the first floor above G4 and G5, which is presumably where the pointed medieval doorway mentioned in earlier descriptions is situated. The dating and function of this phase are difficult to ascertain; its more basic style suggests it is likely to be earlier medieval than Phase 2, although it clearly cannot be earlier than the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Assuming all of the outer buildings associated with the cloister were rebuilt when it was and assuming this is certainly the case, it would be likely to be 14<sup>th</sup> century. In terms of function, the large fireplace suggests it was functional, and it therefore probably served as a kitchen, although whether it served the whole priory or only a small part of it such as the prior's lodgings or guest house is impossible to know.

5.1.3 **Phase 2 (later medieval):** running from the south side of the Phase 1 structure, but not apparently connected to it, to the north side of the adjoining property to the south is a very tall wall, which forms the spine of the current house. The manner in which it relates to the later phases indicates that it was already in existence when they were created. It is therefore likely to have formed part of an inner precinct wall between two medieval buildings. The moss or lichen preserved on its west face shows that it was originally unrendered and external and the openings through it may all be added, although some are probably original, such as the large ground floor window in G2, and may relate to the control of access and communication between the inner and outer precincts. Its height is not surprising as some monastic precincts were essentially fortified and some sites were even granted a licence to crenellated from the crown (Thompson 2007, 106-107), especially during the turbulent late 13<sup>th</sup> to early 14<sup>th</sup> century, when violence was remarkably common – in the case of Cartmel the threat was attacks from across the border with Scotland, and this may have led to the ruinous state of the Priory by the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, as has been seen (see *Section 3.2.3*). The presence of suspected sections of precinct wall incorporated into later buildings has already been observed in Cartmel (Greenlane Archaeology 2013). The assumption is that the wall at Priory Close is later than Phase 1, although it could be contemporary. Also belonging to Phase 2 is a small section of the south-west part of the property, comprising Rooms G7 and F6. The style of the fireplace in F6 is suggestive of a later medieval date, perhaps 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century; although it could be even later (doorheads in the same style dated from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century are known; Hall and Alcock 2002, 20). Its relationship with the adjoining rooms to the north is not obvious but the arrangement of the west gables would suggest it was earlier, although it is apparent that it continues into the adjoining buildings to the south and east; there is a similar arch to the fireplace forming a doorhead in the building to the south (CVG and RBPT 1999, 7). The wide blocked opening in G7 is suggestive of this having a functional use, perhaps as stabling, with a better room above. Again the purpose of this building is uncertain, although it is entirely likely that it served as the Prior's Lodgings, as has been suggested, or that it was the guest house. It would be necessary to investigate the adjoining buildings in order fully understand these phases.

5.1.4 **Phase 3 (late 16<sup>th</sup> – early 17<sup>th</sup> century?):** the style of certain elements of the upper part of the rear (west) section of the building (the ogee-moulded door head in Room F7 and the beaded timbers in Rooms S2-S4; see Hall and Alcock 2002, 20 and 50) suggests that this represents a period of redevelopment and extension to the property in the relatively early post-medieval period, in this case probably specifically of post-Dissolution date. That this is later than Phase 2 is evident by the alcove in



the north side of Room F6, which was probably originally a window. Similarly the front section (Rooms G1-G3, F1-F3 and S1) probably also originally belonged to this period, although later much altered, based on the style of the trusses (Brunskill 2002, 153) and alterations made to them in Phase 4. This phase probably equates to alterations made following the acquisition of former priory property after the Dissolution of the 1530s, and judging by the documents relating to the Preston family's estates, most likely after the extensive sales of 1610 (France 1950, 8-9). Who was responsible for these additions and what they were used for is uncertain, although if the buildings at Priory Close did represent the guest house and stables mentioned in 1610 then Leonard Harper or his ancestors might have been responsible. It is also likely that the sections either side of the tall spine wall that were built represented two separate houses, one contained to the east and overlooking the open space, the other forming an extension to the existing building to the south.

**5.1.5 Phase 4 (18<sup>th</sup> century):** a number of features such as H-shaped hinges, the decorative panelling in Room G3, the marble fireplaces, and the staircase are all suggestive of substantial alterations carried out in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Alcock and Hall 2002, 25; Burton 2000, 22-27; Burton and Porten 2000, 23), and the suggested date of c1740 given in the listing is very plausible. The documentary sources suggest that this might have been carried out during the ownership of John Brockbank, who was clearly a wealthy local resident, and it is worth also noting that the marble fireplaces are liable to be the work of the Webster family, who were principally involved in providing polished stone chimneypieces of this type and are thought likely to have been involved in work at Priory Close. Alterations to the building at this time primarily included the creation of a new symmetrical front by raising the roof line on the east, which is evident in the attic. In addition a stud wall was added along the earlier spine wall in Room G2 to enable the arched alcove to be created and the central entrance hall with flanking rooms was no doubt constructed. The decorated cupboard in Room G10 was probably added at this time, although it was possibly set into an existing opening and it has been subject to later modification or repair. The front (east) and rear (west) sections were possibly connected for the first time at this date, as evident in Room S1 where the purlins and wind braces were cut through to allow this. New staircases were added, a main one with twisted and turned balusters and a smaller back stair linking into the rooms to the south, although this has subsequently been extensively altered. The fireplace in Room G6 was probably modified at this time, to provide the present iron hob grate and crane. The larger Phase 1 fireplace in Room G5 was substantially altered with a smaller fireplace created on the south side with dressed stone surround (now filled by an AGA) and also probably the windows and perhaps doorway were added to the west (and north) side, the whole fireplace probably being extended slightly to the north. The bench within this area cannot have been added any earlier than this date as it has been fitted in around the windows although it is perhaps later. There has been considerable speculation about the date of this bench, with the suggestion being that it is medieval and came from the priory. While it may be the case that the lower part, which is constructed only from thick planks, is indeed medieval, it cannot have been in this position in the medieval period as it would have been within the fireplace! In addition, the upper part is clearly a mixture of re-used decorative pieces, of dubious antiquity and provenance, and sections of panelling of perhaps late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century date.

**5.1.6 Phase 5 (20<sup>th</sup> century):** there is little evidence for substantial activity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although some alterations in Phase 4 could have been carried out slightly later. The documentary sources suggest that the property was perhaps sub-divided at this time and it is possible that the northern part was occupied as one relatively small property, while the southern remained a much larger and grander house occupied by the obviously more wealthy inhabitants listed in the various sources. Of note is the name and date carved into the pane of the window in Room G6 (see *Section 4.3.6* above); the census for 1851 lists a William Newby, the son of a stone mason, aged 15, at the Flags in Cartmel, which is a relatively short distance to the south of Priory Close (HO 107/Piece 2274/Folio 112/Page 23 1851) and he may have been responsible. 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations have largely been quite damaging to the original fabric, these include the removal of the the ground floor floorboards and replacement with concrete and the removal of the panelling from Room G3, and general modernisation and re-plastering elsewhere. The back stairs have been largely replaced, although the original superstructure seems to have remained, and in Room G7 a hole was knocked in the wall for a flue connecting to the fireplace above, presumably for a boiler or stove, and it is possible that the adjoining fireplace was blocked at this time too. A number of minor modifications were also made to various other features: the decorated cupboard set into the

north wall of Room G10 has also been modified, perhaps in the earlier part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the decorative surround does not appear original, although it may be a facsimile of what was there. The AGA stove in Room G7 was also added in this phase with the fireplace in which it is set blocked. The fireplace in G3, decorated with 'delft' style tiles is clearly a later modification, again of this period, and the surrounding plain white tiles are modern and they are all set in concrete and attached to machine made 20<sup>th</sup> century bricks. If the delft tiles are early they have been brought in at a later date. The alcove in Room G1 was also modified to include a lower cupboard, although it is more likely that the shelf is original.

## 5.2 Significance

5.2.1 It is apparent from the building recording at Priory Close that the building does indeed contain elements of probable medieval date, as had been previously stated. Although dating these elements precisely is difficult and ultimately connected to the manner in which the priory developed, it is clear that there has been a degree of unhelpful speculation not based on any obvious evidence in the previous accounts and that a better understanding would only be possible through more detailed investigation of the whole structure, which clearly includes the adjoining buildings to the north and south, and scientific dating such as dendrochronology. The building also contains well-preserved elements of probable 17<sup>th</sup> century date and a substantial period of high-quality 18<sup>th</sup> century remodelling, which has left some of the best and most decorative elements including panelling, moulded cornices, marble fireplaces and the main staircase. Some of the individual elements within the building; the bench in Room G5, the cupboard Room G10 (which are specifically mentioned in the listing), the alcove in Room G1 and the fireplace in Room G3 have all been modified more recently, but generally in a manner intended to be sympathetic to the original design, albeit not always successfully. The bench in Room G5 is particularly curious as it appears to be an amalgam of various pieces attached around a very plain plank bench, which may well be of ancient origins although it has clearly been moved to this location, probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century. Identifying the occupiers and owners of the property even when there are records is difficult because of the manner in which the property was perhaps sub-divided, although it is tempting to speculate that the bench in Room G5 was constructed by Robert Bigland, who was a joiner.

## 5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Should substantial areas of original fabric be exposed, for example through the removal of large areas of wall plaster, it is recommended that further archaeological recording be carried out in order to better understand the development of the building. Further investigation through dendrochronology could be pursued and suitable grant sources investigated to enable this, and this could also be used to examine the adjoining standing buildings in order to understand the development of the whole structure.

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## Appendix 1: Listed Building Information

(From English Heritage 2013)

**Name:** Priory Close House, Cartmel

**Grade:** II\*

**Date first listed:** 25<sup>th</sup> March 1970

**Details:**

House. Parts possibly medieval, reconstructed in early C17, with parts of c1740. Roughcast stone with slate roofs. East facade of 2 storeys, 5 bays, the 4th and 5th bays recessed and lower. 1st 3 bays have 1st floor sill band and cornice. Windows are sashed with glazing bars. Entrance has bracketed canopy and 6-fielded-panelled door with overlight with glazing bars. 4th bay has small casements; 5th bay has windows with small-paned glazing; entrance has bracketed canopy and 6-fielded-panel door, 2 glazed. Return of 3rd bay has 4-light chamfered-wooden-mullioned window to attic. Rear has 3-bay projecting gabled wing with re-entrant lean-to outshut and lateral stack with round shafts to left. 6th bay is gabled, with large stack. Most windows are sashed with glazing bars. Ground floor has 2-light window with casements to 1st bay, 2nd bay has small-paned glazing to window in outshut, 5th bay has stone 3-light single-chamfered-mullioned window. Top-hung casement to window to 2nd bay of 1st floor; 4th bay has large stair window with 56-pane fixed glazing with casement window to attic above; 6th bay has 3-light single-chamfered-mullioned window. Entrance to outshut has half-glazed door. Interior has ground floor room with double hexagon pattern to floor, in dark and light boards, and bolection-moulded panelling with dado rail and cornice. Another room has fireplace with grate, and wall cupboard with fluted flat pilasters, broken pediment and fielded-panel doors opening to reveal round-headed niche with shaped shelves, insides of doors and niche painted with naive laquerwork oriental scenes. Outshut has segmental arch and bench with decorative panels and figurework said to come from pew in church. Stair has panelled square newels, ramped handrail, and turned and double-twisted balusters. 1st floor has bolection moulded fireplaces and 2-panel doors; stone fireplace has triangular head with dagger motifs. The house is believed to be an early C17 reconstruction of the medieval Prior's lodging and guesthouse.

## Appendix 2: Census Details 1881-1901 for Priory Close

1881 RG 11/Piece 4275/Folio 19/Page 7				
Address	Name	Age	Profession	Place of birth
Priory Close	Margaret Rudge	36	Dividends, interest etc	Monmouth, Pontypool
	John MacFarlane	46	Commissary & Transport Department	Scotland
	Elizabeth MacFarlane	45		Monmouth, Pontypool
	Emily E MacFarlane	18		Devon, Devonport
	Walter CW MacFarlane	16	Scholar	Devon, Plymouth
	Muriel M MacFarlane	2		Hong Kong
	Annie Gardner	26	Cook, Domestic servant	Devon, Combewaten(?)
	Agnes Henderson	15	Housemaid	Lancashire, Cartmel

1891 RG 12/Piece 3474/Folio 20/Page 12 (Priory Close not listed)				
Address	Name	Age	Profession	Place of birth
Priory Cottage	William Lancaster	73	Saddler and Parish Clerk	Westmorland, Hincaster
	Elizabeth Lancaster	69		Leicestershire, Eastwell
	Mary Ellen	34	Assistant in house work	Lancashire, Cartmel

1901 RG 13/Piece 4000/Folio 19/Page 8				
Address	Name	Age	Profession	Place of birth
Priory Close	Mary Ellen Lummie	58	Private means, paying guests	Lancashire, Manchester
	Annie Louisa Lummie	28	Assists in household	Yorkshire, Hull
	Edith Margaret Lummie	19	Assists in household	Staffordshire, Birmingham
	Ellen Black	34	Living on own means	Scotland, Glasgow
	Mabel Routledge	33	Living on own means	Lancashire, Cartmel
	Wallis Routledge	10		Cumberland, Millom
	Olivia Routledge	9	Cook, Domestic servant	Cumberland, Millom