

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Bere Ferrers, West Devon	National Grid Reference SX45886340	Number:
Subject: Reduction of the floor level inside the Cart shed at Bere Barton		Photo attached? Yes
Planning Application no: 03164/2012	Recipient museum: Plymouth City Museum	
OASIS ID: southwes1-145949	Museum Accession no: 2013.15	
Contractor's reference number/code: BFC13	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 15.01.2014	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. at the request of Mr Andy Paton of AJDesign (the Agent) on behalf of David Chapman (the Client) during the reduction of the floor level within the Grade II Listed Cart Shed at Bere Barton, Bere Ferrers, Devon (Figure 1). The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved by Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET) and the work was undertaken by S. Walls.</p> <p>The site of Bere Barton has a long and significant history, and was seemingly established in the 12th century on the acquisition of the manor by the Ferrers family. Portions of the Grade II* Listed house may date back to a fortified manor of the 14th century, but the present building is primarily of 18th century date. The cart shed itself is a 3-bay 18th/19th century modification of a large medieval Great Barn. A 1737 estate map by Hobart (Figure 2b) does not depict the cart shed, but this does not mean that the cartshed was not present at this date, as the map does not generally depict agricultural buildings. The 1842 tithe map depicts the cartshed as a considerably more complex building than the surviving structure, with additional elements projecting to the east and south (Figure 2a). These had seemingly been largely demolished by the time of the 1896 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (Figure 2c) although a small portion may have survived as a separate detached building to the east (which was demolished between 1906 and 1954).</p> <p>The required monitoring simply included the reduction of the floor levels within the two (now surviving as one) southern compartments of the cart shed (a total area of 7.6x11.4m). The reduction was undertaken under strict archaeological supervision by a mini-digger (1.5 tonne) fitted with a 0.8m wide toothless grading bucket. The modern floor was formed by a dusty grey-brown sandy-clay loam (0.06m thick) which contained common nails, fragments of slate and wood. Below this was a dark brown-yellow topsoil (0.06m thick) which contained common sheep bones, slates and occasional sub-rounded stones (>0.08m diameter). This topsoil deposit overlay a compact yellow-red clay-silt containing occasional to common sub-angular to sub-rounded stones of mixed size (>0.06-0.13m diameter). This deposit varied in thickness between 0.02-0.08m and most likely represents a levelling event.</p> <p>The levelling deposit overlay a cobbled surface of well-sorted and mixed sized sub-rounded to sub-angular cobbles of generally medium size (c.0.08m dia.) and loosely/poorly packed in a yellow sandy-clay with lime. The pebbles used included common quartz fragments, and were slightly better packed/surviving within the southern compartment. The existence of two compartments during the use of this cobbled floor was confirmed by a c.0.6m break in the cobbles, which had very ragged edges, particularly the northern edge, where a former dividing wall had seemingly been robbed out. The fill of this robber trench was comprised primarily of a yellow-grey slightly clayey sand containing occasional cobbles. The cobbles were overlain around the edges of the reduced area by a packed creamy-white lime, which presumably relates to a phase of re-pointing the inside of the building prior to the levelling of the floors. In one small area the cobbled surface gave-way to the shillet bedrock which is orientated east-southeast to west-northwest. This patch of bedrock had a very worn surface, and had seemingly been used as part of the same floor, as there were no cobbles evident above it.</p> <p>On the removal of the cobbled floor it became clear that this surface directly overlay the compact natural bedrock across the entire stripped area. The natural within the former eastern compartment was worn and had clearly been a former floor surface, and there were two distinct wheel ruts aligned with the blocked/partially blocked openings within this bay. There was also the remnant of a probable drain (or wall footing?) running northwest to southeast across the centre of this bay. Within the central compartment the natural bedrock was revealed at a slightly lower depth, but did not appear to have the same extent of wear.</p> <p>The depth of this worn natural was just below the required formation level and it would not have to be dug into. A small sondage was excavated to establish that this 'floor' was indeed natural.</p>		

No finds were recovered from the site.

A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.

Recorder: S. Walls

Date sent to HER: 13.02.14

Please email completed form to: archaeol@devon.gov.uk or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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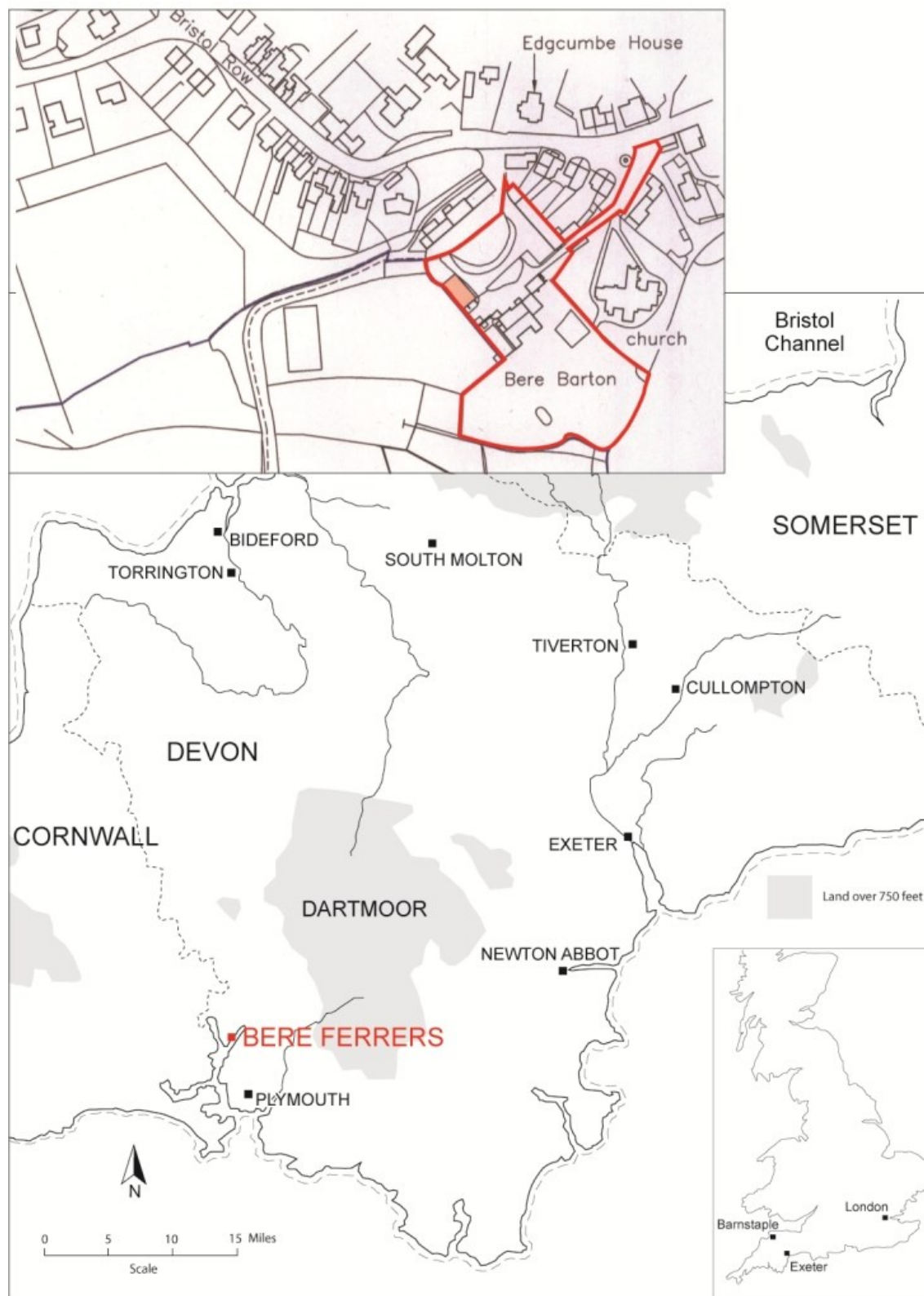


Figure 1: Location Map. The location of the cart shed is highlighted.



Figure 2: a) Extract from the 1842 tithe map. b) Extract from the 1737 Hobart Estate map. c) Extract of the 1:10560 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition Map of 1896. The cart shed is highlighted on the later maps and the yards in the 1737 map.

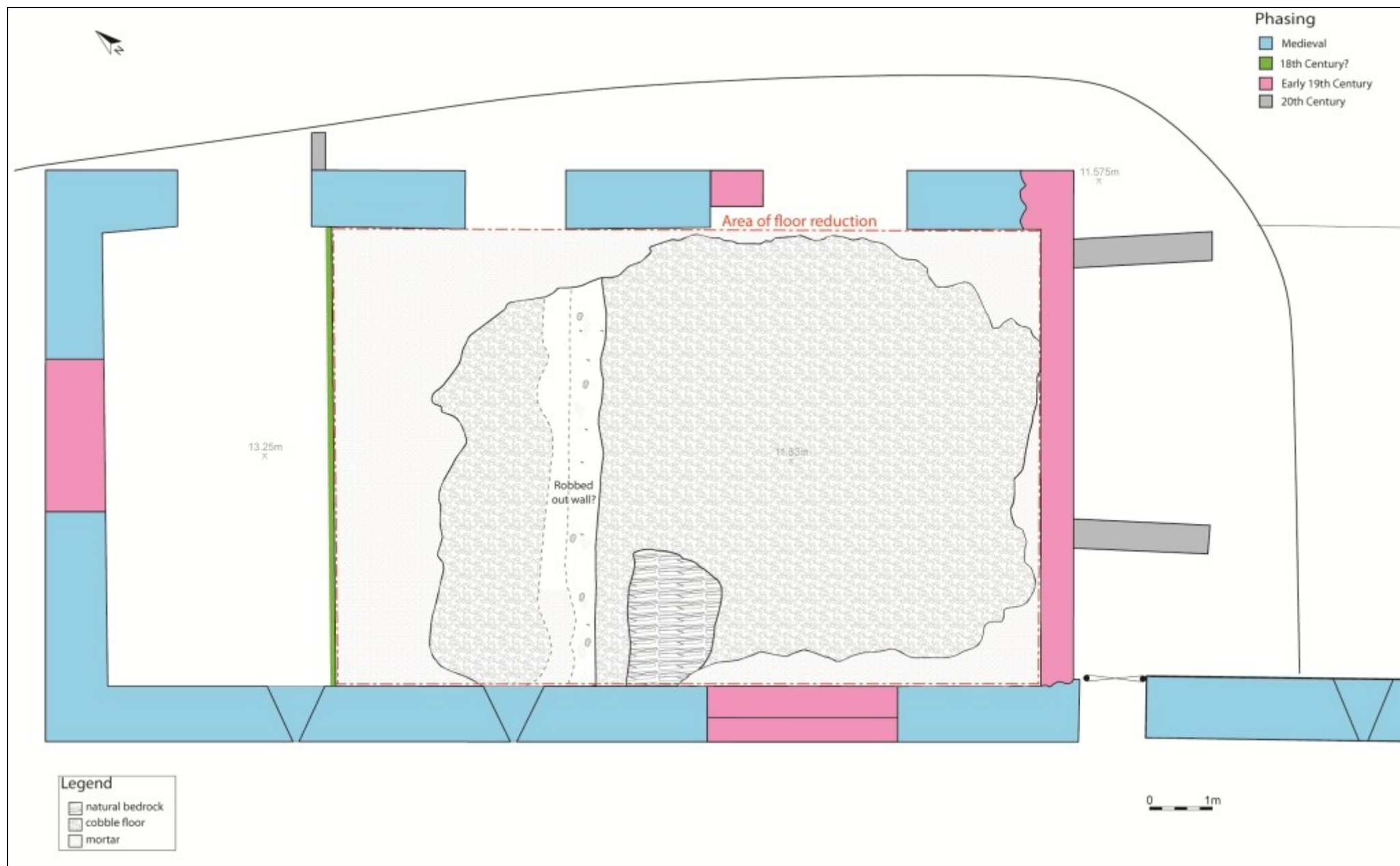


Figure 3: The surviving (19th century) cobble floor surfaces, exposed during the floor reduction.

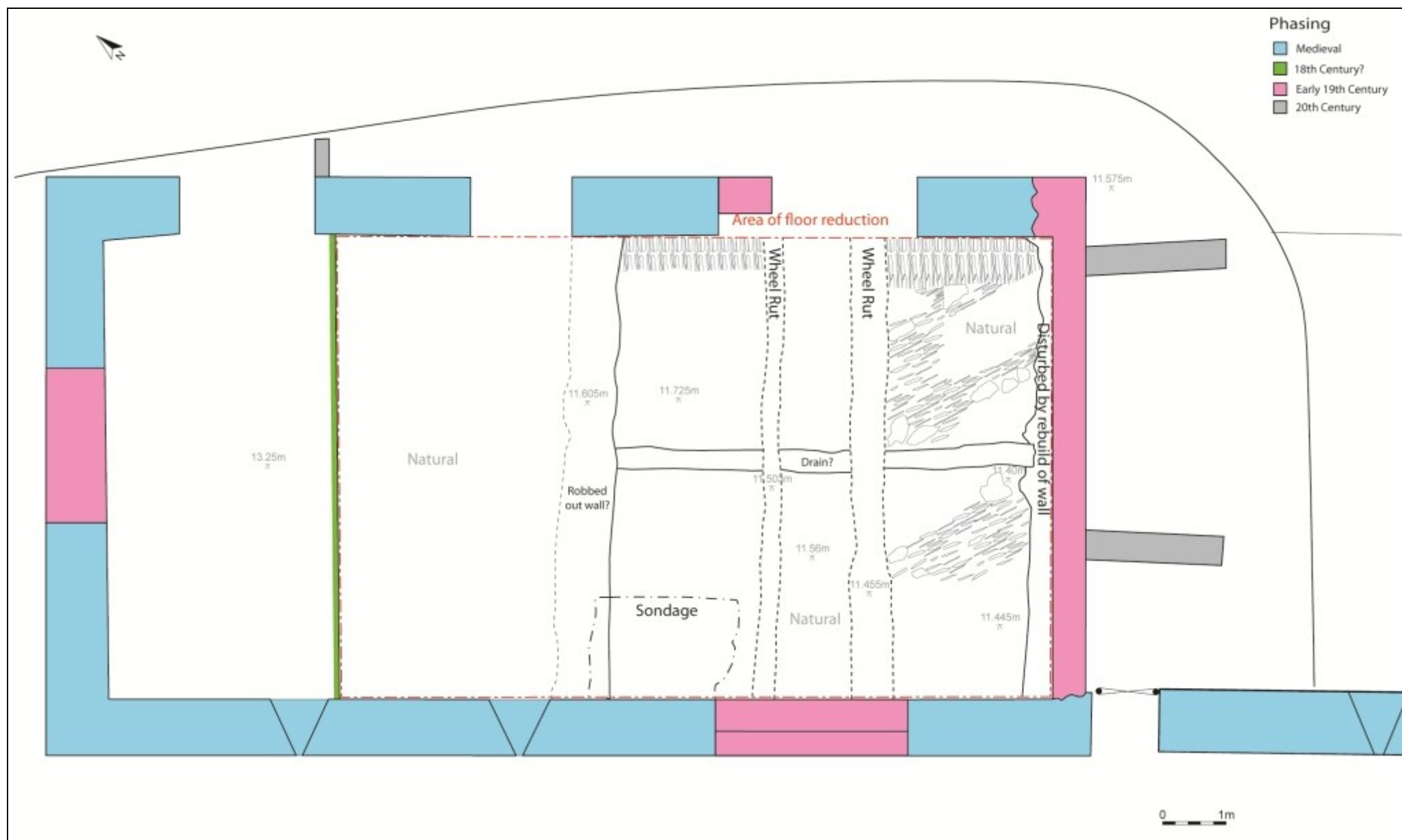


Figure 4: The earlier floor surviving of natural shillet with occasional patches of repair/infill.