

Sweetclough Cottage  
Baxenden, Lancashire:  
Historic Building Survey (Level 2 Record)



July 2021

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*This report is formatted for printing on both sides of the paper  
and contains some blank pages*

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## SUMMARY

Sweetclough Cottage, near Baxenden (NGR: SD 77498 25798), dates from about 1800, and was built up to an earlier house which has since been rebuilt. It is a two-storey structure with small cellar, originally of one room on each floor, and originally may have been an annex rather than an independent dwelling, but it was later extended to the rear on two occasions. Recording was carried out for the developer, Laura Kirkman, to fulfil a condition of planning consent from Hyndburn Borough Council for an extension.

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**S T E P H E N   H A I G H**  
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23	First floor room in front part of cottage: south-west side (former external wall face)
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29	First floor of nineteenth century extension, looking south-east
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## **SWEETCLOUGH COTTAGE, BAXENDEN, LANCASHIRE:**

### **HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY (LEVEL 2 RECORD)**

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of the recording of Sweetclough Cottage, at Baxenden, in Lancashire. It was commissioned by the owner and developer Laura Kirkman, to fulfil a condition of planning consent from Hyndburn Borough Council (HBC) for the erection of an extension, and the survey was carried out in June 2021.
- 1.2 Sweetclough Cottage is believed to date from the late eighteenth century, and is of two storeys with cellar. It was originally only one room deep, and may originally have been an annex rather than an independent dwelling, but appears to have been extended to the rear in two phases.
- 1.3 The recording work was confined to photography, supplemented by a brief study of some historic sources. This report will be submitted to the client, the local planning authority and the Lancashire Historic Environment Record, as well as the Oasis Project for publication on the internet<sup>1</sup>. The project archive will be deposited with Lancashire Archives.

#### **2 Location**

- 2.1 Sweetclough Cottage stands in the hamlet known as Bridge Houses, about 700m south of Baxenden village, and 3km south-east of Accrington town centre (NGR: SD 77498 25798). It lies at an altitude of 235m AOD in an area containing a mix of residential and industrial buildings, to the west of the Woodnook Water, at the edge of open countryside (figures 1,2).
- 2.2 The house itself faces south-east, almost in line with its larger neighbour to the south-west, Sweetclough Farmhouse. There was formerly a barn to the south of here, and a railway running alongside the property's north-eastern boundary.

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<sup>1</sup> [Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations](#)

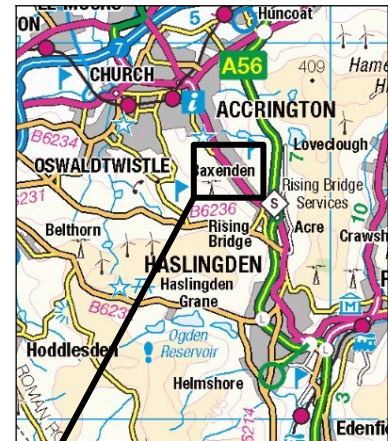


Figure 1: Location map (i),  
1:200,000

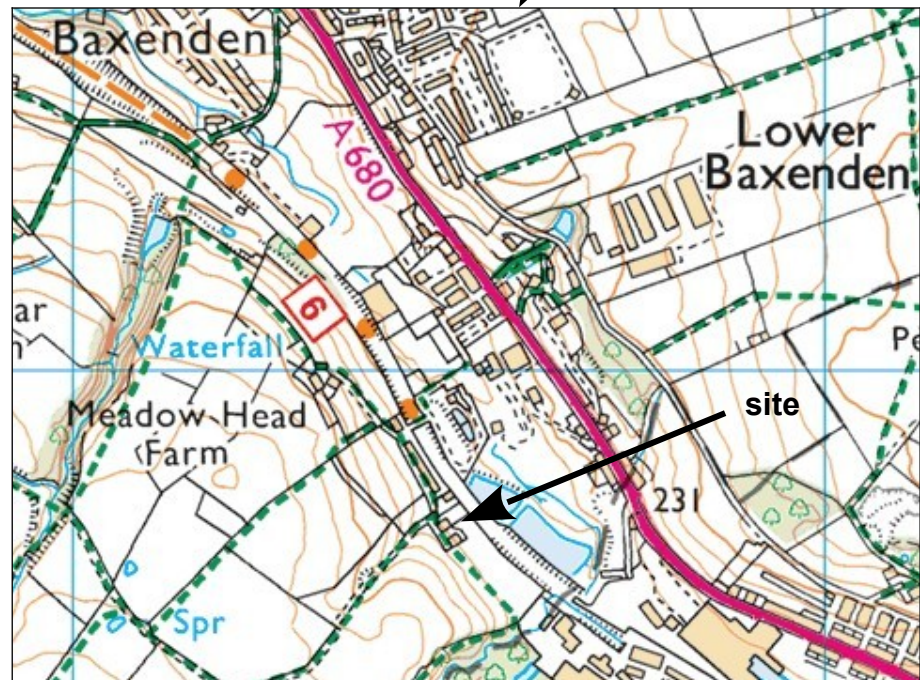


Figure 2: Location map (ii), 1:10,000

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### 3 Planning context

- 3.1 The local planning authority has determined that the building is a non-designated heritage asset.
- 3.2 Planning consent was granted by HBC on 20 May 2021 for: "*Erection of two-storey extension to front of property*" (application reference 11/21/0137).



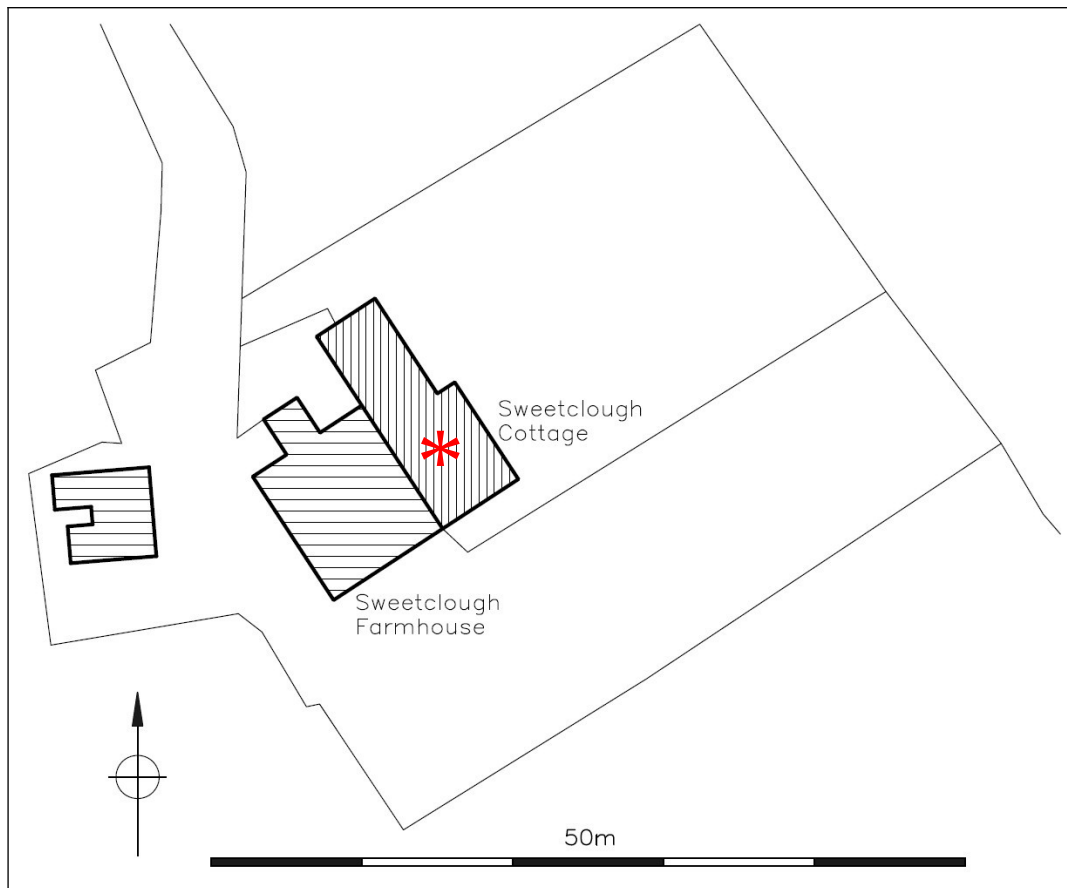


Figure 3: Site plan (1:500)

3.3 Condition 6 of the consent stipulates that:

*"No demolition or construction work shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The programme of works shall include:*

*(i) The creation of an Archaeological Building Record of Sweetclough Cottage to the specifications set out in 'Understanding Historic Buildings' (Historic England 2016) for Level 2*

*(ii) The work shall be carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).*

*(iii) The completed record shall be deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Lancashire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER)."*

#### 4 Previous investigative work

4.1 No previous investigation or recording is known to have taken place at the site.

## 5 Historic maps

- 5.1 The Ordnance Survey 1:10560 map of 1849<sup>2</sup> (figure 4) shows cottage and farmhouse, but the scale is too small to infer precise details of the building's footprint.



Figure 4: OS 1:10560 map, 1849

- 5.2 The OS 1:2500 map of 1911<sup>3</sup> (figure 5) shows the cottage to have been extended to the rear, but not to have acquired its present footprint.

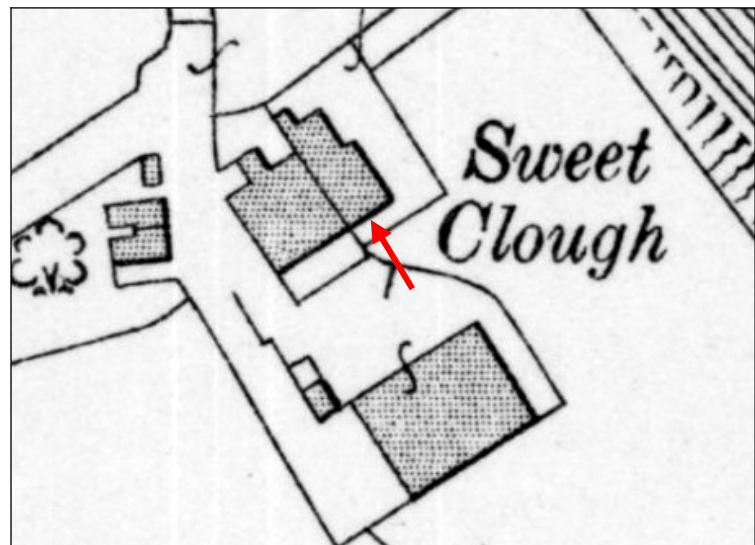


Figure 5: OS 1:2500 map, 1911

- 5.3 Later maps show the building was extended further to the rear during the course of the twentieth century.

<sup>2</sup>Lancashire, sheet 71, surveyed 1844-5

<sup>3</sup>Lancashire, sheet 71.4; revised 1909



## 6 Recording methodology

- 6.1 Recording was carried out on a site visit on 16 June 2021, and involved detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the cottage, together with photography and written notes.
- 6.2 At the time of the survey, renovation works were underway at the house, but these were unrelated to the development approved by the current planning permission.
- 6.3 The photographic record was made using a digital SLR camera (12 megapixels), and both external and internal photographs were taken where possible, generally using a scale in the form of a 2m ranging pole marked with 0.5m graduations, or a 0.5m baton with 0.1m graduations. Images were captured as JPG files and printed at approximately 5 x 7", to form part of the project archive. The photograph locations are shown on copies of the architect's plans, and a selection of photographs is copied at the end of this report; in the text they are referred to by numbers in **bold**.

## 7 The cottage

- 7.1 The cottage is built into a slope which rises to the south-west, so is set considerably below the level of the adjoining later farmhouse (**1**), and the front doorway is reached by descending a set of stone steps from the built-up ground further forward (**2**).
- 7.2 The front of the cottage is faced with coursed, watershot sandstone, and its doorway has a monolithic surround, characteristic of the period around the turn of the nineteenth century (**3**). To the right of it, the present window with a vertical emphasis is not an original opening, but probably dates from a late nineteenth or early twentieth century phase (**4**). The sill of the original window has been cut through to accommodate it, but the lintel, which extends further to the left than the present window dictates, survives intact. The first floor window has similarly been changed, from a longer and shallower opening (**5**).
- 7.3 The upper part of this front elevation contains a vertical joint, 230mm from the side of the adjoining farmhouse (**5**). This seems to represent the outer face of an earlier building adjoining to the south-west, probably the predecessor to the present farmhouse. Further evidence relating to it can be seen inside the cottage (see below).
- 7.4 The cottage's north-east gable is faced with similar watershot stone, and has two windows and a doorway, the latter created from a window. None of these

openings are thought to be original, and they are likely to have been inserted at least partly to compensate for the loss of windows caused by the extension of the house to the rear (**6-8**). The original house's rear wall (now facing into the extension) was also of coursed, watershot stone, and does contain at least one former window on both ground and first floors.

- 7.5 The two-storey, nineteenth century extension is built from random, squared sandstone, and involved the heightening of part of the original rear wall, to form a roof valley. It has a number of openings in its north-east and north-west sides, although only the first floor rear window appears unaltered and original (**9-11**).
- 7.6 During the mid twentieth century, a single-storey brick lean-to of L-shaped plan was built up to the rear of the nineteenth century extension, and this presently contains the kitchen (**12**).
- 7.7 All parts of the cottage are roofed with blue slate, though in part this is likely to have replaced local stone slate.
- 7.8 The main ground floor room of the cottage has a gable fireplace set within a chimney-breast of handmade brick (**13-15**), and a suspended timber floor, which overlies the original flagstones, where they survive. Overhead are two deep, square-sawn softwood beams, of which the rear one formed the line of a partition. It meets the south-west wall over a tall recess, possibly a former doorway (**16**). The joists are also softwood, and whitewash beneath the first floor indicates that the ceiling was not underdrawn originally (**17**). At the back of the room is the closed string timber staircase, with turned newel and square balusters, whose form suggests it is later than the supposed date of the cottage (**18,19**).
- 7.9 Beneath the staircase is a trap to the cellar, which occupies about a third of the area of the ground floor room. It seems that this was formerly entered from the building to the south-west, via a now bricked-up opening (**20**). The cellar has various wall recesses (**21**), one of which may be a former light-well (**22**). A cross-wall and the original flagged ceiling have been removed, historically.
- 7.10 The main first floor room contains good evidence for the cottage having been built against an earlier building to the south-west, as this side of the room (which runs through to the straight joint in the front elevation) is of watershot stonework, contrasting obviously with the rubble of the other internal faces (**23,24**). There is a blocked doorway within it, implying that the cottage was occupied by the same household as that other building. It seems that this room was unheated at the outset, as the stone chimney-breast lacks any opening but was later widened in

brick so as to accommodate a fireplace (25). A rear window has been slighted by the new doorway connecting to the nineteenth century extension (26). Roof timbers are of similar material and size as the first floor beams.

- 7.11 The ground floor rooms of the nineteenth and twentieth century extensions are entirely modern in appearance, and have not been stripped of plaster or their modern fixtures and fittings (27). The first floor room of the former contains a plain stone fireplace surround in its shallow chimney-breast (28), but no other features of particular interest (29,30).

## **8 Conclusion**

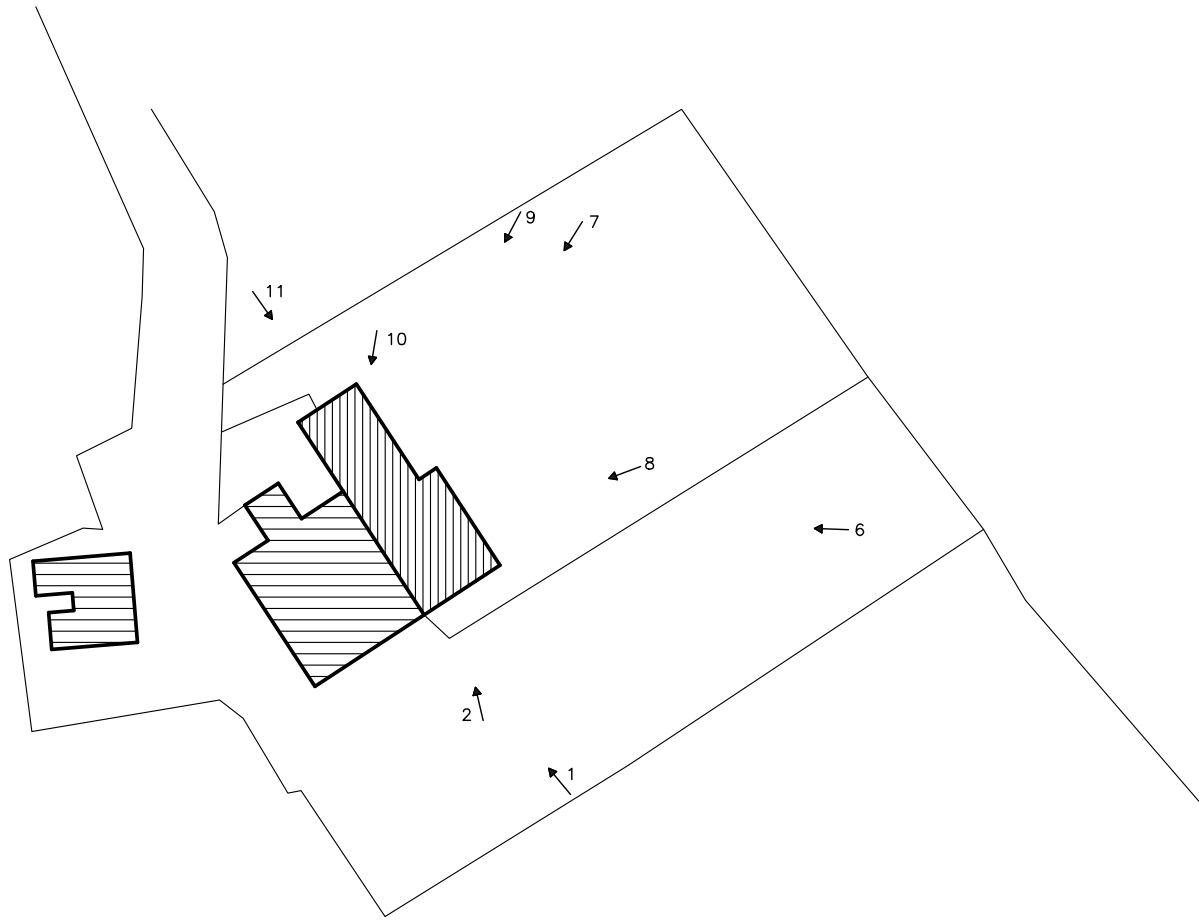
- 8.1 Sweetclough Cottage appears to date from about 1800 and to have been built up to a slightly earlier building, now almost entirely replaced by the present Sweetclough Farmhouse. The cottage was at first of two storeys with small cellar, and had only one room on each floor, and was perhaps originally an annex to its adjoining neighbour, rather than a separate dwelling. Its front doorway remains in place, but all of its original window openings have been modified. Its extension to the rear in the nineteenth century provided an additional two rooms, and it was also given another ground floor room in the twentieth century. It is of some heritage interest as a relatively early dwelling, first built within what was a more rural setting than is now apparent, but its appearance has been greatly altered and it contains no original fixtures.

### **Appendix 1: Contents of the project archive**

To be deposited with Lancashire Archives, Preston (reference DDX 2204)

Archive contains:

- a copy of the report
- full set of printed photographs
- CD or DVD with all photographs as JPG files



↗ 1: photograph direction and number

SWEETCLOUGH COTTAGE  
 BAXENDEN  
 LANCASHIRE  
 (NGR: SD 77498 25798);  
 HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

FIGURE 6:  
 SITE PLAN  
 WITH PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS

SCALE: 1:500 (at A4)

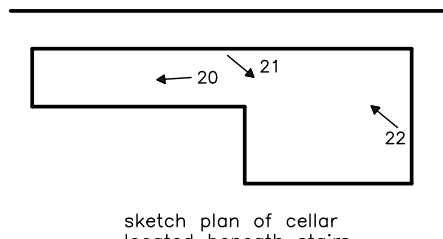
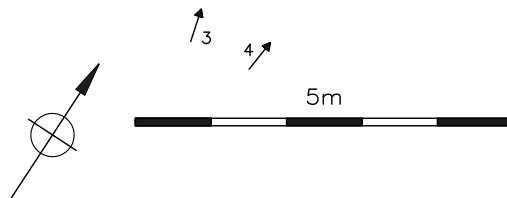
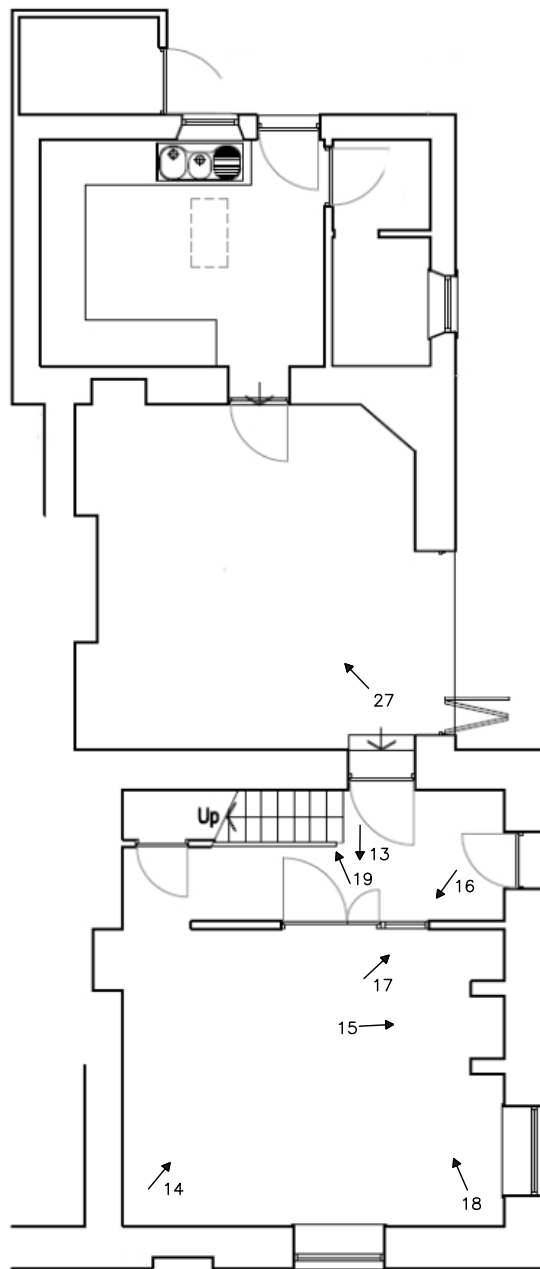
DATE OF SURVEY: JUNE 2021

STEPHEN HAIGH  
 Buildings Archaeologist



50m





sketch plan of cellar located beneath stairs

↖ 12

↗ 1: photograph direction and number

SWEETCLOUGH COTTAGE  
 BAXENDEN  
 LANCASHIRE  
 (NGR: SD 77498 25798):  
 HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

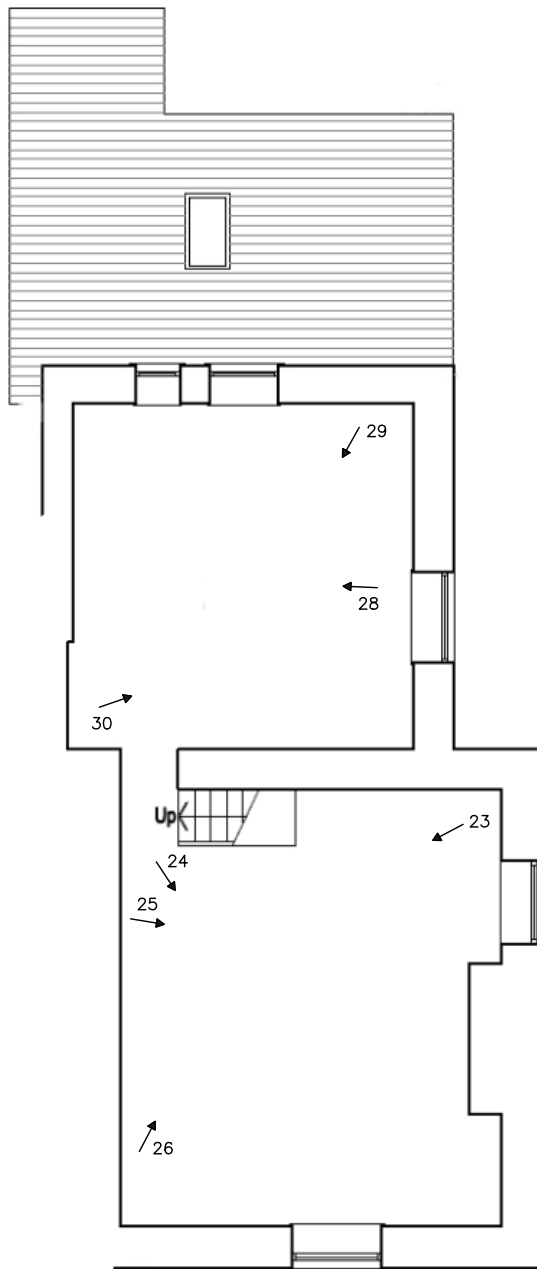
FIGURE 7:  
 GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
 WITH PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS

SCALE: 1:100 (at A4)

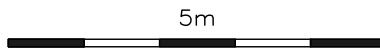
DATE OF SURVEY: JUNE 2021

STEPHEN HAIGH  
 Buildings Archaeologist





5 ↗



5m

↗ 1: photograph direction and number

SWEETCLOUGH COTTAGE  
 BAXENDEN  
 LANCASHIRE  
 (NGR: SD 77498 25798):  
 HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

FIGURE 8:  
 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 WITH PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS

SCALE: 1:100 (at A4)

DATE OF SURVEY: JUNE 2021

STEPHEN HAIGH  
 Buildings Archaeologist





Photo 1: General view of Sweetclough Cottage (right) and Farmhouse (left), from the south-east



Photo 2: Front elevation of cottage





Photo 3: Front entrance to cottage



Photo 4: Ground floor window in front elevation, with earlier sill visible at higher level





Photo 5: First floor in front elevation: straight joint at left, and earlier window sill visible



Photo 6: General view of Sweetclough Cottage (lower) and Farmhouse (upper), from the east





Photo 7: General view, from the north-east. Original part of cottage to left, nineteenth & twentieth century extensions to right



Photo 8: Gable of original part of cottage





Photo 9: General view, from the north-east



Photo 10: Nineteenth and twentieth century extensions, from the north





Photo 11: Rear view of Sweetclough Cottage (left) and Farmhouse (right), from the north-west



Photo 12: Twentieth century rear extension, from the north





Photo 13: Ground floor room in front part of cottage, looking south-east



Photo 14: Ground floor room in front part of cottage, looking north



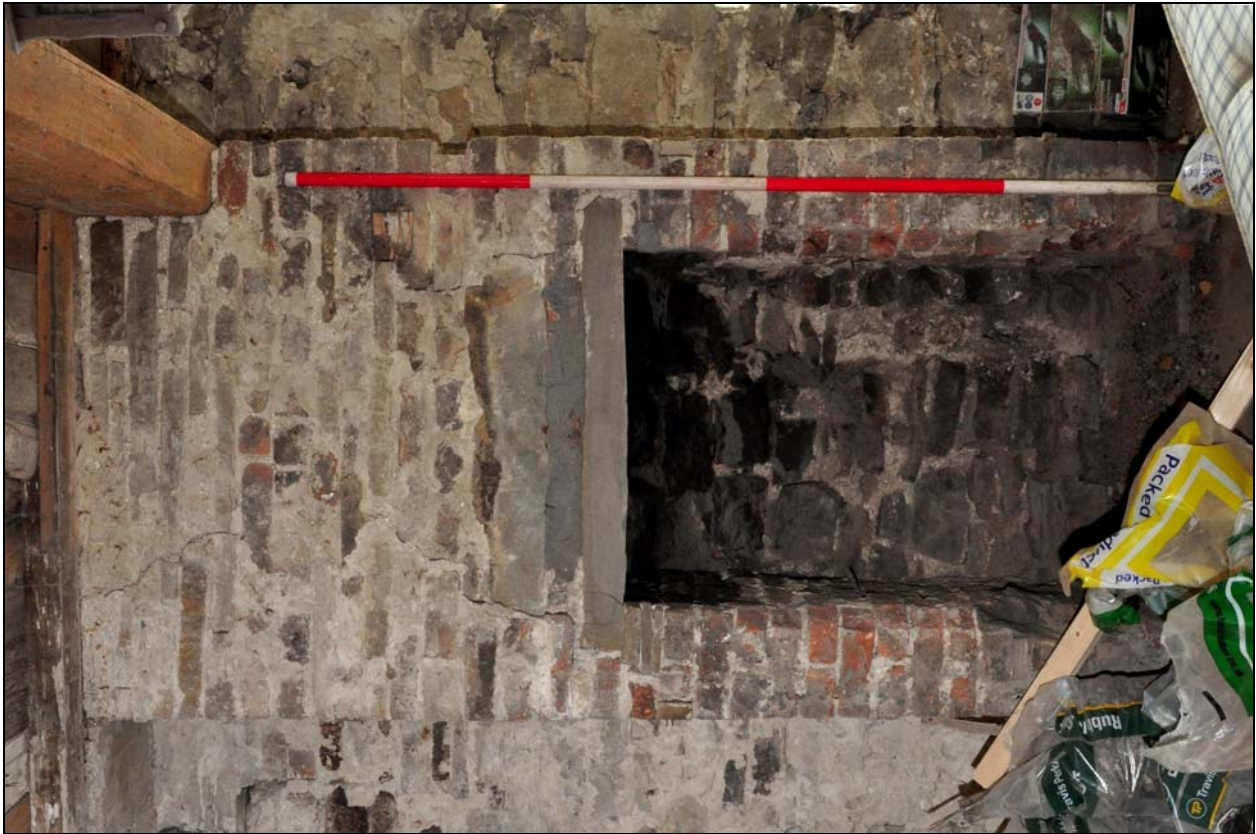


Photo 15: Ground floor room in front part of cottage: detail of fireplace and chimney-breast



Photo 16: Ground floor room in front part of cottage, looking south





Photo 17: Ground floor room in front part of cottage: underside of first floor



Photo 18: Ground floor room in front part of cottage, looking north-west





Photo 19: Ground floor room in front part of cottage: detail of stairs



Photo 20: Cellar: looking south-west towards blocked doorway in wall with Farmhouse





Photo 21: Cellar: recesses and scar of cross-wall, in south-east side



Photo 22: Cellar: recess (light-well?), in north-west side





Photo 23: First floor room in front part of cottage: south-west side (former external wall face)



Photo 24: First floor room in front part of cottage, looking south-east





Photo 25: First floor room in front part of cottage, looking north-east towards widened chimney-breast



Photo 26: First floor room in front part of cottage, looking north





Photo 27: Ground floor of nineteenth century extension, looking west



Photo 28: First floor of nineteenth century extension, looking south-west





Photo 29: First floor of nineteenth century extension, looking south-east



Photo 30: First floor of nineteenth century extension, looking north-east