
*MIDDRIDGE GRANGE MILL
REDWORTH
COUNTY DURHAM*

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD



APRIL 2022



*The Archaeological
Practice Ltd.*



MIDDRIDGE GRANGE MILL,
REDWORTH,
COUNTY DURHAM

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD



Frontispiece: Screen capture from a 3D model of Middridge Grange Mill, viewed from the east, captured in April 2022 by Gianluca Foschi.

Report title:	<i>Middridge Grange Mill, Redworth, County Durham. Historic Building Record.</i>
Stage:	<i>Final</i>
Project code:	<i>AP 22/13</i>
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OASIS ID:	<i>thearcha2-510228</i>
ADS Project ID:	<i>20016663</i>
Date issued:	<i>15/06/2022</i>
Planning reference:	<i>N/A</i>
Grid reference:	<i>NZ 2432 2425</i>
Client:	<i>Bright Water Landscape Partnership, with thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund</i>

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SUMMARY

A programme of building recording has been carried out at Middridge Grange Mill, Redworth (NGR: NZ 2432 2425) as part of a historic buildings recording project carried out on a group of Farmsteads and Mills for the Bright Water Landscape Partnership. To accompany a written description of the buildings a plan was produced by Peter Ryder, historic buildings consultant, and photographic recording undertaken in April 2022 by colour digital photography using a Panasonic DMC-FZ1000. The visual record of the farmstead was further enhanced by means of a digital 3D laser scan of the mill complex carried out in April, 2022. In addition, an attempt was made to research the history of the building through locally available historic maps and records.

Middridge Grange Mill is situated on the north side of the valley of Red House Beck, 400 m from the old house of Middridge Grange which tops the ridge on the north side of the valley. The mill is a small but lofty building which seems to be of one build with the slightly-lower adjacent house on the east; the third element in the range is a slightly-lower short bay, added to the house on the east.

The mill, constructed of roughly-coursed rubble (largely rounded cobbles) with irregular roughly-shaped quoins and some cut dressings, is marked clearly as a 'corn mill' on the tithe map of 1844 and, as with other mills of the region, likely dates to the earlier part of the 19th century.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Middridge Grange Mill (NGR: NZ 2432 2425) is situated on the north side of the valley of Red House Beck, and reached by a lane extending north for c 1 km from the village of Redworth, which continues a further 400 m in the same direction to the old house of Middridge Grange which tops the ridge on the north side of the valley.

The Mill is a fairly small but lofty building, which seems to be of one build with the slightly-lower adjacent house on the east; the third element in the range is a short bay, slightly-lower still, added to the house on the east. The mill is marked clearly as a 'corn mill' on the tithe map of 1844 and, as with other mills of the region, likely dates to the earlier part of the 19th century.

Accordingly, the current investigation and recording exercise has been carried out as far as possible in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed for the Bright Water Landscape Partnership Built Heritage Lot 3 (Innovation) Archaeology Project in January, 2020. All historic buildings within the development area were included in this work, with **Level 2** recording of the majority of the historic buildings.

The overall approach of the Bright Water Landscape Partnership Built Heritage Lot 3 (Innovation) Archaeology Project was to gain a clearer understanding of the surviving planned farms (and mills) within the Bright Water Landscape Scheme area whilst providing training in historic building recording methods and techniques to interested volunteers and furthering the understanding of the site and its environment by all members of the community, thereby reinforcing and developing the existing sense of place and belonging within the area and providing a springboard for further community-led initiatives in the field of archaeology. However, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic soon after agreement of the WSI necessitated a change in approach, with the majority of on-site recording being carried out by a greater number of professionals, supplemented by additional approaches (aerial photography and digital scanning - see *Illus. 09-16*), while an attempt was made to respond to the volunteer component of the project by providing online guides to building types of the Brightwater area, including historic farms, and the approaches and techniques used to record them.

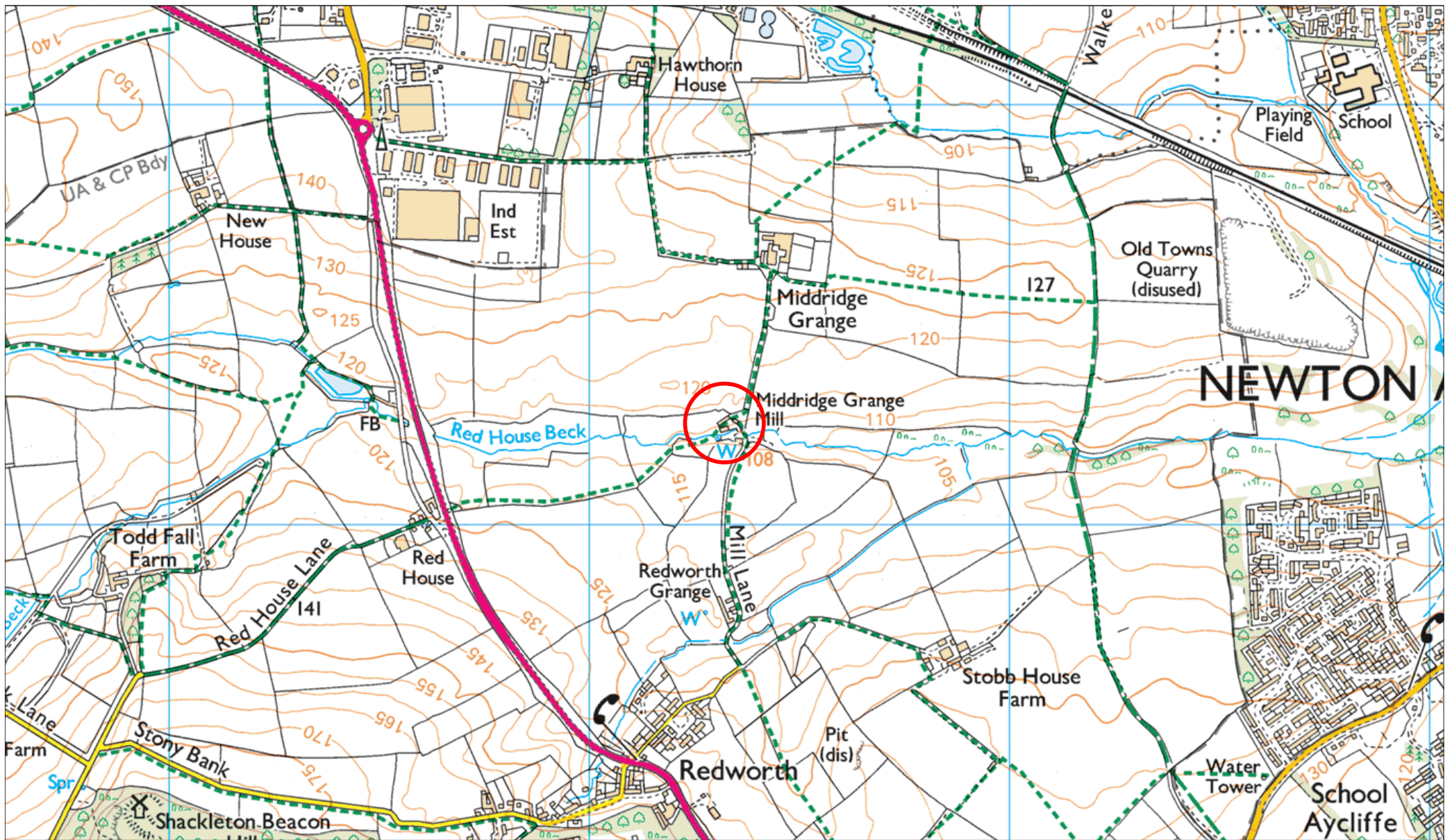
1.2 Cultural Heritage Background

Extracts summarised from County Durham Historic Environment Record, Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of 1848 and Wikipedia.

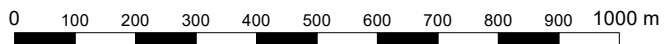
Historical background

Description of Middridge Grange Township in *A Topographical Dictionary of England comprising the several counties, cities, boroughs, corporate and market towns, parishes, and townships.... 7th Edition, by Samuel Lewis, London, 1848:*

MIDDRIDGE-GRANGE, a township, in the union of Auckland, S. E. division of Darlington ward, S. division of the county of Durham, 7 miles (N.) from Darlington; containing 40 inhabitants. The township comprises by computation 860 acres, and is pleasantly situated on an eminence, at the base of which passes the Witton, Darlington, and Stockton railroad; it is wholly the property



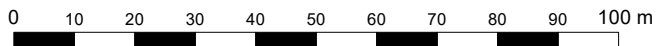
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Illus. 01: Broad view of Middridge Grange Mill (circled in red), extracted from the modern Ordnance Survey.



Scale 1:1250



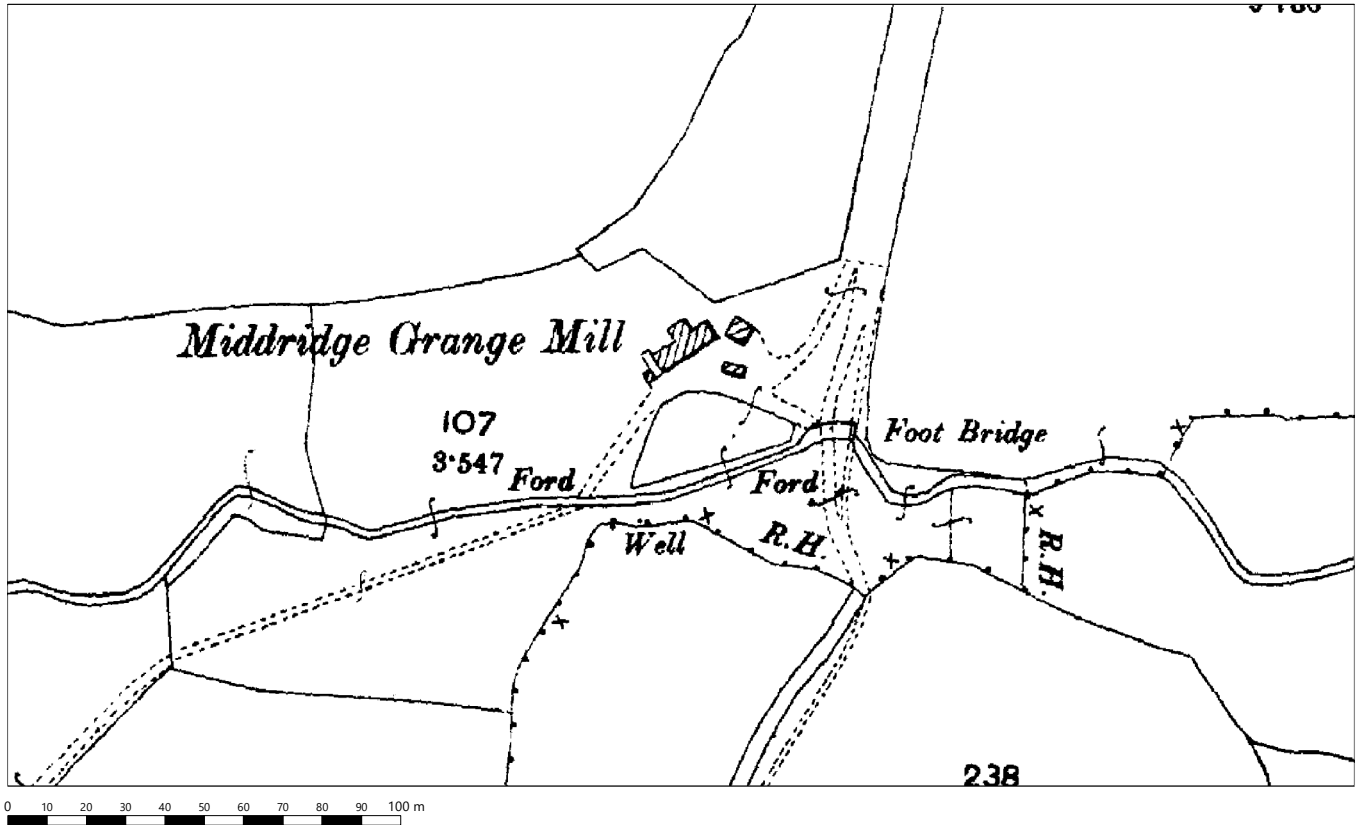
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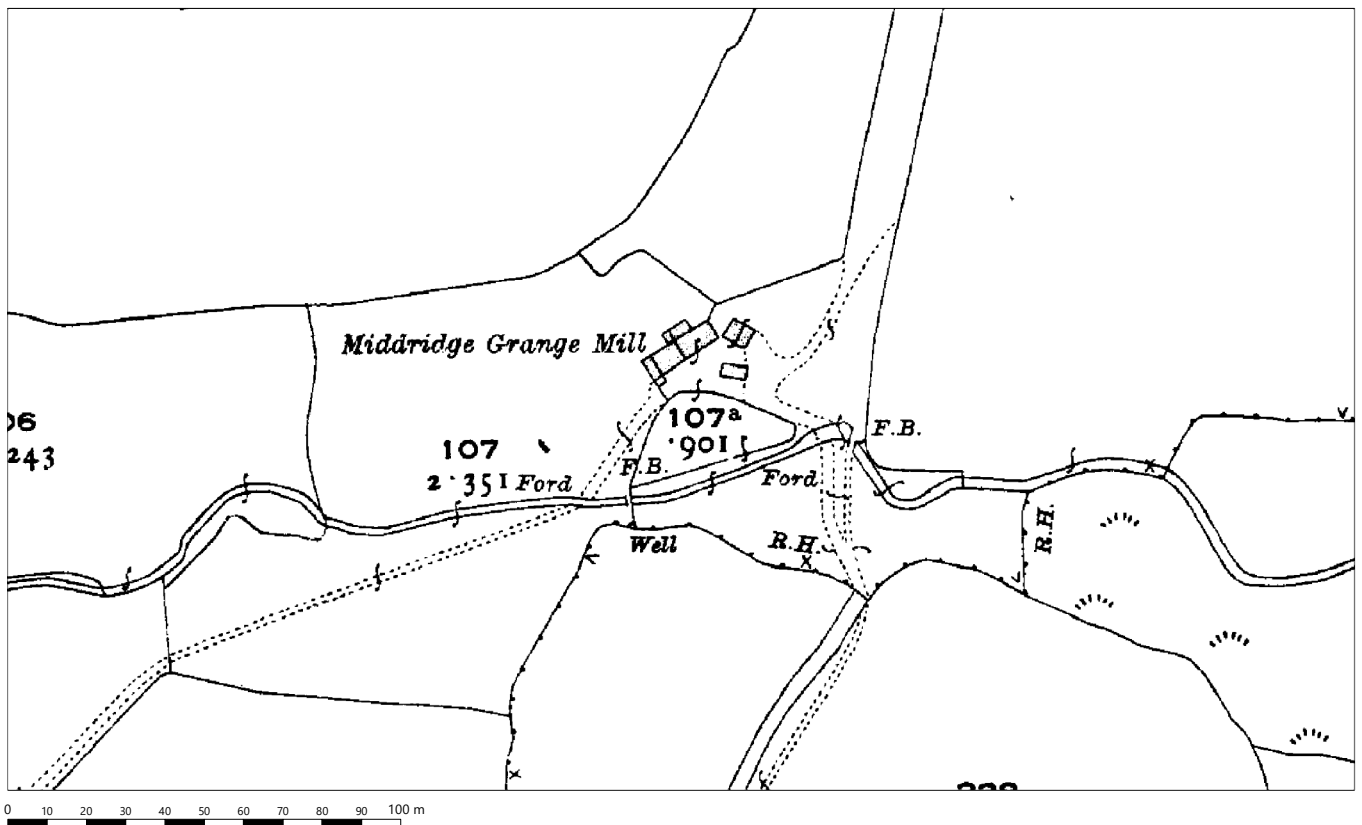
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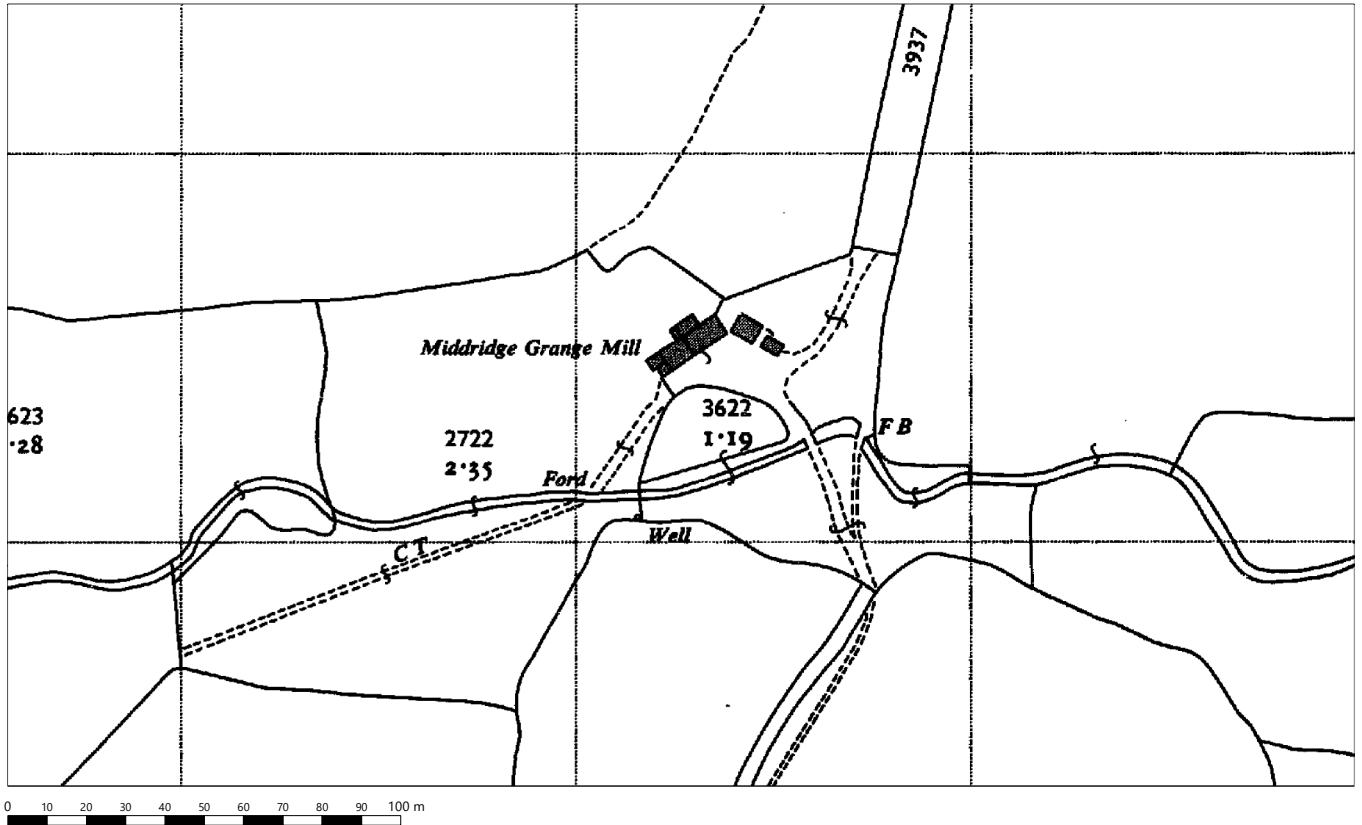
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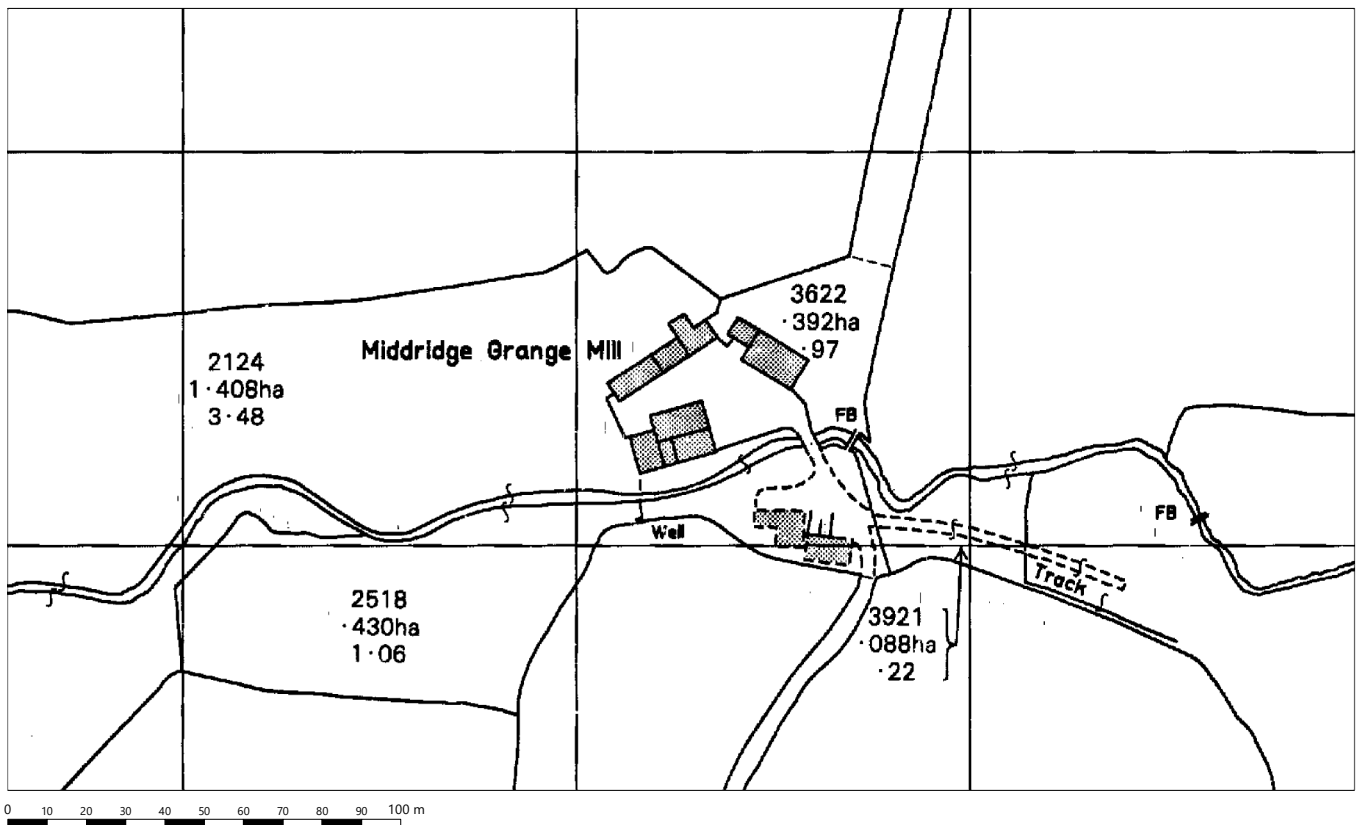
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Illus. 07: Extract of the c.1963 edition Ordnance Survey, 25" series, showing Middridge Grange Mill.



Illus. 08: Extract of the c.1989 edition Ordnance Survey, 25" series, showing Middridge Grange Mill.

of the Earl of Eldon. The seat once occupied by Colonel Byerley, M.P. for the county of Durham, and anciently the residence of Catesby, one of the conspirators in the Gunpowder plot, is in the township. A dispute is now pending as to whether the township belongs to the parish of St. Andrew Auckland, or to Heighington.

Description of Middridge Township, in which Middridge Grange and Middridge Grange Mill feature:

Following the fall of the Roman Empire, the Angles arrived in the area around 500 AD and created several settlements, including Middridge. The name "Middridge" is derived from its location at that time on the "middle ridge" between Eldon and School Aycliffe (near the current Aycliffe golf course).

Anglo-Saxon Middridge lasted for approximately five hundred years before its destruction at the hands of the Normans during William the Conqueror's Harrying of the North. Those who survived this massacre (and the resulting disease and starvation) were enslaved by the invaders. They were forced by the Bishop of Durham to toil in the surrounding fields as serfs, and forcibly relocated to gloomy huts centred on the village green. The "serfs" eventually gained their freedom and the village green survives to this day, although the housing has improved considerably.

The arrival of the industrial age in the nineteenth century resulted in two coal mines: Charles Pit and Eden Pit. These pits were collectively known as Middridge Colliery, and provided employment for hundreds of people in their heyday while producing a combined daily total of 600 tons of coal, before closing in the early 20th century. The remains of this era live on in the names of places such as Charles Row, Eden Grove and the "pit heap", a small hill used in the winter as a sledge run. Until recently, the pit heap was also used to host the annual village bonfire.

Notable buildings, structures and features

Middridge Grange is a Grade II listed building situated just outside the village itself, between Shildon and School Aycliffe. It is one of the oldest buildings in the region, beginning life as a large Elizabethan manor in 1578. However, the current Middridge Grange bears little resemblance to the original manor, much of which was destroyed by fire in the 19th century.

Used as a farmhouse, it has been owned by the Scott family since the early 20th century but has not been lived in since the 1970s, after falling into serious disrepair. A site of great interest to historians, it is currently undergoing an extensive renovation.

Middridge Village Hall was originally built as a school for the children of the village and local farming community. It served this purpose for many years, but due to a continuing fall in pupil numbers in the 1950s and 1960s and changes in education policy, it closed.

To prevent the building becoming derelict, the committee of the village association took over the administration of the hall. After various repairs and alterations, it became the village hall, which it has been for well over thirty years. The village hall is used as a venue for discos, church services, parties and social gatherings such as the monthly wine club. The hall has recently been refurbished, with an entirely new roof section, plumbing structure and electrical system.

Middridge Quarry is a site of special scientific interest.

Famous residents

The Byerley Turk, the great stallion owned by the then Captain (later Colonel) Robert Byerley, was arguably Middridge's most famous resident. The Byerley Turk was one of the three founding stallions of today's thoroughbred horses and was stood at Middridge Grange, until being moved to Goldsborough Hall, near Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, when his owner married his cousin, Mary Wharton, in 1692.

Robert Byerley was the son of Colonel Anthony Byerley, a cavalry officer who served Charles I in a unit known as "Byerley's Bulldogs". The Byerley line eventually died out, but their name lives on in place names around the region, such as Byerley Park and Byerley Road.

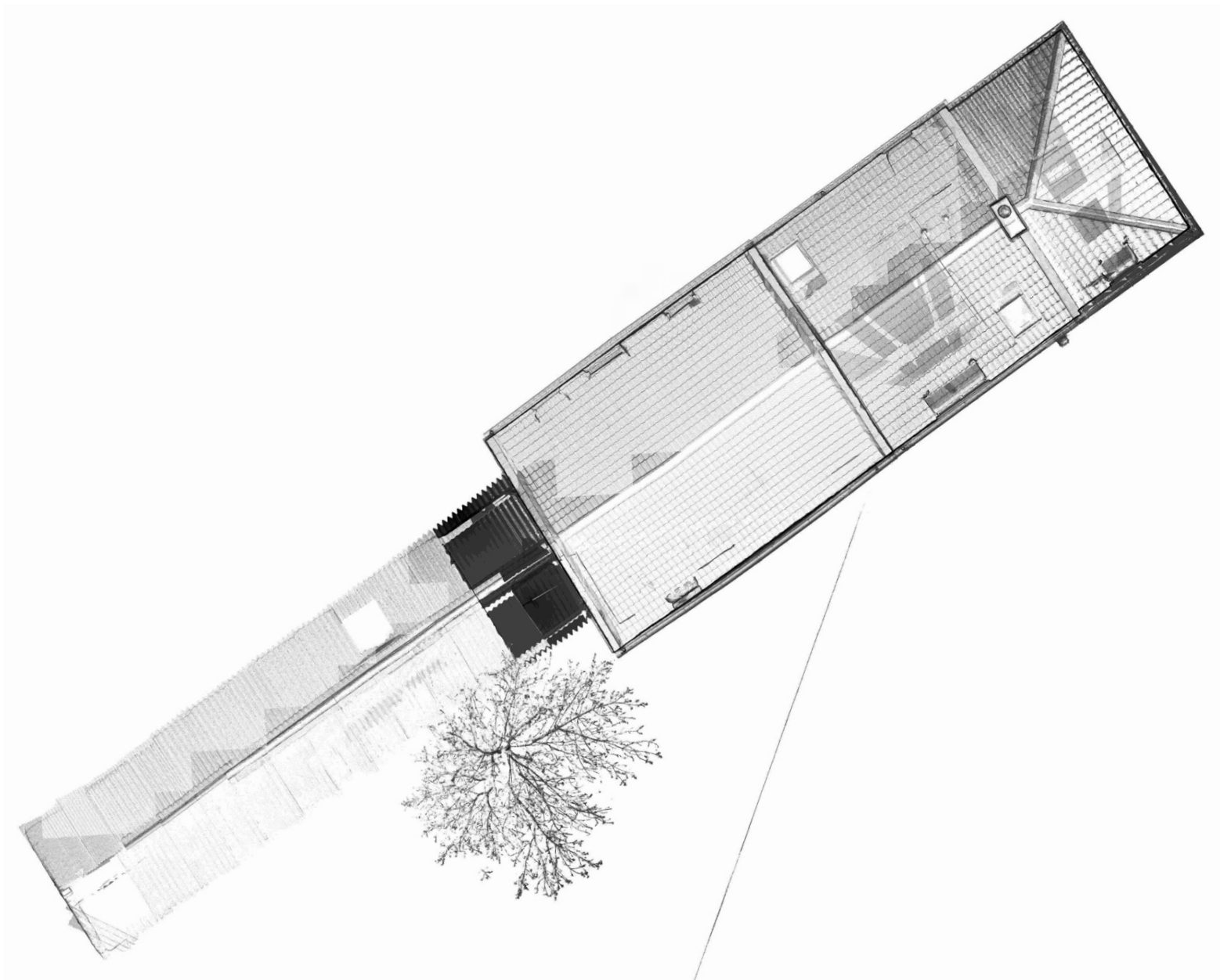
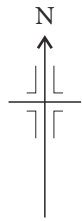
It is believed that King Charles I of England took refuge in Middridge Grange during the English Civil War.

John Marley (geologist) was born at Middridge Grange in 1823. He made the commercial discovery of Cleveland ironstone which led to the industrial growth of Middlesbrough.

1.3 Methodology

The photographic recording of the mill and farmstead (see *Appendix 1*) was keyed to Illus. 19 and accompanied a written description in April 2022. All elevations were photographed as far as possible face-on and from a consistent height and perspective. Where possible, all ground floor record photographs included a scaled ranging pole. Where it was not possible to capture an entire elevation in a single photograph because of the constricted nature of the site, a series of partial elevations were recorded along with an oblique overall view of the full elevation.

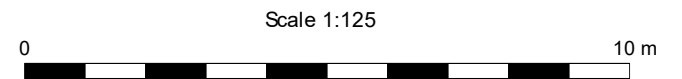
Subsequently, the visual record of the mill was further enhanced by means of a digital 3D laser scanning survey carried out in April, 2022 (*Illus. 9-16*), from which plans and elevations were captured. In addition, an attempt was made to research the history of the buildings through locally available historic maps and records which could shed light on the history of the buildings.



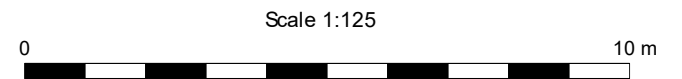
Scale 1:125



Illus. 09: Digital scan of Midridge Grange Mill in plan form, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 10: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, south-east facing elevation, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 11: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, north-west facing elevation, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 12: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, south-west facing elevation, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 13: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, NE facing elevation of mill with cottage removed, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 14: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, NE facing elevation of cottage and mill, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.

Scale 1:75





Illus. 15: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, 3D view looking WNW, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.



Illus. 16: Digital scan of Middridge Grange Mill, 3D view looking south-east, captured by Gianluca Foschi, April 2022.

2. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

2.1 The mill and house are aligned west-south-west to east-north-east, hereafter taken as west-east for ease of description. The Mill is a fairly small but lofty building, which seems to be of one build with the slightly-lower adjacent house on the east; the third element in the range is a short bay, slightly-lower still, added to the cottage on the east.

2.2 The Mill

The building is constructed of roughly-coursed rubble (largely rounded cobbles) with irregular roughly-shaped quoins (some quite large) and some cut dressings, and roofs of modern brown tiles. At ground-floor level there is a doorway at each end of the south wall of the Mill, the western slightly taller and with a tooled-and-margined lintel. A little to the east of this doorway is what looks to be a small infilled opening just over 2 m above the ground, with beyond it a small 4-pane window in an opening that looks to be an insertion, with a cut sandstone lintel. On the first floor towards the west end is a 6-pane window with a cut sandstone lintel. The upper metre or so of the wall is of rather more elongate stones and may have been heightened or rebuilt. A 1966 photograph (available at: <https://catalogue.millsarchive.org/middridge-grange-mill-heighington-2>) shows a small window set roughly centrally just below the eaves, now only discernible as an irregular patch of yellower stone.



Illus. 17: View looking north-west towards Middridge Grange Mill in 1966.

© Alan Stoyel

The end gables have a simple stone coping.

The lower part of the west end of the Mill is covered by an adjacent range of single-storey outbuildings, of blockwork and of mid-20th century date. Above its roof there is a rectangular window set centrally at a second-floor/eaves level; within the outbuilding the Mill wall is plastered.



*Illus. 18: View looking south-east towards Middridge Grange Mill in 1966.
© Alan Stoyel*

On the north, the lower 2 m or so of walling is irregular and has a rough batter; at the north-west corner some projecting tooled-and-margined blocks are a remnant of the east side of the wheel pit, which was set against the west gable. The rough bettered masonry further east was probably originally footings, exposed when the ground level alongside the wall was lowered relatively recently to facilitate drainage (and giving the erroneous impression of a millrace adjacent to the wall). At first-floor level in the wall is a boarded door with a square window to either side, all with cut stone lintels.

2.3 The House

The Mill House is of two storeys and has been extensively remodelled relatively recently; its main part has a broad glazed opening on the ground floor (which the 1966 photograph shows replaced a doorway and window) and a modern window on the first floor (replacing one set slightly further east) is of one build. The east end of this part has a stone bopping to its gable and a modern stack. The added bay to the east has a broad ground floor opening combining a door with a window to the west (the 1966 photograph shows a door and window as separate openings) and a single window above.

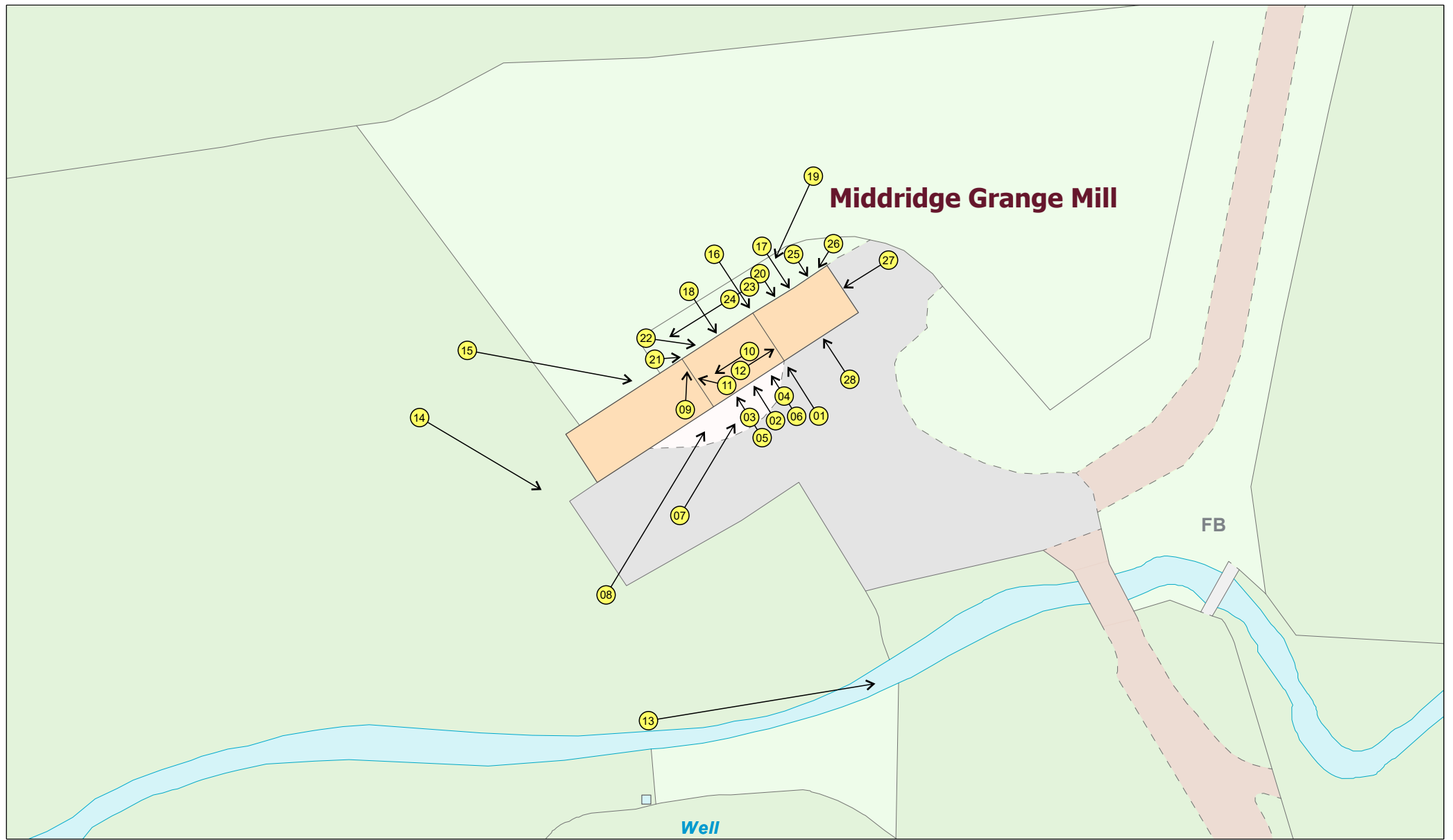
The east end of the house has a modern ground-floor window. On the north the lower wall is of very rough stonework, with a marked batter like that of the adjacent Mill. In the older western bay are two bricked-up doorways, with a column of better-coursed stonework between, whilst above the western is a first-floor doorway, with some brick in its jambs, infilled in stone. These openings relate to a projecting gabled wing shown in one of the 1966 photographs, stone built with a 16-pane sash window in its end wall. East of the site of the wing is a modern (?) first-floor window.

3. THE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD – LOCATIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Photo number	Internal/ External	Description
01-08	External	Views and elevations of the southern aspect of the mill
09-12	Internal	Views of the mill interior (ground floor)
13-18	External	Views and elevations of the northern aspect of the mill
19-26	External	Views and elevations of the northern aspect of the mill and cottage
27-28	External	East and south elevation of the cottage
29	External	Outlying stone

Photo number	Caption
01	View looking north-west towards Middridge Grange Mill (left) and adjoining cottage (right).
02	South-east facing elevation of the mill building.
03	South-east facing elevation (lower-left portion) of the mill building, showing doorway (left) blocked window (centre) and ground floor window (right).
04	South-east facing elevation (lower-right portion) of the mill building, showing a second doorway (right) and ground floor window (left).
05	South-east facing elevation (upper left portion) of mill building, showing small first floor window.
06	South-east facing elevation (upper right portion) of mill building.
07	View looking north-east across Middridge Grange Mill, with modern concrete shed (left), mill building (centre), and cottage (right).
08	Broad view looking north-east across Middridge Grange Mill.
09	View looking north from inside the east end of the modern shed, towards the west wall of the mill (stone visible behind render at north corner).
10	View looking south-west along interior of mill ground floor towards west wall.
11	View looking WNW at west wall (interior) of mill, with blocked window towards centre.
12	View looking north-east at east wall (interior) of mill.
13	View looking east along the Red House Beck, situated just to the south of Middridge Grange Mill.
14	View looking south-east at location of former mill leet, on the west side of the site.
15	View looking ESE across the mill complex, with the modern concrete shed in the foreground.
16	View looking south-east at north elevation of mill and cottage.
17	North elevation of cottage adjoining the mill.
18	North elevation of mill.
19	View looking south-west across the mill complex, with the cottage in the foreground.
20	Detail of blocked doorways at the west end of the cottage north wall.
21	View looking east at projecting tooled-and-margined blocks, a remnant of the east side of the wheel pit, set against the west gable of the mill.
22	The lower portion of the mill north wall, showing rough masonry footings and projecting blocks from the former wheel pit.
23	View looking south-west at disturbed masonry pieces alongside the north wall of the mill.

24	Alternative view, looking south-west at disturbed masonry pieces alongside the north wall of the mill.
25	Detail of rough battered masonry in the lower part of the mill-cottage north wall, probably originally footings, exposed after modern landscaping work.
26	North-east view alongside the north wall of the mill-cottage.
27	East elevation of the mill-cottage (east bay).
28	South elevation of the mill-cottage and its east bay extension.
29	Outlying large building stone, presumably moved from the mill, observed along the track near Red House Beck.



Illus. 19: Key Plan, showing the location of Record Photographs captured at Middridge Grange Mill.

4. REFERENCES

<https://catalogue.millsarchive.org/middridge-grange-mill-heighington-2>

A Topographical Dictionary of England comprising the several counties, cities, boroughs, corporate and market towns, parishes, and townships.... 7th Edition, by Samuel Lewis, London, 1848

A History of the County of Durham: Volume 3. 1928. Victoria County History, London.

APPENDIX 01: The Photographic Record – Image Sequence.



Photo 01. View looking north-west towards Middridge Grange Mill (left) and adjoining cottage (right).



Photo 02. South-east facing elevation of the mill building.



Photo 03. South-east facing elevation (lower-left portion) of the mill building, showing doorway (left) blocked window (centre) and ground floor window (right).



Photo 04. South-east facing elevation (lower-right portion) of the mill building, showing a second doorway (right) and ground floor window (left).



Photo 05. South-east facing elevation (upper left portion) of mill building, showing small first floor window.



Photo 06. South-east facing elevation (upper right portion) of mill building.



Photo 07. View looking north-east across Middridge Grange Mill, with modern concrete shed (left), mill building (centre), and cottage (right).



Photo 08. Broad view looking north-east across Middridge Grange Mill.



Photo 09. View looking north from inside the east end of the modern shed, towards the west wall of the mill (stone visible behind render at north corner).



Photo 10. View looking south-west along interior of mill ground floor towards west wall.



Photo 11. View looking WNW at west wall (interior) of mill, with blocked window towards centre.



Photo 12. View looking north-east at east wall (interior) of mill.



Photo 13. View looking east along the Red House Beck, situated just to the south of Middridge Grange Mill.



Photo 14. View looking south-east at location of former mill leet, on the west side of the site.



Photo 15. View looking ESE across the mill complex, with the modern concrete shed in the foreground.



Photo 16. View looking south-east at north elevation of mill and cottage.



Photo 17. North elevation of cottage adjoining the mill.



Photo 18. North elevation of mill.



Photo 19. View looking south-west across the mill complex, with the cottage in the foreground.



Photo 20. Detail of blocked doorways at the west end of the cottage north wall.



Photo 21. View looking east at projecting tooled-and-margined blocks, a remnant of the east side of the wheel pit, set against the west gable of the mill.

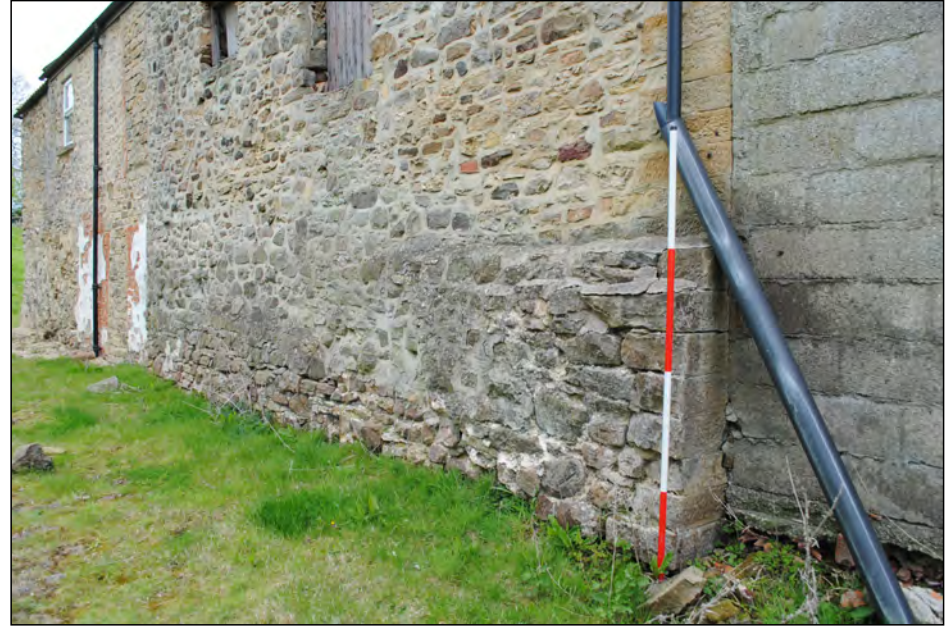


Photo 22. The lower portion of the mill north wall, showing rough masonry footings and projecting blocks from the former wheel pit.



Photo 23. View looking south-west at disturbed masonry pieces alongside the north wall of the mill.

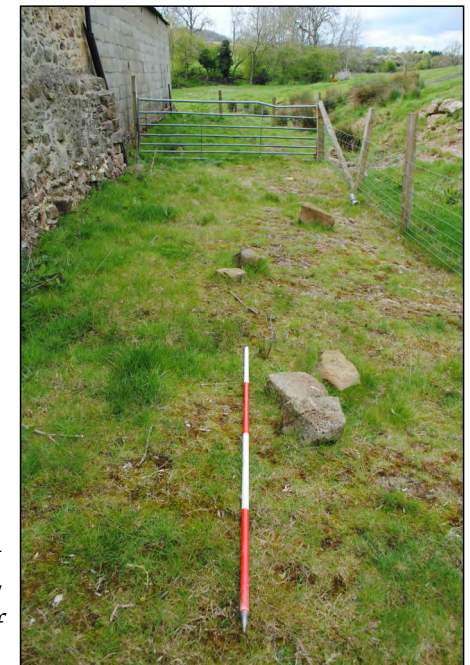


Photo 24. Alternative view, looking south-west at disturbed masonry pieces alongside the north wall of the mill.



Photo 25. Detail of rough battered masonry in the lower part of the mill-cottage north wall, probably originally footings, exposed after modern landscaping work.



Photo 26. North-east view alongside the north wall of the mill-cottage.



Photo 27. East elevation of the mill-cottage (east bay).



Photo 28. South elevation of the mill-cottage and its east bay extension.



Photo 29. Outlying large building stone, presumably moved from the mill, observed along the track near Red House Beck.

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