



THE ARCHAEOLOGY CO.

Dewhirst House, Rochdale
Heritage Statement

December 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Steven Price of The Archaeology Co. on behalf of Saleem Architects to accompany a planning application for the conversion of the attached barn and stables into dwellings. The building appears to have been constructed c.1800 as an extension to an earlier barn. It was built as a two unit house, with the earlier barn demolished and rebuilt, along with a rear house extension, in 1894. The L-shaped stable block was added soon afterwards and was present by 1910. A heritage assessment which considers the impact of the proposal on this is required to accompany the planning application.

1.2 This statement has been prepared in accordance with the policies and procedures of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in addition to an examination, analysis and assessment of available historic records and cartographic sources and consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).

1.3 This statement includes:

- A description of the application site's location;
- A summary of the application site's archaeological and historical background;
- A summary of the heritage planning policy guidance context, and;
- An assessment of the relative archaeological potential of the application site and the impact of the development upon it

This statement is not intended to be a full or complete record of the site.

2. Site Location and Setting

2.1 The site lies in what is now a modern housing estate, accessed from both Dewhirst Road and Wood Hey Grove, lying to the west of the former and north of the latter. The postal address is Dewhirst House, Wood Hey Grove, Rochdale OL12 9TX and the NGR is SD 89753 15632. The geology of the area comprises bedrock geology of Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation (BGS 2023). The building is

not listed and does not lie within a conservation area. It is, however, an entry on the Historic Environment Record (HER).

- 2.2 The building is recorded on the HER as “Dewhirst House (formerly Nigher Dewhirst; record previously named 'Higher Dewhirst')” (HER No. 2664.1.0) and listed as “Farm on this site dated with stone from 1684. The datestone is set into a barn rebuilt in the 19th century”
- 2.3 Dewhirst Farm, listed as Dewhirst on the HER (No. 2391.1.0) lies to the southwest of the site, although little is known about it. To the northeast of the site are the Grade II Listed 190, 191 and 192 Dewhirst Road (HER No. 5369.1.0), 3 houses c.1800. with watershot stone with stone slate roof. To the north of these is Syke Mill (HER No. 5383.1.0), converted to row of cottages, with a datestone of 1754. To the southwest of the site, on Syke Road are several cottages dating from the c. 1800 built in watershot stone: 144, 145, 146, 147 and 148 Syke Road (HER No. 11598.1.0); 149 and 150 Syke Road (HER No. 11599.1.0); 151 and 152 Syke Road (HER No. 11540.1.0), and; 153 & 154 Syke Road (HER No. 11322.1.0). The site of Buckley Hall (HER No. 2355.1.0) lies c. 900m southwest of the site. This was constructed sometime prior to 1626 with a new hall built in 1863.

3. The Heritage Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The proposed scheme should be assessed against National Planning Policy Framework which replaced Planning Policy Statement 5. The NPPF represents a significant overhaul of the planning system for the historic environment. Whilst the changes are intended to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, the fundamental principle of conserving heritage as a precious, fragile, and finite legacy remains at the heart of national policy.
- 3.2 At the core of NPPF is the principle of supporting appropriate development that delivers the long-term viability of ‘heritage assets’ (defined in Annex 2: Terminology as: ‘a building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning

decisions') while conserving their significance for the benefit of generations to come.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 Large concentrations of flints from the Mesolithic period have been found between Saddleworth and Marsden, found as well defined arrangements of struck flint. Neolithic sites have not been identified to the same extent, although Mesolithic sites often have traces of some of the more easily identified Neolithic stone tools on them, such as flint arrowheads and stone axes, suggesting a degree of continuity. Only one Bronze Age occupation site, the Piethorne Brook spur, has been excavated in Rochdale Borough (Adams 2017). There are no known prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Dewhirst House.
- 4.2 Despite good evidence from other areas of Greater Manchester there is presently little direct evidence for Romano-British settlement in Rochdale, though it does lie within a wider landscape with evidence for activity. Most of the evidence for post-Roman settlement in this area is based upon studies of place-names and upon the limited contemporary documentary sources available (Adams 2017).
- 4.3 The Domesday entry for Rochdale (Recedham) records that it was held by Gamel, one of twenty-one thegns of Salford Hundred, who held two hides of land free of all but six duties. The manor went through several changes of ownership between until the 15th century but remained a single estate from the early 14th. By the 15th century the economy changed from one of cattle rearing, to wool production, with Rochdale becoming a market for cloth produced in the surrounding hamlets (Adams 2017).
- 4.4 By the end of the 15th century Rochdale was a significant market centre. Buckley Hall was constructed to the southwest of the site before 1626 and the enclosure of agricultural land began in the 16th century, causing conflict between tenants and landowners into the 17th century (Adams 2017). The datestone of 1684 found at Dewhirst House may suggest a building was present here at this time.

- 4.5 Yates map of Lancashire from 1786 shows several buildings in the Wardleworth area, with one shown in roughly the location of Dewhurst House. A similar situation is shown on Greenwoods map of 1818. The 1841 census return records Dewhurst as occupied by Thomas Blomby, a farmer, living with his wife Martha and their four children. Although listed as 'Dewhurst', it is likely that the entry refers to Dewhurst House (or Nether Dewhurst as it was known at the time), as 'Dewhurst' (farm) lay within Spotland Ward, rather than Wardleworth, with the boundary falling between the two.
- 4.6 The 1851 OS map shows the site in detail at this time. The building is shown as having a cruciform plan and named as 'Nigher Dewhurst', accessed via a track named Dewhurst Lane. The house is presumably the western end of the cross and appears to be quite thin, suggesting it had not yet been extended to the rear. To the east the barn is projecting forward from the house, as well as extending further to the rear, with a smaller unit to the east. The 1861 census records Robert Sladen at 'Dewhurst', a farmer living with his wife Betty and their seven children.
- 4.7 The site is mentioned in a newspaper article from 1869, although incorrectly named. It was reported that "The committee appointed to secure land for the erection of an hospital recommended the purchase of Higher Dewhurst farm" (Rochdale Observer 30/01/1869). The article states that this recommendation was in error.
- 4.8 The 1881 census returns lists James Taylor at 'Dewhurst', listed as an auctioneer. He was married to his wife Mary and lived with their 3 sons. By 1891 the census records the property as 'Dewhurst Dewhurst Farm' with Thomas Roberts recorded as an elementary school teacher.
- 4.9 "Nigher Dewhurst" is shown again in more detail on the 1893 OS mapping. The building is shown as two units. To the west is the house, which appears as a two unit dwelling once again, although with a porch to the front. To the east is the attached barn with long rear extension. A small outbuilding is shown to the east, to the north side of Dewhurst Lane. The following year the barn was rebuilt to what

is present today, along with the extension of the house to the rear. In 1895 the name was given as 'Higher Dewhurst' in reference to the footpath "leading past Dewhurst and Higher Dewhurst farms" (Rochdale Observer 22/06/1895).

- 4.10 The 1910 OS map is the first to show the site as it appears today. The house is shown with the extension to the rear and the porch which was shown previously is no longer present. The barn is a single large rectangular unit to the east, the same width as the house. To the east is the L-shaped stable block. By 1911 Charles Edward Dearden is recorded at "Dewhurst House", listed as a "Dental Surgery + Anesthesia". He was married to his wife Clara Ann and they lived with their two children. A boarder is also recorded who worked with Charles, as well as a domestic servant, a visitor and a nurse. Charles also appears to have been a councilor, as it was report that same year that at the Coronation Day celebrations for Greenbank Wesleyan Sunday School that "[t]he people then adjourned to a field belonging to Councilor Dearden at Higher Dewhurst, where games were indulged in" (Rochdale Times 24/06/1911).
- 4.11 Charles appears to have continued living at the property through the early 20th century, recorded as Alderman Charles Edward Dearden, Dewhurst House" in 1935 (Rochdale Times 09/03/1935). Mr Lancaster Higgins was recorded at Dewhurst House in 1961 (Rochdale Observer 29/03/1969) and in 1990 it was occupied by Ray Colley, the secretary of the Spotland Liberal Democrats (Rochdale Observer 21/03/1990).

5. Site visit

- 5.1 The site was visited on the 5th December when the buildings were inspected and photographs were taken.
- 5.2 The building comprises a two unit house, with extension to the rear, barn extension to the east and L-shaped stable extension to the east of the barn (plates 1 – 2).

- 5.3 South elevation. This forms the main frontage of the range, with the house to the left (plates 3 – 5). This is three bays wide with a pair of sandstone bay windows flanking a central doorway, with sandstone surround. Timber framed sash windows with nibs are present to each of the bays at first floor level. The whole is constructed in watershot stone. A straight joint marks the end boundary between the house and the barn.
- 5.4 The barn (plates 6 – 11) is likewise constructed in watershot stone and the face is dominated by the large barn door to the centre, with rounded arch lintel with keystone. The keystone bears the engraving "Re Built 1894 A. F.". Large sandstone blocks form the jambs of the barn door. To the west of this is a small personnel doorway with solid sandstone jambs and a large sandstone lintel bearing the date 1684. The top of this lintel is not flat but chamfered to each side. A small set of sandstone steps lead up to it, showing the higher internal floor level. East of this is a small portrait window set within a sandstone surround. The window itself is modern. This arrangement of door and window is mirrored to the other side of the barn door, although here the doorway has a simple sandstone lintel to match the jambs. The first floor level is featureless, although above the barn door is a small gabled clock tower with weathervane above. Quoins line the eastern corner.
- 5.5 Set back from the barn face is the face of the stable block (plates 12 & 13). This contains a pair of small portrait windows at ground floor level, each with a sandstone surround and modern upvc frame. At first floor level are larger portrait windows, with similar surrounds and frames. The whole is constructed in regularly coursed stone with quoins to the west side.
- 5.6 East elevation. This forms the gable end of the stable block and the barn. The barn is constructed of watershot stone and is featureless. The stable block is constructed of regularly coursed stone and is likewise featureless (plate 14).
- 5.7 North elevation. This forms the rear elevation of the block. At the western end is the gable of the stable block (plates 15 – 17). This is narrow, with a portrait window at the centre of the ground floor with stone surround. Quoins line each corner and at ground floor level these have been chamfered. To the west side a sandstone

chimney is present with a single pot. Set back from the gable is the rest of the stable block façade. This contains a wide doorway to the east side at ground floor level with the regular coursed stone walling forming the jambs. A modern lean-to roof has been placed across the face to provide a sheltered area. The first floor level is featureless.

5.8 To the east of the stable is the rear elevation of the barn (plates 18 & 19). At the western end is a doorway with sandstone surround and timber door hung. East of this is a small portrait window with modern frame and sandstone surround. East of this is a further doorway, opposite the barn door, and likely a winnowing doorway. It likewise has a sandstone surround and a further small portrait window with modern frame and sandstone surround lies to the east of it. An additional window lies close to this, matching, but cleaner, suggesting it is a later insertion. Above it is a tall portrait window with sandstone surround and timber framed casements. This sandstone is again cleaner, suggesting it may be a later insertion. These windows mark the end of the barn, although no straight joint is present. This suggests that this part of the rear extension of the house was added at the same time as the barn.

5.9 At the eastern side of the house elevation is a tall portrait window with sandstone surround and timber framed sash window with nibs. A matching window lies above, although with a modern frame. East of this a modern porch has been added at ground floor level. At first floor level a smaller portrait window has been inserted, with matching sandstone surround. To the east the face steps forwards as the rear extension. This contains a large square window at ground floor level containing a six light timber framed window of three sashes, with nibs. Above is a portrait window with modern frame. Each has a sandstone surround (plates 20 & 21).

5.10 West elevation. This forms the side elevation of the house, formed of two gable ends (plates 22 & 23). Each has a stone chimney rising from the apex and a straight joint separating them but are otherwise featureless. The stonework differs slightly between the gables however, with the northern extension being much more regular in appearance and the original house gable being rougher and smaller stonework. Quoins are also present to the straight joint.

- 5.11 Interior. The house has been modernised internally, with several walls removed and other inserted (plates 25 – 30). However, the basic two unit plan form is still present. Although modernised, a few late 19th century features still remain, including some door frames, plaster cornices and a ceiling rose to the dining room. Within the rear extension, the quarry tile floor is also still present. A narrow cellar is located to the northern side of the original 2 unit house, with stone flagged floor and a low brick and stone thrawl to the south. The first floor has been modernised further, with 5 bedrooms and a bathroom inserted. The landing area has some late 19th cornice around. A doorway has been inserted in the east wall leading into the first floor of the western bay of barn (plate 31). This has again been modernised and converted into a large living room.
- 5.12 At ground floor level the western bay of the barn has a cobble stone floor which has been partially removed (plates 32 – 37). It is separated from the rest of the barn via an inserted brick wall to the east, with personnel doorway within it. A further doorway has been inserted into the house in the western wall. The western wall is constructed of whitewashed stone to the southern end, with a rough joint to the north, from which the remaining wall is of whitewashed brick. This may mark where the previous barn joined to the house. A small shower room has been inserted to the northwest corner. The other two bays of the barn form a single open space (plates 38 – 45), with whitewashed stone walls. The floor is a mix of stone flags and concrete, with an inspection hatch inserted into the floor close to the barn door. A whitewashed timber beam spans the room north - south, supporting timber joist of the floor above. To the central bay these are modern and inserted. Those to the eastern bay are original, with soffits on the underside, suggesting downposts. These, along with the opposing doorways to the eastern end of the north and south walls suggesting a feeding passage, suggest the bay was used as a shippon. The first floor (plates 46 – 49) is accessed via a modern ladder and comprises a single open space. The inserted floor to the central bay cuts across the top of the barn door. The walls are all whitewashed rough stone. A doorway in the east wall leads through to the first floor of the stables.

- 5.13 The first floor of the stables (plates 50 – 55) comprises a single open L-shaped space. The walls are all whitewashed brick and windows, with modern frames, all have bullnosed brick cills and jambs. A blocked doorway is present to the western wall, between the two windows. At the northern end of the room a set of timber stairs have been inserted, giving access to the northern ground floor room (plate 56). This has a stone flagged floor and the bricks have traces of whitewash remaining. A timber partition has been inserted with a modern bath and toilet inserted. A doorway lies in the west wall, and both the doorway and window have bullnosed brick jambs. The remaining ground floor rooms (plates 57 – 62) are accessed externally, all of which are stables. To the south of the inserted bathroom the floor is cobbled and the walls whitewashed, the window and doorway again having bullnosed brick surrounds, as are the remaining stables. Each has a metal hey trough mounted to the wall.

6. Analysis

- 6.1 The house was built as a two unit house, which was popular from the early 17th century through to the early 19th (Brunskill 2008). However, it is in the Georgian style, with large portrait windows, and constructed in watershot stone, suggesting it was constructed around the late 18th / early 19th century. Several buildings in the surrounding area are also of this date, and also constructed in watershot stone.
- 6.2 A further building was attached to this to the east, likely a barn, although this was demolished and replaced in 1894. The straight joint between them contains no quoins to the house side, whereas quoins are present to the houses western corner. This may suggest that the house was constructed as an extension to the previous barn. The replacement barn contains a lintel bearing the date 1684, which may give an indication of the date of the previous barn on the site. The present barn was constructed as a combination threshing barn, with shippon and storage above.
- 6.3 The house appears to have been separately let from the adjoining farm buildings from the late 19th century. The 1861 census lists Robert Slayden as a farmer there,

but by 1881 the house was occupied by James Taylor, and auctioneer, and later by a school teacher followed by a dentist. It is unknown who the farm buildings were used by over this time.

- 6.4 Internally the house has been considerably modernised, although still retains some late 19th/early 20th features such as plaster cornice and ceiling rose. The barn appears to have been built as a threshing barn, with large barn door to the south and smaller winnowing doorway opposite. It has been subdivided internally with a separate room added to the west and a first floor added to the central bay. The timbers to the eastern bay show soffits to the underside and the doorways suggest a feeding passage, indicating the area was likely used as a shippon. With the exception of the inserted bathroom to the northern stable, the stable block has been relatively unchanged, with the exception of modern replacement windows. A blocked doorway at first floor level suggests the first floor was used as storage.

7 Statement of Significance

- 7.1 The Historic England Publication "Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets" (HE 2019) suggests three areas of interest for assessing a heritage assets significance. These are to be described, following which the level of the general significance of the heritage asset should be assessed, with the particular contribution of any described features. The three areas of interest are:

- **Archaeological interest** if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **Architectural and artistic interest** which are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

- **Historic Interest** which is an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

House

Archaeological interest

The building dates to late 18th / early 19th century but has been altered throughout its life, although the original two-unit layout is still evident. Several Victorian decorative features are still present, such as the ceiling rose and some of the cornice. As such has a medium archaeological interest.

Architectural and artistic interest

The building is constructed of watershot stone in the Georgian style. Watershot stone was used a lot in the surrounding area, with several buildings nearby, included on the HER, recorded. The building therefore has a medium architectural interest.

Historic interest

The building dates to the late 18th / early 19th century, possibly as an extension to an earlier barn. A datestone of 1684 reused in the rebuilt barn may suggest a date for this earlier building. As such the house has medium historic interest.

Barn

Archaeological interest

The building dates from 1894, replacing an earlier barn on the site. This has been modified internally through the insertion of a brick wall to the western bay and the insertion of a first floor to the central bay, as well as modifications to the flooring. As such has a low archaeological interest.

Architectural and artistic interest

The building is also constructed of watershot stone to match the house and has a small gabled clock tower above the barn door with weathervane. The building therefore has a low - medium architectural interest.

Historic interest

The building dates from 1894 and has been modified throughout its life. As such it has low historic interest.

Stables

Archaeological interest

The L-shaped stable block dates to the late 19th / early 20th century. It was constructed as a purpose built block attached to the barn and, with the exception of a bathroom and staircase insertion, has been little altered. It has a low archaeological interest.

Architectural and artistic interest

The building is faced with shaped stone rubble to match the external appearance to the adjoining barn, with brick construction shown internally. The building therefore has a low architectural interest.

Historic interest

The building dates from the late 19th / early 20th century as a purpose built stable block. As such it has low historic interest.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The house has a medium heritage significance, mainly due to its age and association with an earlier farm. However, very few changes are proposed to the house, with the exception of the blocking of the inserted doorways between the house and the barn, which will be a minor positive impact.

- 8.2 The barn has a low heritage value, constructed as a combination threshing barn in 1894, but later altered through the insertion of a wall and upper floor. The proposals to convert it to a dwelling will see a further wall inserted between the central and eastern bays, as well as the conversion of the personnel doorways to the south elevation into windows. The first floor will see several walls inserted, but the first floor to the central bay mostly removed. The proposals will have a minor negative impact on the heritage value of the barn.
- 8.3 The stable block was constructed after the barn was rebuilt and was present by 1910. It has a low heritage value. The proposals will see a wall extended along the line of the barn and all internal walls being removed. At first floor level several walls shall be inserted. The proposals will have a negative impact on the heritage value of the block.
- 8.4 The house is the area that holds the most heritage significance and this area is not proposed to be negatively affected. As such, a level 2 building survey of the barn and stable block may be considered as mitigation to the proposals.

9. Statement of Indemnity

- 9.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report, however such facts and opinions may have been derived.
- 9.2 The author will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

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Appendix 1: Figures

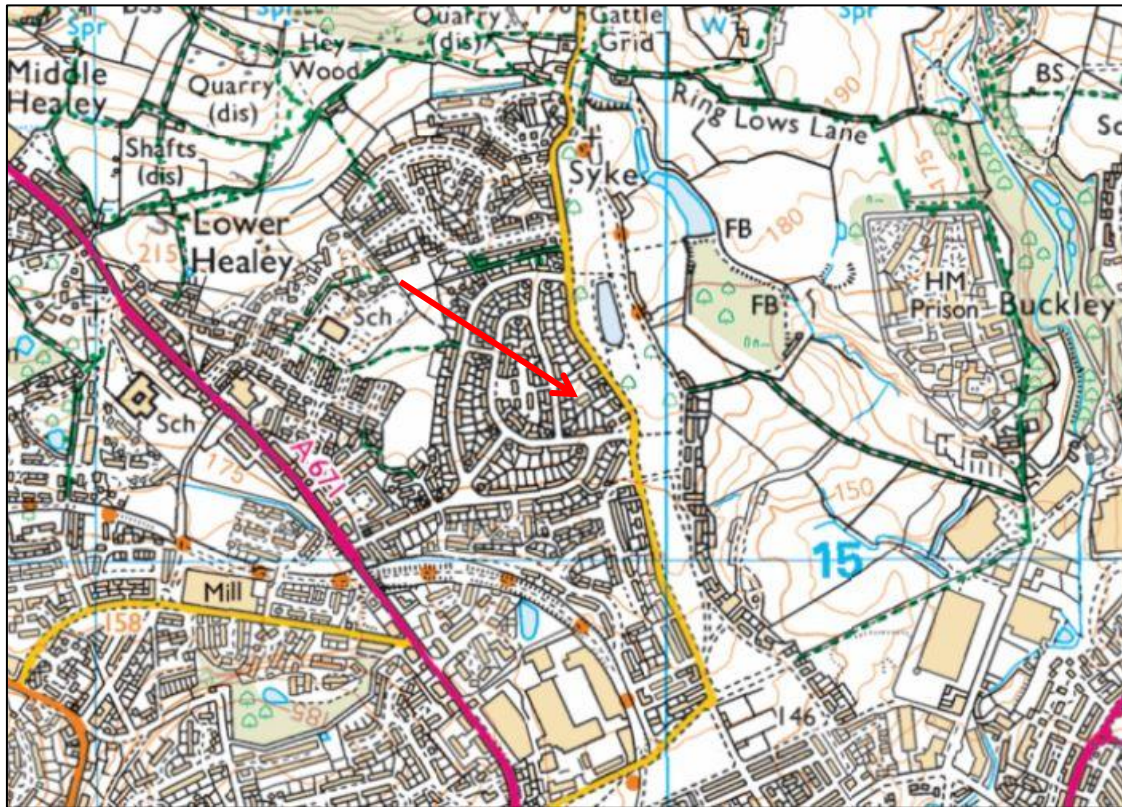


Figure 1: Location Plan (OS Licence Number: 100057911)



Figure 2: Site Plan (Courtesy of client)



Figure 3: 1786 Yates' map of Lancashire showing approximate site location

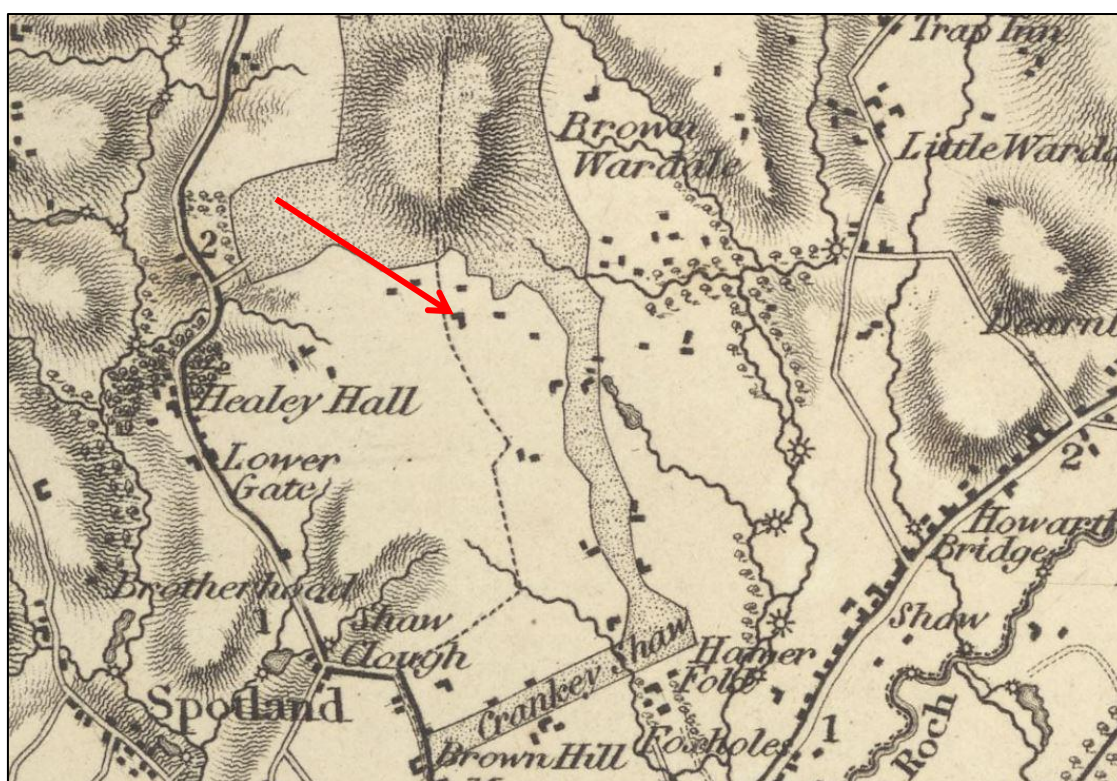


Figure 4: 1818 Greenwoods' map of Lancashire showing approximate site location

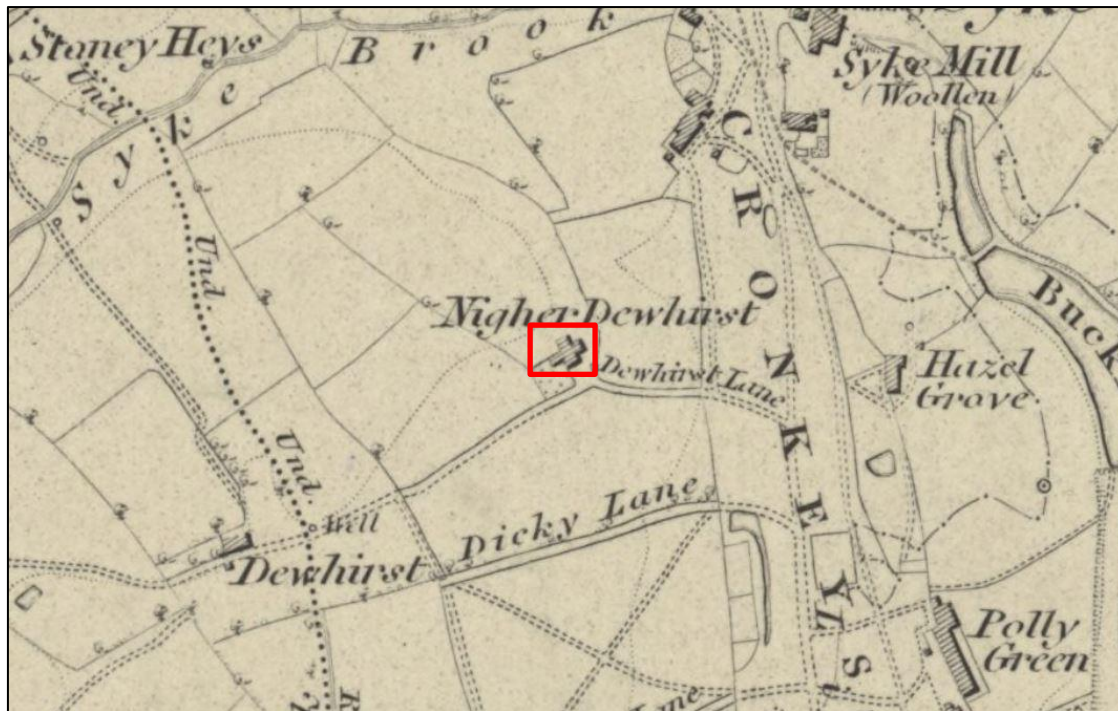


Figure 5: 1851 OS map Lancashire Sheet LXXXI

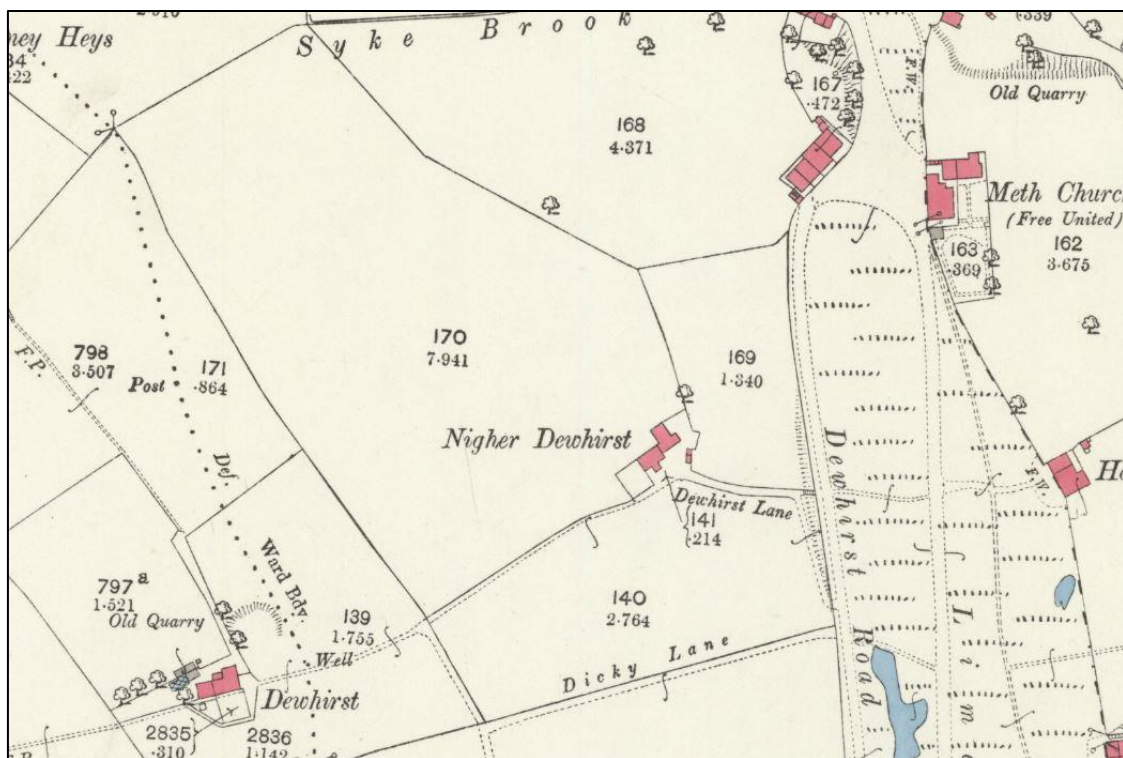


Figure 6: 1893 OS map Lancashire Sheet LXXXI.13

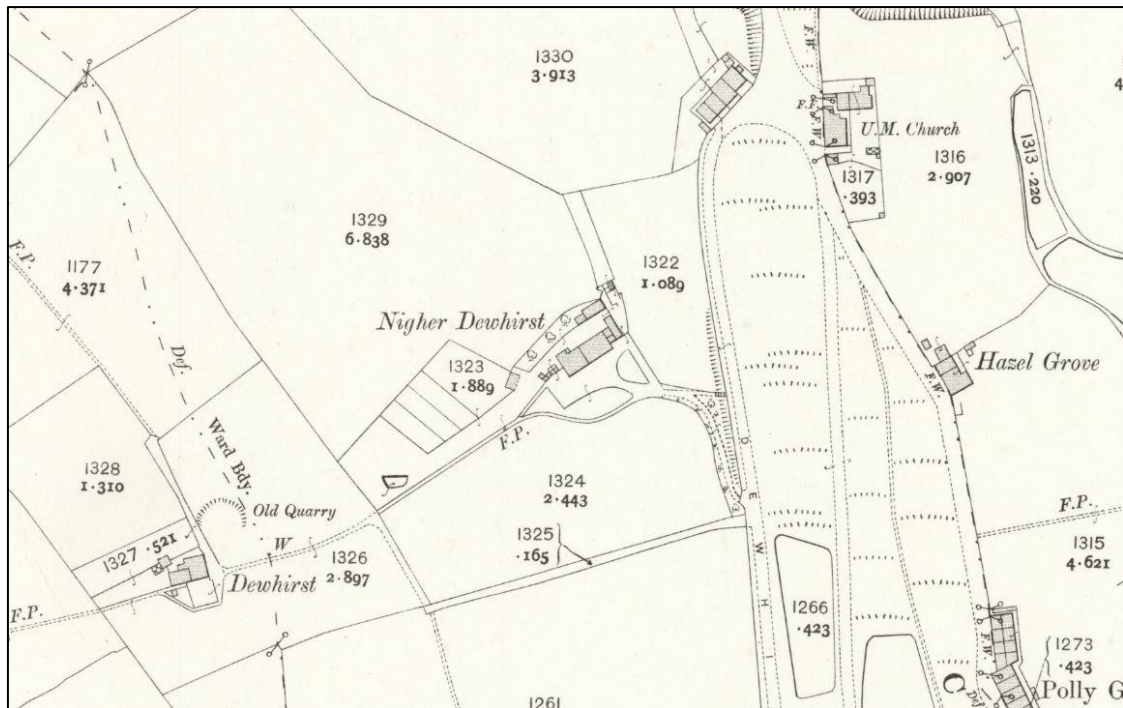


Figure 7: 1910 OS map Lancashire Sheet LXXXI.13

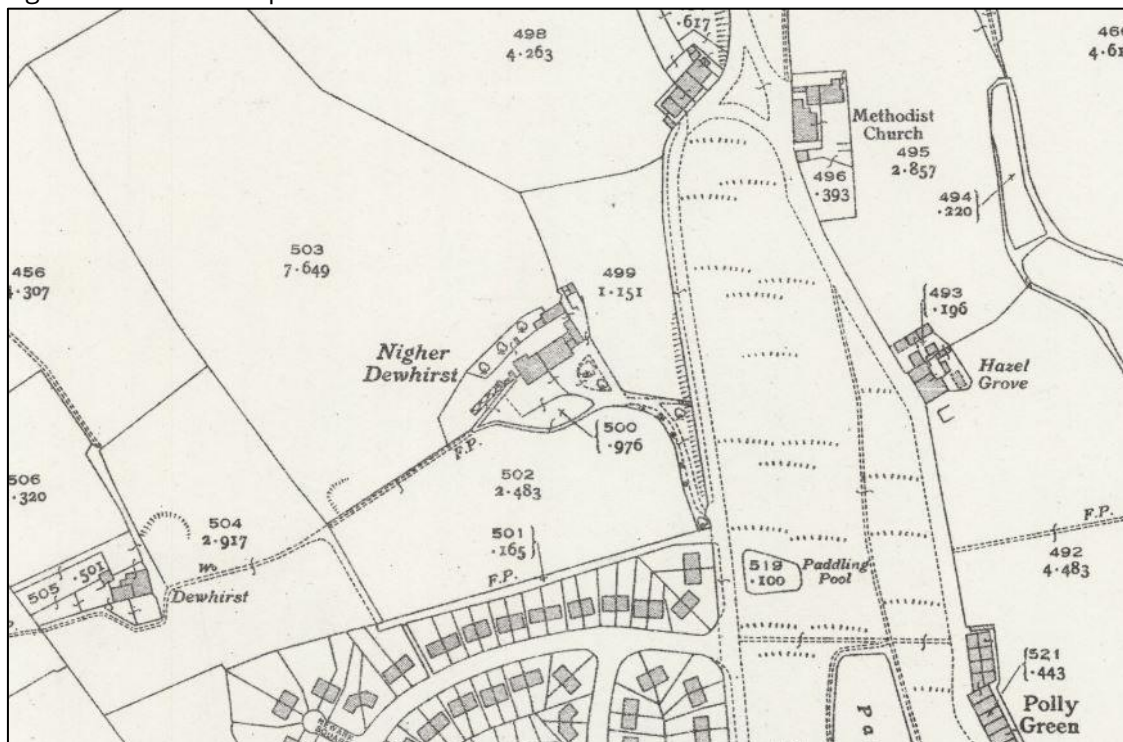


Figure 8: 1943 OS map Lancashire Sheet LXXXI.13

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 1: General shot of Dewhurst House



Plate 2: General shot of house and barn



Plate 3: South elevation of house



Plate 4: First floor window details



Plate 5: Bay window, stonework and quoins



Plate 6: South elevation of barn



Plate 7: Detail of barn door

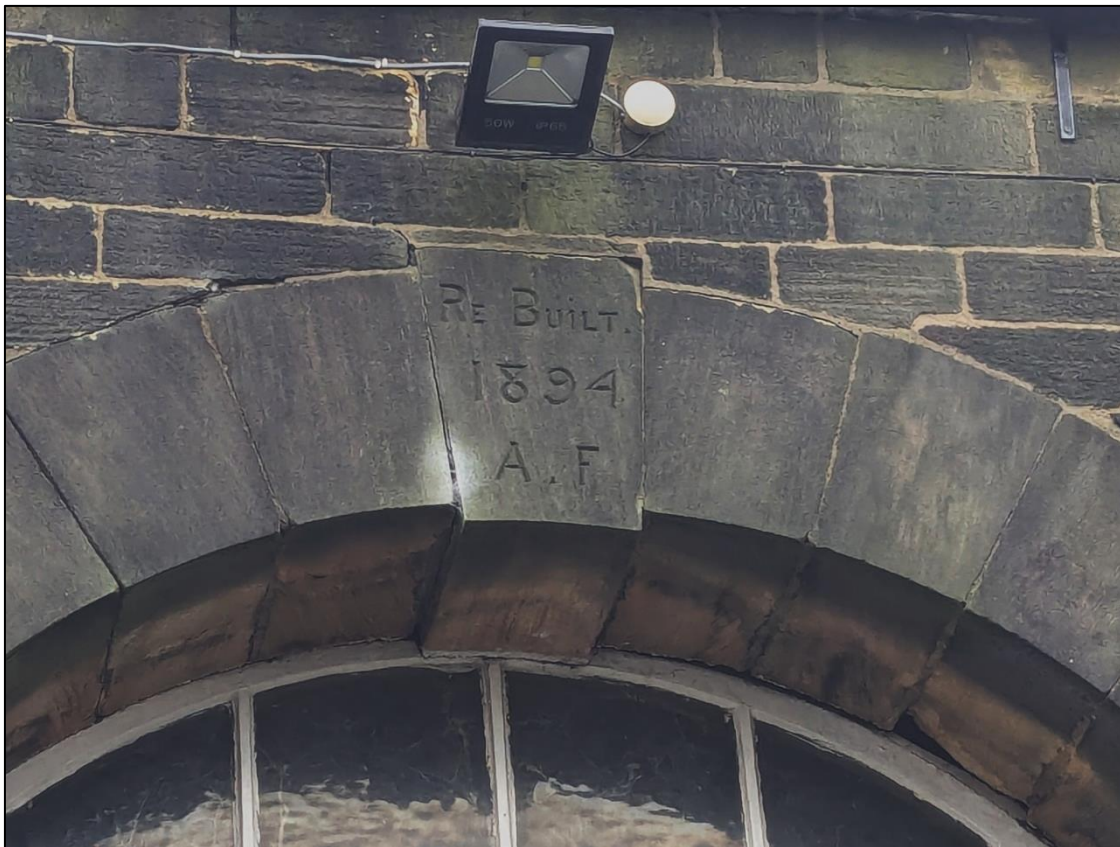


Plate 8: Detail of keystone



Plate 9: Western doorway with reused lintel bearing date 1684



Plate 10: Lintel detail



Plate 11: East end of barn showing doorway and window



Plate 12: South elevation of stable block



Plate 13: Modern windows



Plate 14: West elevation of stable block



Plate 15: Northern gable of stable block



Plate 16: Detail of chamfered corner



Plate 17: Rear elevation of stable block



Plate 18: Eastern end of barns rear elevation



Plate 19: Rear elevation of barn and house extension



Plate 20: Rear elevation of house



Plate 21: North elevation of projecting house extension



Plate 22: Double gable to west elevation of house

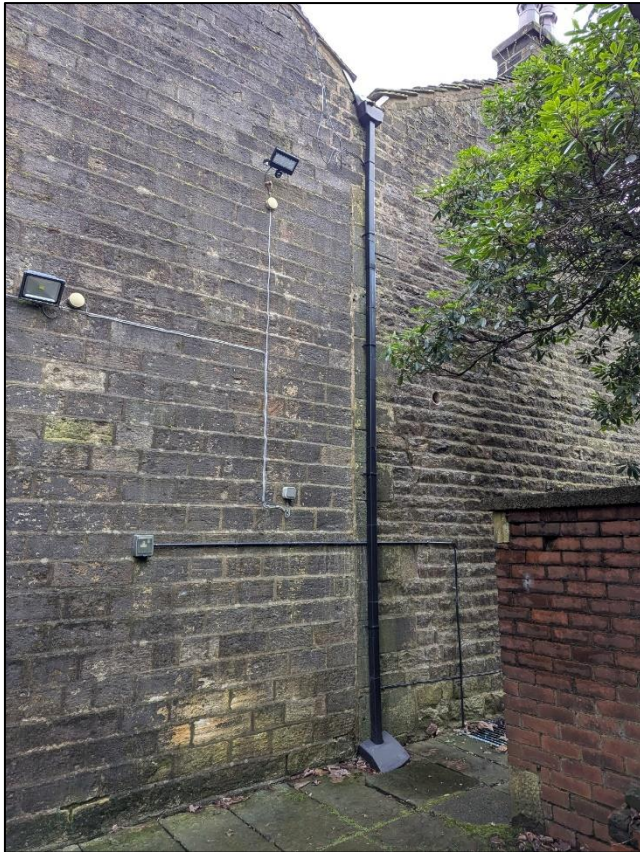


Plate 23: Straight joint with quoins to the right



Plate 24: General shot of living room showing plaster cornice and modernised walls and fireplace



Plate 25: Ceiling rose to dining room



Plate 26: Modern kitchen to house extension



Plate 27: Tiled floor to utility room within extension



Plate 28: Narrow cellar



Plate 29: First floor landing



Plate 30: First floor bedroom example



Plate 31: Living room in first floor of barn, accessed via the house



Plate 32: Ground floor of eastern bay of barn



Plate 33: Inserted brick wall to central bay



Plate 34: Eastern wall showing rough joint to stonework and inserted doorway to house



Plate 35: Detail of stonework with brick to the right



Plate 36: Inserted shower room to northern end



Plate 37: Inserted wall showing scars of removed walls

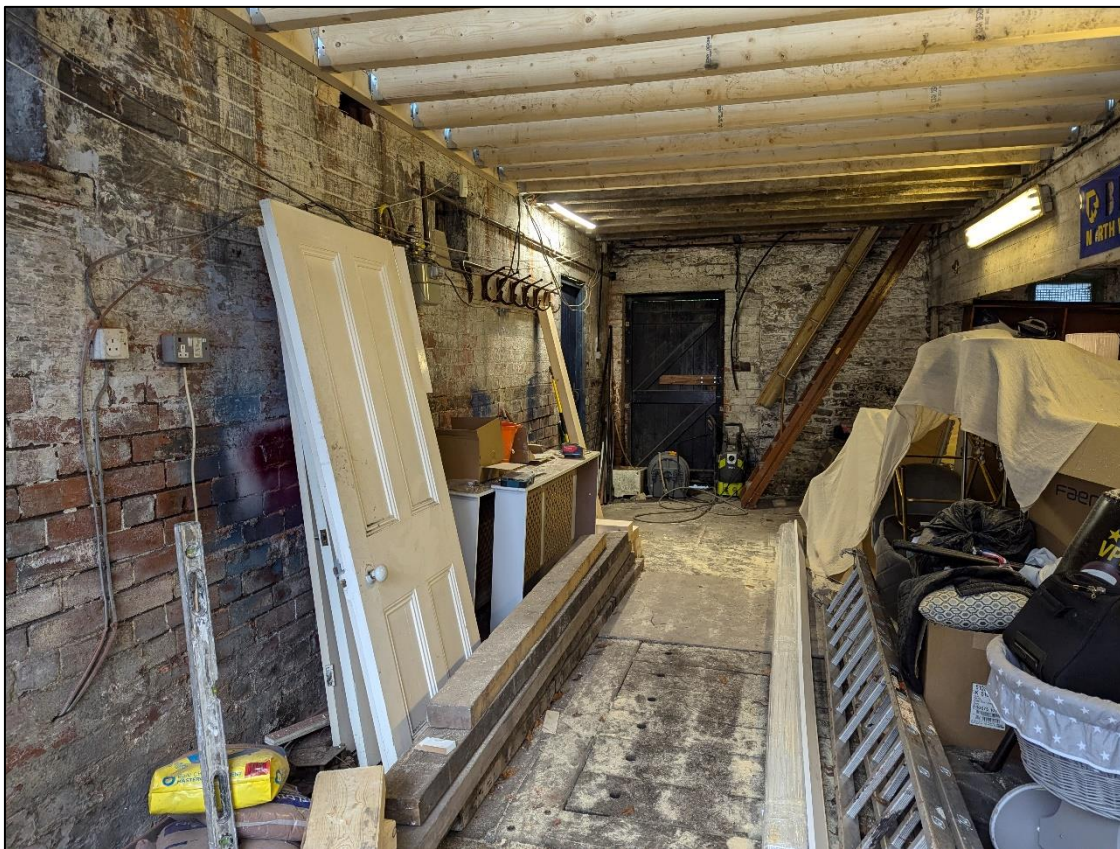


Plate 38: View of central bay from the barn door



Plate 39: View of eastern bay



Plate 40: Inserted inspection hatch in floor

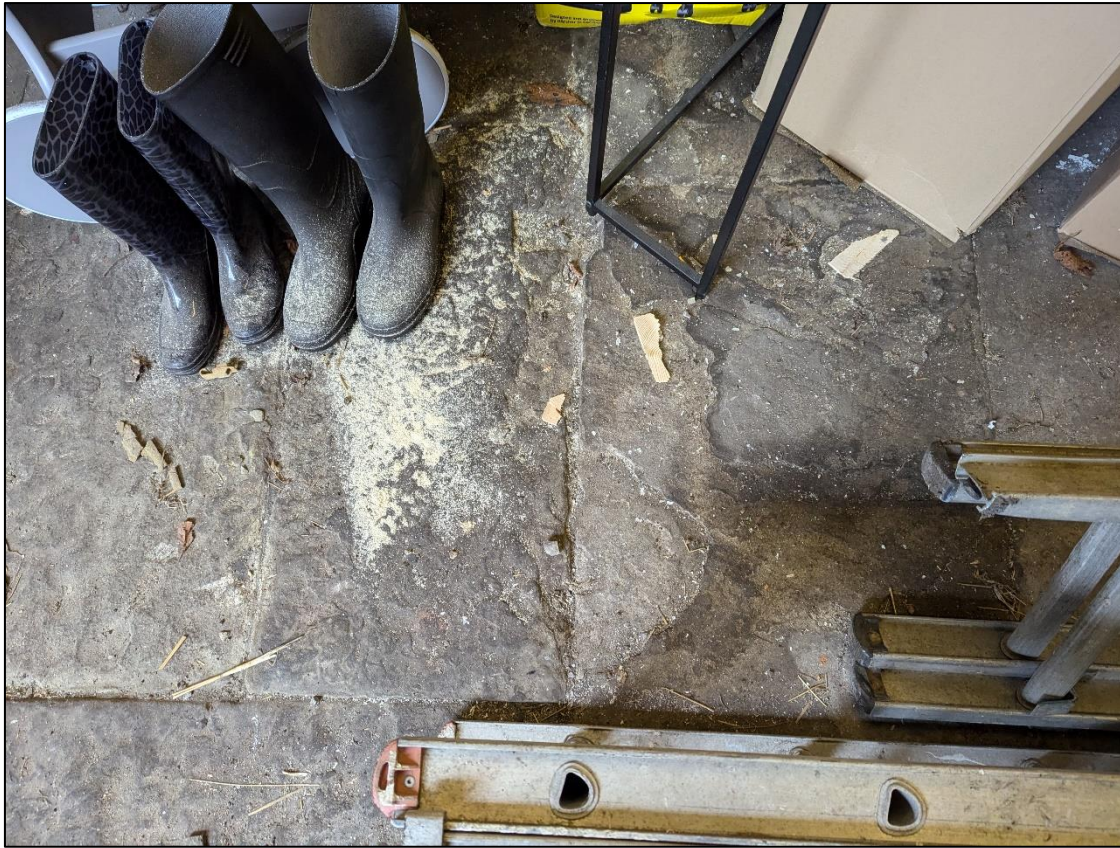


Plate 41: Flagged floor



Plate 42: Eastern bay



Plate 43: Timber beams with soffits to the underside

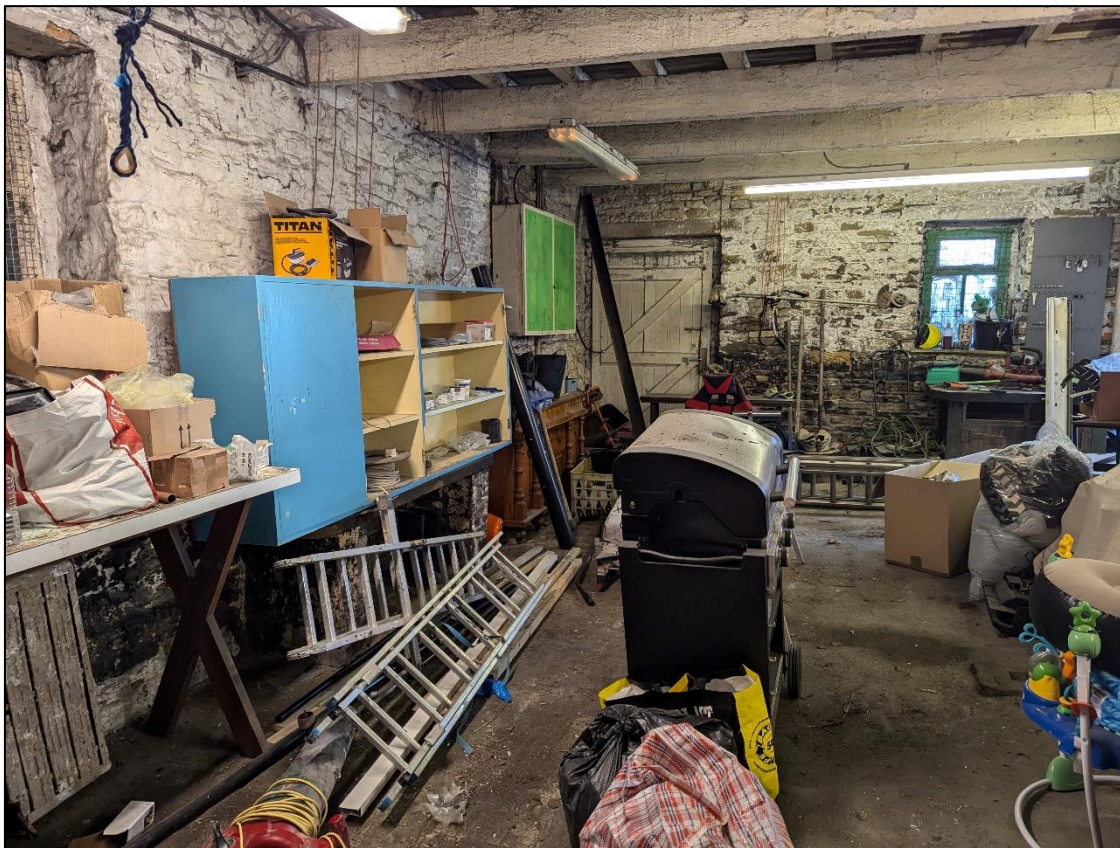


Plate 44: Eastern bay looking south



Plate 45: Inserted wall to western bay



Plate 46: First floor of barn showing inserted floor cutting across doorway



Plate 47: Inserted doorway to stable block



Plate 48: General shot of rough stone walling to east



Plate 49: Inserted ply wall to western bay



Plate 50: First floor of stable block showing brick construction



Plate 51: Window detail



Plate 52: First floor looking north

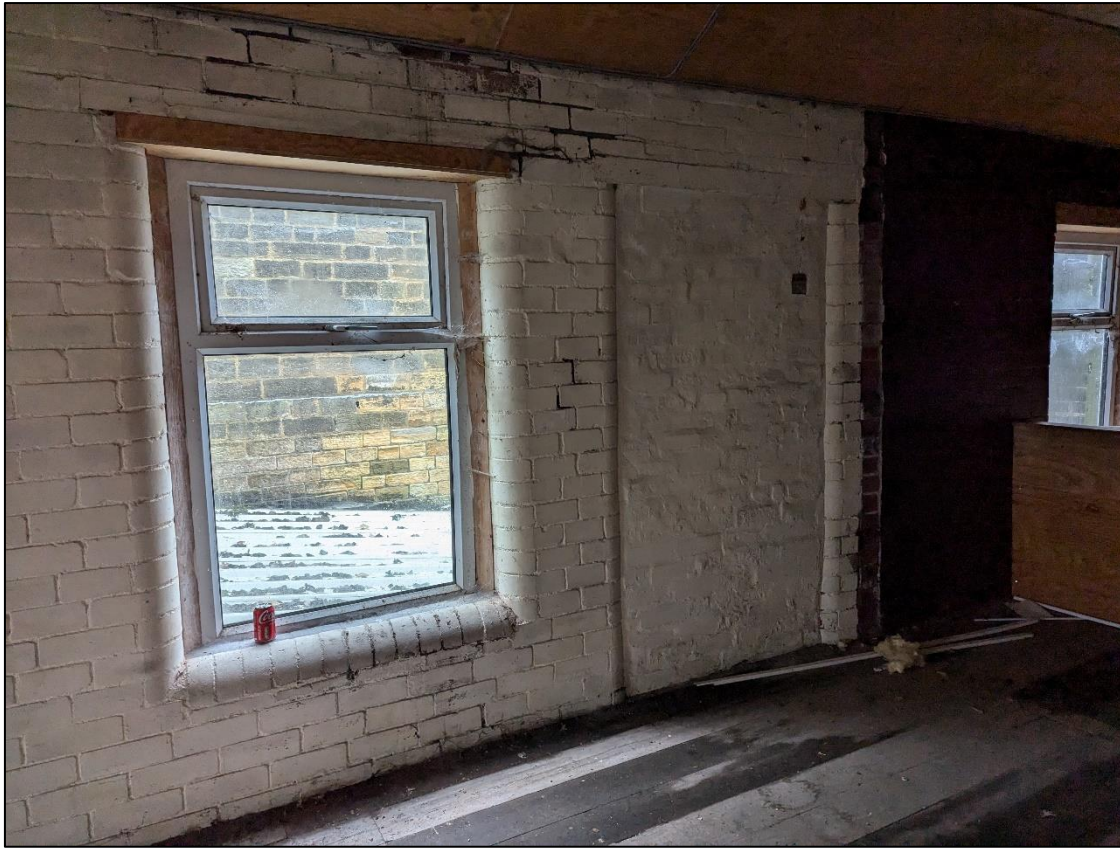


Plate 53: Blocked doorway



Plate 54: View south



Plate 55: Inserted staircase



Plate 56: Inserted bathroom at northern end of ground floor



Plate 57: General shot of stable room showing metal hay trough



Plate 58: Cobbled floor



Plate 59: Ceiling detail



Plate 60: Bullnosed bricks to window surround



Plate 61: Southernmost stable



Plate 62: Cobbled floor