Barn on West Side of Small Lane beside Number 747, New Hey Road, Outlane

Heritage Assessment

Introduction

This Heritage Assessment relates to a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry no. 1287186) off the south side of New Hey Road, Outlane, Kirklees. It has been prepared in order to address matters raised in Kirklees Council's Conservation & Design consultation response to initial proposals for the conversion and extension of this asset. The response required more detail on the significance of the 'Listed Farmhouse and Barn', particularly on their interiors. The aim of this assessment is to address these concerns, through an analysis of the historic mapping evidence, and through a more detailed study of the building itself. For ease of description, this assessment treats the Listed Building as if it were aligned north to south, though its orientation is more closely north-west to south-east.

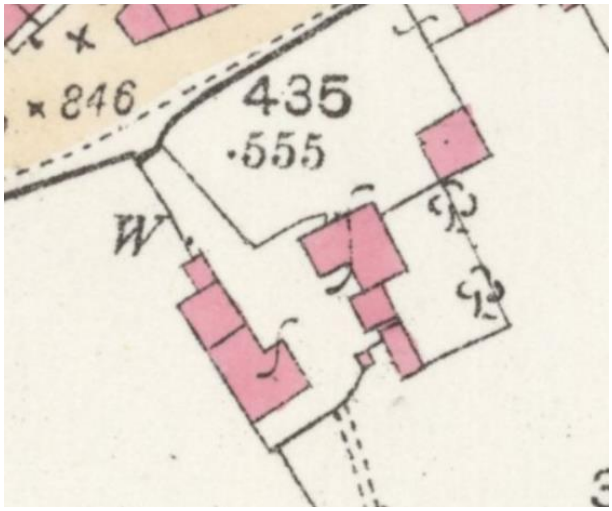
Historic Mapping

The Ordnance Survey Six Inch map, surveyed between 1848 and 1850, and published in 1854 (*1. below*), shows the outline of the stone building broadly as it is now. The map is on too small a scale to represent detail, but the building was clearly set on the west side of a farmyard, with a large block, almost certainly a farmhouse, facing it on the east side of the yard.

1. Map surveyed 1848-50; barn arrowed

Forty years later, the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch map, surveyed in 1888 and published in 1893, provides additional detail (*2. below*). The listed barn can be seen to have been divided into two units: a smaller northern part and a larger southern part, presumably representing different functions. The northern part also has a

narrower extension running northwards from its north wall. The building is recorded as being in the same land parcel as the yard to the east, along with the buildings on the east side of the yard which include a large L-shaped building, probably a farmhouse. Whatever its function, this last building has subsequently been demolished.



2. Map surveyed 1888

Building Description

The building which is the subject of this application is a single range, incorporating a now vacant dwelling at its north end, and a disused barn to the south. The description provided in the List Entry is both very brief and somewhat at odds with what can be seen today. In full, it records the building thus:

C18 or early C19. Hammer-dressed stone. Pitched stone-slate roof, catslide to east. Coped gables on cut kneelers. Former longhouse-type farmhouse. 2 ranges of sashes and door with 4 moulded panels in north end. Segment-headed barn doors in centre. Lean-to extension on east side at south end.

3. N wall from N

The first illustration of the present building (*3. above)*, showing part of the north wall, indicates the character of the external wall faces, with side alternate quoin stones, kneelers and coping, along with flat-faced mullioned windows. The stone courses are relatively neat but of uneven depth. The inner faces, shown below, have less regular coursing interspersed with larger, irregular boulders which might be field clearance stones. The external face of the west wall is hidden by render but the wall is clearly of stone, on the evidence of its inner face. The internal partition walls are a mixture

stone, brick and blockwork, reflecting change of use for the various spaces. The ground floors are concrete or earth, as far as can be seen under the accumulated building materials and debris.

The walls carry timber trusses which support the stone slate roof of the barn and continue into the dwelling to the north. The two trusses in the barn area are fully accessible (*4. below*), and have short kingposts set on collars. Further north, there is evidence for at least one similar truss in the southernmost first-floor rooms of the dwelling, though beyond that the arrangements could not be seen as the roof space was not accessible. In the two southern bays, the roof extends eastwards, in catslide fashion, to cover both a room projecting from the main east-side wall line, and the timber stairs giving access to a loft, which had probably been accessed originally by ladder.

4. Barn loft area, from S

The next illustration (*5. below)* shows the S gable end wall of the barn and its eastward extension. The only external opening in the S wall is a ventilator just below the apex of the gable. There is no evidence in the walling to suggest that the eastward extension under the catslide roof is an addition to the original building. The dilapidated single-storey shelter attached to the gable end wall is a 20th-century addition of no architectural significance, although it does reflect the changing requirements of the farm in the later 20th century, perhaps after demolition of other farm buildings elsewhere in the yard.

5. S elevation from SE

6. S end of E elevation from SE

The E wall of the extension to the barn (*6. above*) contains two doorways. The S one, at the corner of the building, is clearly original as its S jamb is tied into the quoin stones. The more northerly doorway is just as clearly an insertion, cut through the walling and provided with nothing more than a thin, flat stone lintel.

7. N end of E elevation from SE

Northwards, the ground floor has a large French window, evidently a 20th-century creation, and a four-light flat-face mullioned window beyond (*7. above*). At the N end of the elevation is a doorway with lintel and jambs in the same style as the one at the S end. The first floor has three, three-light flat-face mullioned windows.

The N gable wall is topped by coping stones and shaped kneelers. It also has two, two-light flat-face mullioned windows set one above the other on the building's main axis (*8. below*). There is a small building, roughly walled and roofed, attached to the E end of the gable. This was formerly a coal store.

The external elevation on the W side is obscured by render; but it contains three-light and two-light flat-face mullioned windows at ground and first floor levels (*9. below*).

The doorway through the W wall is roughly in the centre of the elevation, within a narrow lean-to extension that runs along part of the southern half of the elevation (*10. below*).

8. N gable wall from NW

9. W elevation from SW

10. W outshot from NW

Internally the barn at the S end has a hay-loft with a timber floor extending through the southernmost two bays as far as the brick S wall of the dwelling (*4. above*). The ground-floor is obscured by piles of supplies and equipment but the quoin stones of the corner of the eastward extension to the barn can be seen close to the brick partition wall which forms the S wall of the dwelling. The wall separating the extension from the barn appears to be an insertion (*11. below*).

11. Barn ground floor from SW

12. N ground-floor room from SE

The interiors of the two ground-floor rooms of the dwelling seem to have been fully refurbished in the mid-20th century. The N room contains the stairs to the first floor, set against the W wall (*12. above*). The chimney stack is set in the middle of the S wall, but there is nothing left of any fireplace pre-dating the mid-20th century (*13. below*). The S ground-floor room has no features of interest (*14. below*), but the bedroom above seems to be roofed with a truss similar to those in the barn area (*15. below*).

13. N living room of dwelling from NE

14. S living room of dwelling from NE

15. SE bedroom of dwelling from NW

Analysis

The Listed building and its various additions are now unused, and are slowly falling into disrepair. With changing times and the construction of the nearby M62, they are not viable as functioning farm buildings in this location. A major part of conservation is sustainability, and allowing buildings to remain useful can be the best way to preserve them for the future.

There are several discrepancies between the List Entry description and the building as it now exists. These have to be considered before its heritage significance can be determined. The List Entry mentions the stone walling, the stone roof slates and the coping stones and kneelers. It also mentions 'segment-headed barn doors in the centre', a description which suggests that the main barn opening was in the centre of the E elevation and had a segmental arch. There is now no sign of this arch. In addition, the List Entry records, without specifying their locations, two 'ranges of sashes... in northern end'. The building now has no sash windows. Instead, it has numerous flat-face mullioned windows that are not mentioned in the List Entry.

These inconsistencies have two possible explanations. Either there has been a confusion of two different buildings during the Listing fieldwork in the 1970s; or the building has undergone significant alteration since the field description was prepared. The latter explanation is the more likely one, in the light of verbal information provided locally by a former resident. This indicates that, until the later 1970s, the dwelling part was confined to a smaller area than now, at the building's N end. It comprised one main ground floor room with stairs against the N wall leading to two rooms above. In the later 1970s the domestic area was extended southwards into the barn, creating a second main room on the ground floor and two further bedrooms on the first floor, accessed from the current staircase against the W wall. It was also at this time that the sash windows were replaced by the flat-face mullion windows, and the barn door by the French windows.

This information is consistent with the building's representation on the map of 1888 (*2. above*), which shows its division into two parts, but with a dividing line further N than the present division between barn and dwelling; in fact, on the line of the chimney stack which sits in the wall between the current two ground-floor rooms. It also accounts for some original jamb stones of what must have been the main barn doorway on the N side of the French windows; and for the unusual positions of the windows set axially in the building's N end wall.

The extension southwards of domestic accommodation also provides a context for the erection of the lean-to extension against the southern part of the W wall. It was accessed from the SW corner of the new southern living room, and in turn gave access to the barn, part of which had been converted into stables at the same time. It reflects the changing needs of the occupants in the late 1970s, as does the shelter to the S, attached to the gable end wall of the Listed barn.

These observations suggest that significant changes occurred between the relisting field visit, perhaps in the mid-1970s, and the formal Listing in September 1978. The

flat-face mullions are clearly stones cut in the later 18th or early 19th century, but they must have been derived from a different building and set in their current positions in the 1970s.

Heritage Significance

The List Entry claims that the building is a 'Former longhouse-type farmhouse', referring to a type of farmhouse that was thought at the time of Listing to represent the standard medieval peasant farmhouse. This description is no longer tenable, as it has since been recognised that longhouses were late medieval types confined to specific parts of the British Isles, areas that do not include West Yorkshire (see M. Gardiner 'Vernacular Buildings and the Development of the Later Medieval Domestic Plan in England', *Medieval Archaeology* 44 (2000), 159-79).

The relationship between the dwelling and the barn seems at first glance to be more in keeping with the 'laithe house' tradition of West Yorkshire (see P. Smith 'The Long-house and the Laithe-house', in I.Ll.Foster and L. Alcock, *Culture and Environment* (1963), 415-37). But there are two reasons for doubting that this was a laithe house. First, such houses, incorporating dwelling, cattle byre and hay barn, provided in one building the full range of facilities required for a small farming enterprise focused on animal husbandry. In the case of the building under consideration, the 1888 map (*2. above*), shows that the Listed building was just one of several buildings set along the sides of a rectangular farmyard, of which the L-shaped building at the NE corner was almost certainly a separate farmhouse.

Secondly, the laithe house was 'a house-and-byre homestead conceived as a single building from the start' (Smith, above, p.430). The Listed building does not seem to have been one of these, as there is no indication that the northern end of the building was originally intended to provide domestic accommodation. The List Entry's reference to sash windows suggests it was a mid or late 19th-century domestic conversion, probably creating a small dwelling for the family of a farm labourer. Nothing survives architecturally to signify that dwelling except, probably, the chimney stack; and none of this speculation adds to the significance of the asset.

This conclusion, based on a more detailed assessment, enables further information to be provided in relation to Conservation & Design's consultation responses to the initial proposals, and in support of the current proposals:

1. None of the mullioned windows appears to have been installed in this building earlier than the late 1970s. They do not, therefore, contribute to the building's heritage significance.

2. No features of heritage significance remain in that part of the building which is currently a house, other than at least one roof truss.

3. On the basis of historic map evidence, the narrow, northern extension to the house, shown on the 1888 map (*2. above*), was at least twice as long as the current

extension, which seems to have been constructed as a coal store at some point after 1929, no doubt using materials from the original extension.

4. The single-storey extension on the W side of the building, proposed for demolition, dates to the late 1970s or later, as its function relates to the additional living room which was created at that time. It detracts from the character of the historic building.

5. The revised proposals relating to the adaptation of the single-storey extension attached to the S end of the Listed building will enable the character of the historic barn to be appreciated much more fully, when viewed from the S and SE, than would have been possible with the earlier proposals.

6. The revised proposals relating to the adaptation of this S end extension also offer the opportunity to express the farmstead's more recent past, particularly through the use of materials which contrast with those of the original barn, as the extension currently does.

7. The revised, narrower opening in the S wall of the barn preserves a larger area of the original gable wall than in the earlier proposals.

In conclusion, the heritage significance of this asset is perhaps less than might first appear. Nevertheless, it still has an important story to tell, and the current proposals seem well suited to telling it.

Stuart Wrathmell, BA, PhD, FSA, MCIfA

06 April 2023