

BLACK HOUSE FARM, DALE HEAD, LANCASHIRE: HERITAGE STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED EXTENSION TO FARMHOUSE (TO INCORPORATE REDUNDANT OUTBUILDINGS), CONVERSION OF DETACHED OUTBUILDING TO HOME OFFICE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW DETACHED PLANT BUILDING

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been commissioned by the owners of Black House Farm, Alistair McEntyre and Anita King, to support their planning and listed building consent applications to RVBC, for various works close to the grade II listed farmhouse at the site. The proposals are shown on the architect John Wharton's drawing, number 2873.2.
- 1.2 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, this document assesses the heritage significance of the farmhouse and outbuildings at the site together with their setting, and the impact of the proposed development. It has been produced by Stephen Haigh MA, buildings archaeologist, following a site visit on 23 December 2019.

2 Site location

320200328P

- 2.1 Black House Farm is an isolated farmstead standing in Easington civil parish in the area known as Dale Head, at NGR SD 72985 54977, and at about 190m above sea level. The nearest neighbouring settlement is about 500m away to the south. The landscape in this area was radically changed by the flooding of the upper Hodder Valley in 1932, to create the present Stocks Reservoir, but the majority of it remains essentially marginal agricultural land.
- 2.2 The farmstead includes a number of buildings, both traditional and modern. The farmhouse itself stands at the east of the site, with small domestic and agricultural outbuildings close to its west elevation, and with a large traditional, L-shaped barn further to the south-west. There is a small detached outbuilding to the north-west of the farmhouse, and a large, open-fronted modern shed stands to the north of these.

3 Present function

- 3.1 The farm comprises about 150 acres, which are extensively farmed by the present owners, chiefly as grazing land, with an emphasis on landscape and habitat conservation. The farmhouse is the family home, while a number of historic and modern farm buildings support the agricultural activities.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 Permission is sought to enlarge the domestic accommodation through the conversion and extension of outbuildings on the west side of the farmhouse, which would then be joined to them. All existing pre-twentieth century components of the group would be retained, and there would be some new-build to link the group, as well as to extend it to the south and west.
- 4.2 The application also seeks to convert the small detached, open-fronted, twentieth century shed to a home office, and to construct a new, single-storey plant building to the east of the farmhouse.

5 Relevant heritage assets

- 5.1 "Black House Farmhouse" has been a grade II listed building of special architectural or historic interest since 1983¹, and is the only designated heritage asset at the site.
- 5.2 The listed building description for the house reads:
House, early-to-mid C19th. Squared watershot sandstone with stone slate roof. Double-pile plan with end stacks. 2 storeys, 3 bays, with projecting furrowed quoins. Windows and door have plain stone surrounds. Windows sashed with glazing bars. Over the door is an illegible datestone with plain stone surround. Eaves project at gables on shaped purlins. At the rear are sashed windows with plain stone surrounds.
- 5.3 All those buildings included within the current proposals can be considered to form part of the listed building's curtilage, and so subject to the same legislation. Buildings of post-1948 date do not form part of its curtilage.

6 Forest of Bowland AONB

- 6.1 The site's location within the Forest of Bowland AONB is also a material factor in the heritage assessment of the site and the proposals, although the AONB is not a designated heritage asset. The AONB covers about 75% of the local planning authority area and is designated for its natural beauty, although the landscape's historic and cultural associations are identified as contributing to its special qualities.

¹ National Heritage List for England, ref no 1362268 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1362268>

7 Planning background

- 7.1 The only relevant historic planning application appears to relate to the construction of the present open-fronted agricultural storage shed, to the north-west of the farmhouse, in 1998 (3/1998/023N), although a comprehensive search of previous planning applications has not been carried out.

8 History of the site

- 8.1 Black House Farm formed part of the Hammerton Hall estate in the late medieval period, and was referred to as "*Blakhous*" in 1538²; there is a large collection of deeds relating to the property held at Lancashire Archives, the earliest of which is from 1546³. It later became part of the Slaidburn estate, until sold off in the mid-nineteenth century. It forms one of numerous farmsteads in the upper Hodder Valley district, where dispersed rural settlement has predominated throughout the post-medieval period.
- 8.2 The present farmhouse at Black House Farm is, as the listed building entry suggests, of mid nineteenth century date, with the now legible date-stone reading 1849, and bearing the initials GW. The house is believed to have then completely replaced an earlier one, apparently with a T-shaped plan, according to the first edition 1:10560 Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in 1847 (below). The origins and details of that earlier house remain unknown. The distinctive, large L-shaped barn to the south-west of the house is likely to be slightly earlier than the present house, perhaps early nineteenth century, as it was extant by 1847.



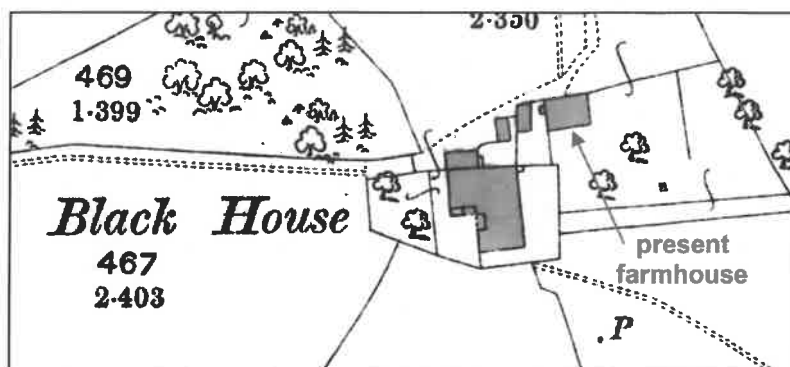
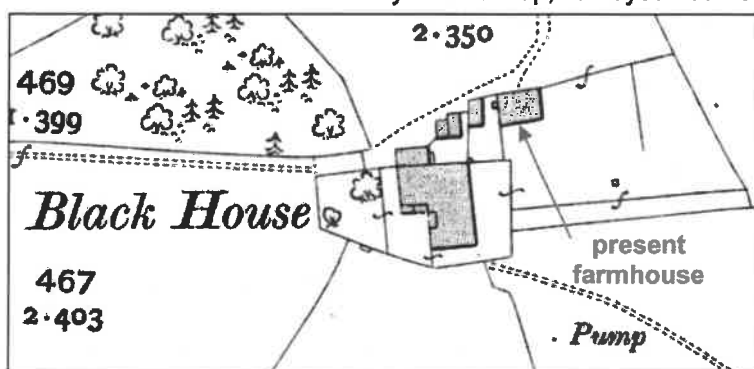
Ordnance Survey 1:10560 map, surveyed 1847⁴

² Smith, A H 1961 *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire Part 6* (EPNS 35)

³

<https://archivecat.lancashire.gov.uk/calmview/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=DDKW%2f1&pos=4>

⁴ Yorkshire, sheet 148, published 1850

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, surveyed 1892-3⁵Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, revised 1907⁶

9 Description of the buildings

Farmhouse

- 9.1 The farmhouse is set within the north-east part of the historic farmstead, and at the north-west corner of what is now its garden. This enclosure has dry-stone walls to most of the boundaries. Very close to the west of the house is a small group of single storey, stone-built domestic and agricultural outbuildings, perhaps including wash-house and dairy originally, which are contemporaneous with, or post-date the house.
- 9.2 The farmhouse's external appearance and plan-form display many aspects very typical of the centrally-planned, double pile farmhouses built throughout much of England in great numbers from about the mid-eighteenth century, at this level of society. Its almost square plan and nearly symmetrical frontage are characteristic of such houses. The front openings are large and essentially classical in proportion, and are matched by similar but smaller windows to the rear, where the stair window is a fundamental indicator of the internal arrangements. The mid-nineteenth century origins are apparent from the cyma-moulded stone eaves brackets to the front elevation, and similar purlin ends to

⁵ Yorkshire, sheet 148.14, published 1894

⁶ Yorkshire, sheet 148.14, published 1909

the gables, but there is relatively little ornamentation otherwise. A small, mid-twentieth century porch with mass concrete roof adjoins the west elevation.

Outbuildings

- 9.3 A narrow, concreted yard separates the farmhouse from the existing single-storey outbuilding to the west, with a wall and doorway linking the two, in line with the rear of the farmhouse. The outbuilding is built from rubble with squared sandstone quoins, blue slate roof, and tile ridge. It has two entrances facing the farmhouse: the north room may have been a dairy and the south room appears to have been a wash-house, as a flue-pipe survives in its south-west corner. Attached to the south end is a poorly built twentieth-century lean-to, with rubble walls and asbestos-cement roof.
- 9.4 Another small outbuilding stands to the west of the domestic range, and may have been a pigsty, built in the second half of the nineteenth century, but now redundant and disused. It too is built from sandstone rubble, but the roof covering has been replaced with asbestos-cement sheeting. There is a pair of doorways in the east side, one of them with a re-used chamfered lintel, bearing the initials: "RS ES RS", together with the date of 1711. The initials are those of the Shaw family: Richard Shaw let the property to his son Richard in that year, and the stone itself is likely to have come from the farmhouse demolished in about 1849, to make way for the current dwelling. In other aspects, this outbuilding is not of particular interest; it has a small concreted yard on its east side. A lean-to garage of concrete block walls has been added on its west side, open to the north, which diminishes its aesthetic value.
- 9.5 Another, detached outbuilding stands about 8m to the north of the pigsty. It comprises a crudely built, open-fronted shed, likely to date from the second half of the twentieth century (not shown on the 1909 OS map). It consists of two mortared rubble walls projecting from the dry-stone boundary of the adjacent wood, the three of which together support a low, single-pitch roof of asbestos-cement sheets.

10 Statement of significance

- 10.1 The farmstead, as a complex of various buildings set within an historic landscape, has heritage significance, as do some of the individual structures within it. There is good historical value for the site, because of the abundance of documentation relating to its occupation and ownership throughout much of the post-medieval period.
- 10.2 The farmhouse holds the principal significance, as is reflected in its grade II listed status. It is a good example of a mid-nineteenth century farmhouse, with

central stair-hall plan, and unaltered fenestration to front and rear. The date-stone also lends value. The modern porch attached to the west gable detracts from its significance, because of its flat, concrete roof.

10.3 The range of domestic outbuildings close to the west side of the house contributes to the farmstead, as a mainly nineteenth century, traditionally-built group, but it is not of special individual importance. Similarly, the likely pigsty beyond it is traditionally-built and of a similar date, with the only particular feature of note being the re-sited 1711 date-stone.

10.4 The detached open-fronted shed to the north is not of heritage significance. It is of relatively recent date, badly built, and has a modern, non-traditional roof.

11 Impact of proposals

11.1 The main proposal represents a modest enlargement of the dwelling, which would be achieved principally through the conversion of existing, partly redundant outbuildings. There would be negligible physical impact on the historic fabric of the listed farmhouse, and a very minor impact on its setting. There would also be some positive impact, resulting from the removal of the incongruous flat-roofed porch, and its replacement with the new linking structure, of a higher quality design, more sympathetic to the historic farmhouse. A positive impact would also result through the incorporation of the partly redundant and deteriorating historic outbuildings, in particular of the pigsty with its 1711 date-stone. This building would remain distinct from the other parts of the proposals, by virtue of the narrow link attaching it to the wash-house/dairy. All existing components of the new residential area would retain their existing roof profiles, so that their diverse origins would remain apparent, and all doorways would be retained, meaning that their historic forms would persist within the converted/extended structure.

11.2 The southward extension of the domestic outbuildings would take place within that part of the farmstead already visually enclosed by the dominant buildings of the farmhouse and barn. Its low, single-storey outline would be entirely subservient to both of these, and so it would represent an acceptable level of incremental change.

11.3 Conversion of the existing detached, open-fronted shed or store to a home office would make use of a poorly-built modern building, without enlargement of floor area. (It is quite likely that the shed post-dates 1948, so would not form part of the listed building's curtilage.) Its proximity to the large, recent, agricultural shed also means that it has far more visual association with the latter, than with the traditional, historic buildings within the group. Modest design and traditional materials mean there would be no impact on heritage significance arising.

- 11.4 The new plant building proposed to be built to the north-east of the farmhouse would be traditionally-built, and set a sufficient distance (approximately 25m) from it for there to be no heritage impact. It would be a modest, plain, stone building which would sit easily at the perimeter of the traditional farmstead, without visual intrusion. Together with the nature of the proposed domestic extension, there would be no significant encroachment on the farmhouse's setting or a reduction of its prominence within the group.
- 11.5 As far as the effect on the AONB is concerned, the relatively small scale of the proposals, and their sympathetic designs, to be executed in traditional materials, mean there would be no meaningful impact on this entity.

Stephen Haigh Buildings Archaeologist, MA
09 January 2020

photographs below



Photo 1: Farmhouse, and site of proposed extension to left



Photo 2: Yard between farmhouse and outbuildings, with modern porch at right

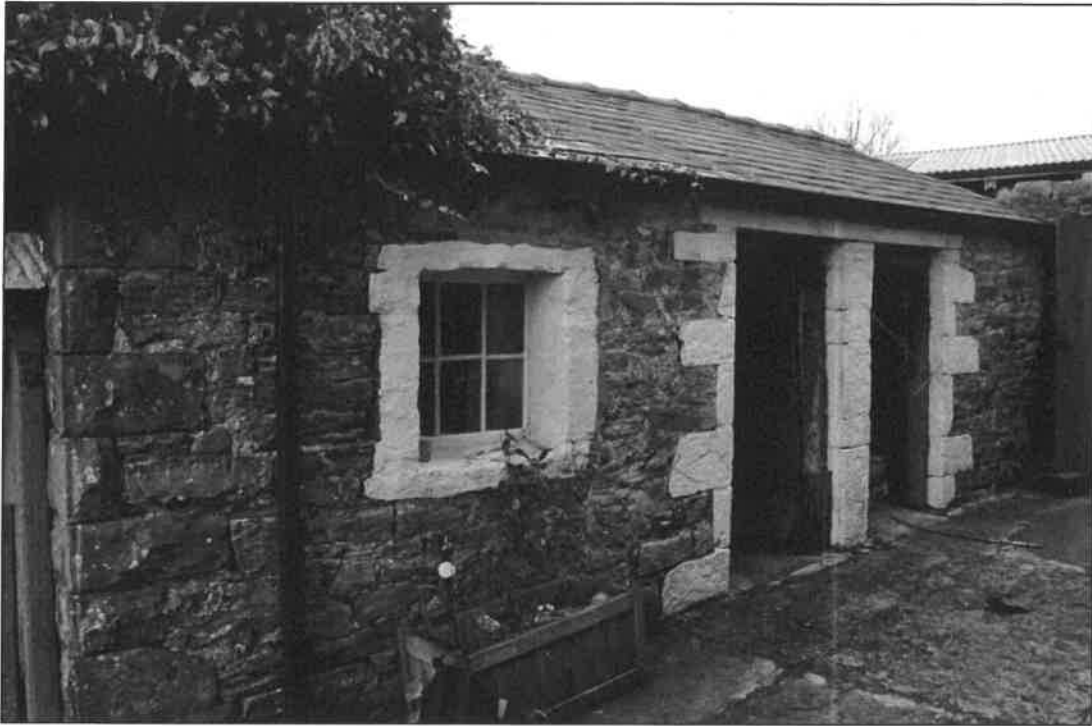


Photo 3: Domestic outbuildings (wash-house/dairy), to be incorporated within proposed extension



Photo 4: Rear view of domestic (left) and agricultural (right) outbuildings, to be incorporated within proposed extension



Photo 5: Agricultural outbuilding to be incorporated within proposed extension (re-used, dated lintel over left-hand doorway)

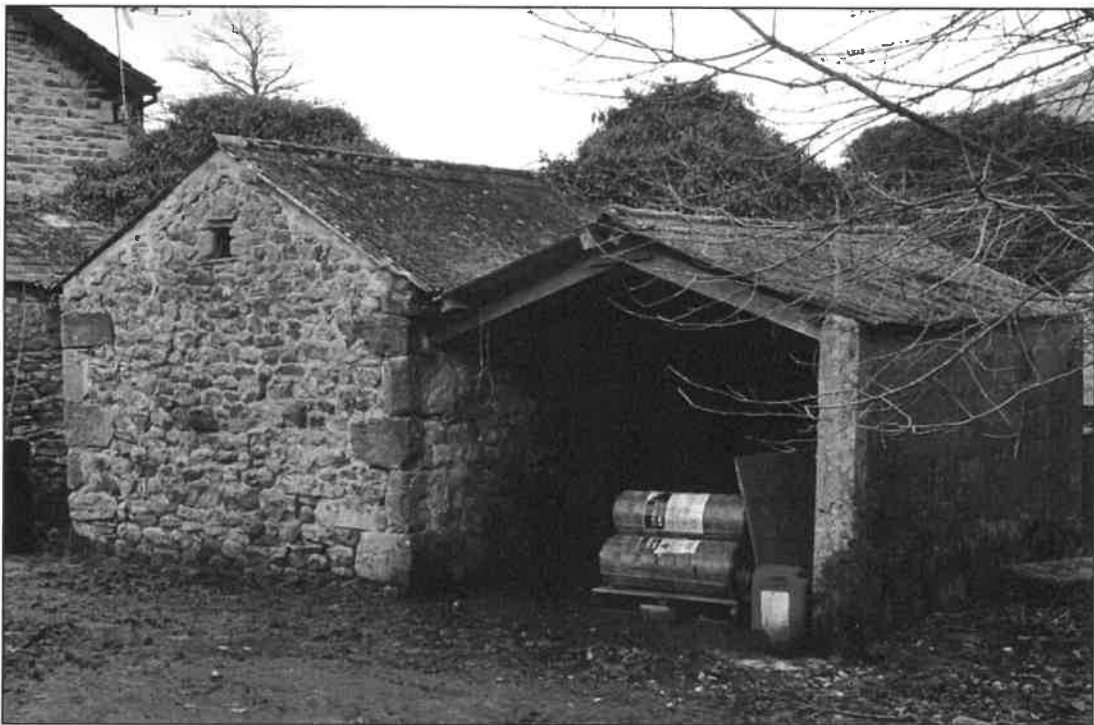


Photo 6: Rear view of agricultural outbuilding to be incorporated within proposed extension; garage at right is modern



Photo 7: Detached, modern, open-fronted shed proposed as home office