

Heritage Statement
to support planning application
for conversion of redundant farm buildings
at Fooden Hall, Bolton-by-Bowland

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement supports a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the conversion of redundant farm buildings to the north-east of the grade II* listed Fooden Hall, and has been written by Stephen Haigh Buildings Archaeologist, who has also advised on the scheme design. The work was commissioned by the owner and applicant CWS Farm, through its agent John Willcock, and a site visit was made on 10 December 2024.

2 Relevant heritage assets

- 2.1 Fooden Hall is a grade II* listed building, first listed in 1954, and described in the National Heritage List's official entry¹ as:

House, late C17th. Slobbered rubble with stone slate roof. 2 storeys with 2-storey gabled porch. Windows mullioned on ground floor, mullioned and transomed on 1st floor, with outer chamfer and inner hollow chamfer, and with hoods. To the left of the porch is one of 5 lights, to the right one of 6 lights, both with king mullions. On the 1st floor is a 6-light window to the left, with one of 8 lights to the right. On the 1st floor of the porch is a 12-light window, with 4 lights on each return wall. The outer doorway has a cyma-moulded surround with segmental arched head and moulded imposts. The inner doorway is moulded with tudor-arched head. Chimney in line with porch. The right-hand gable has a 4-light window on ground and 1st floors, with a blocked 3-light attic window. At the rear (south-west) is an outshut. Its north-west wall has a chamfered doorway with tudor-arched head, a 3-light mullioned window on the ground floor and a one-light window on the 1st floor. Interior. The right-hand room has a wide chamfered fireplace with a segmental arch having masons' marks on the voussoirs. The ceiling beams are chamfered with cyma stops. A chamfered doorway with triangular head leads to the outshut.

- 2.2 Historic England describe Grade II* listed buildings as "*particularly important buildings of more than special interest*", which make up only about 5.8% of all listed buildings.
- 2.3 Fooden Hall has an extremely well-preserved 17th century exterior (particularly on the south-east front and north-east side) which is almost entirely unencumbered by modern paraphernalia. The contributions to its setting made by the small, walled, front garden, and its situation facing onto a shallow valley and beck are considerable.
- 2.4 The farm buildings proposed for conversion form a linear range comprising two main structures, separated from the Hall by a trackway, and standing roughly in line with it, and they too make a very strong contribution to its setting (photos 1 &

¹ NHL entry 1072201 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1072201>

2, below). Public footpaths pass along both sides of the farm buildings, increasing their visual prominence.

- 2.5 The site forms part of a hamlet which also includes the grade II listed Fooden Hall Farmhouse, but the proximity of this other heritage asset is not considered directly relevant here, given the dominance of Fooden Hall itself, and the spatial, visual, and functional separation between the grade II farmhouse and the application site.

3 Historic development of the farm buildings

- 3.1 There are two principal, stone-built farm buildings proposed for conversion into residential units 1 and 2; a third, partly brick-built and derelict, would be adapted to form a parking area to the east of these.
- 3.2 The earliest part of the group is a tall, five-bay combination barn of 1833 (building A), which is shown on the OS 1853 1:10,560 map² (figure 1). At that date there was also a T-shaped detached building near its south corner, but this is no longer extant.

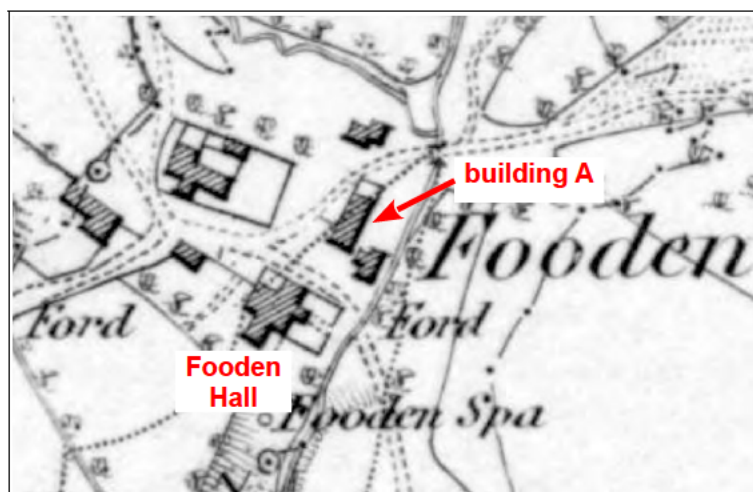


Figure 1: OS 1:10,560 map, 1853

- 3.3 The OS 1894 1:2500 map³ shows additions to the north-east end of building A, in the form of a pair of open-fronted structures (figure 2, below).

² Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map, Yorkshire, 146, surveyed 1849-50, published 1853

³ Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, Yorkshire, 146.9, surveyed 1892, published 1894

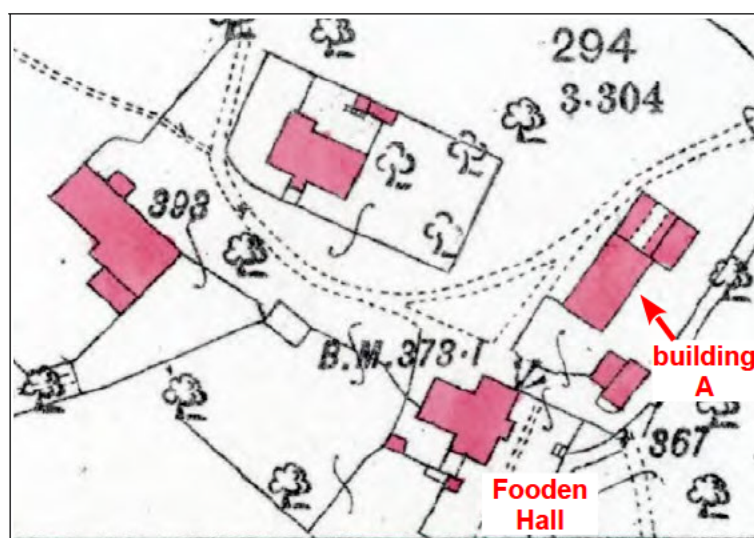


Figure 2: OS 1:2500 map, 1894

- 3.4 A later edition of this map (figure 3) shows that a number of changes took place around the turn of the 20th century (between 1892 and 1907⁴), when building B was added to the south-west end of A. Building B comprises a two-bay, two-storey structure, probably intended as a shippon (cow house) and hayloft. During the same period, the existing buildings at the north-east end of A were adapted to form a new structure, which is now roofless, and consists of brick laid on top of earlier stone walls (building C).

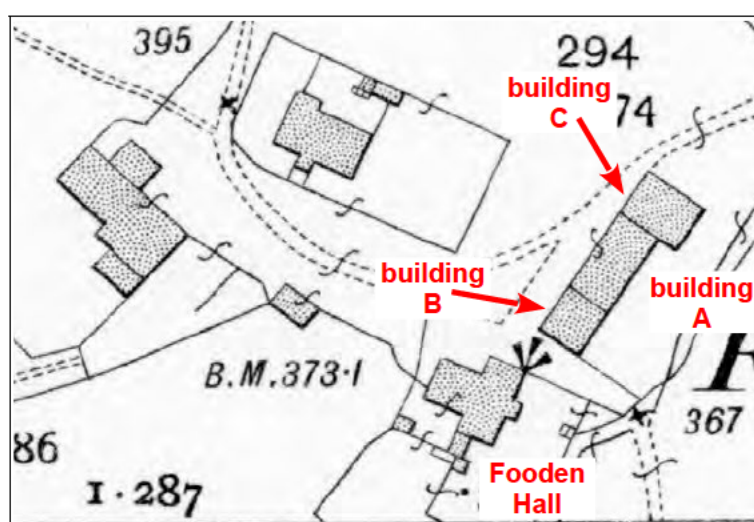


Figure 3: OS 1:2500 map, 1909

⁴ Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, Yorkshire, 146.9, revised 1907, published 1909

4 The present structures

Building A

- 4.1 Building A bears the date of 1833, painted in red on the collars of two of its four roof trusses. The building faces north-west, and is a combination barn which has a typical arrangement of threshing bay with large cart entrance and rear winnowing doorway in the south-east side (photos 3-5). The north-east end contains a shippin at a lower level, formerly with three gable entrances (photo 6), which have been blocked up and replaced by 20th century openings in the adjoining long sides.
- 4.2 Building A is significant for its largely unaltered exterior of local stone with high solid-to-void ratio, and some original details, including the arched entrance and slit ventilators in the long sides, arranged mostly in rows at a high level, but also (less numerously) lower down in the walls. Inserted ground floor openings in the north-east end are 20th century and considered to be less important, but do show the continuing use of the shippin into this period. The interior is largely modern (photo 7), but the roof trusses remain as impressive features, and are enhanced by the painted date of 1833 (photo 8). The barn's original stone slate roof has been replaced by modern steel sheets, which diminish significance and offer scope for enhancement.

Building B

- 4.3 As noted above, building B can be dated by historic Ordnance Survey maps to the period between 1892 and 1907. Its siting at a lower level than building A creates a step down within the linear range, which emphasises the phased growth of the farmstead, in a manner characteristic for the region.
- 4.4 Building B is subtly distinct from the barn in terms of its stonework, and retains its original stone slate roof with ventilation cowls (also perhaps original). It has a slightly lower solid-to-void ratio, and a total of four ground floor doorways. These are arranged symmetrically: the two in the north-west side are positioned in the middle of the wall (photo 9), while those in the south-east side are near the outer corners, and these entrances relate to the former layout of animal stalls within the building, set in two rows to either side of the central cross-wall (photo 10). The pattern of windows is less formal and has been subject to some minor change over time, but one notable opening is the small, arched forking hole in the north-west side. The interior has no individual features of interest, but its role in housing livestock remains evident.

Building C

- 4.5 Building C is of very low significance but contributes to the linear character of the group. Ordnance Survey maps and the presence of stone within its lower walls suggest it began as a small walled fold-yard, before being made into a brick shippon or similar (photos 11 & 12).

Other buildings

- 4.6 There are various other buildings or the remains of them at the site, all of which appear to date from the second half of the 20th century. None have any significance and their modern forms and materials, and in some cases advanced stages of dilapidation, detract from the setting of the Hall and the main farm buildings.

5 Statement of significance

- 5.1 The stone buildings make a strong contribution to the setting of the grade II* listed Fooden Hall, through their architectural and historic interest as a mid 19th and early 20th century linear group, which is closely linked to the Hall both spatially, visually, and functionally.
- 5.2 The Hall and the farm buildings share a valley-bottom site and an alignment along the contour which tie them together visually, and they are also of broadly similar sizes and proportions. The use of local building materials is also a common thread, as is their historic connection as a former working farmstead. As well as features in common, the distinction in form between the well-fenestrated Hall with its refined façade, and the functional, plain, and emphatically more solid farm buildings, is fundamental to the group's significance.
- 5.3 Buildings A and B are of some architectural and historic interest in their own rights as traditional farm buildings albeit of relatively late date, which show evidence for the evolution of the farmstead, and for changes and intensification in local farming practice.

6 Proposed development and impact

- 6.1 The prolonged redundancy of the farm buildings and their unsuitability for use within modern agriculture in the long term presents an existential threat, and threatens the important contribution they make to the setting of the grade II* listed Hall; sensitive domestic conversion of the site is considered to offer an

alternative and optimum viable use for it, which would achieve a sustainable future, with a primary goal and public benefit being enhancement of the Hall's setting. The rationale for the scheme is described more fully in the agent's Planning, Design and Access Statement.

- 6.2 The scheme proposes the conversion of building A to a three-bedroom dwelling (Unit 1), and of building B to a two-bedroom dwelling (Unit 2), while building C would be adapted to form a parking area to serve both. The wider site would be enhanced through the removal of other, modern outbuildings followed by appropriate landscaping; much of the outer reaches of the farmstead which were developed during the 20th century would then be returned to open countryside, with the area to be defined as residential curtilage being much smaller than the working farm's previous extent, a change which would confer an obvious gain to the setting of Fooden Hall and the traditional farm buildings.
- 6.3 With regard specifically to the conversion of buildings A and B, two changes would constitute major enhancements of the site: the replacement of the steel roof covering to A with natural slate; and the rebuilding of the concrete block lean-to on the north-west side of the range, in stone and slate.
- 6.4 In terms of further detail, the new dwellings (both units 1 and 2) would face north-west, where very few modifications to the existing, relatively generous pattern of openings would be required; this arrangement would leave the Hall as the only one of the three to face south-east, and so maintain its prominence as the principal dwelling, and distinguish it from the former farm buildings.
- 6.5 Within the north-west front of unit 1, the arched cart entry would remain open, with the entrance door and glazing set back from it inside the building, an arrangement which would emphasise the opening's size and form, as well as reducing the visual impact of glass within it.
- 6.6 Elsewhere, the conversions would make use of existing openings wherever possible, including the partial re-opening of the three gable doorways in the north-east end of A. This is intended to sustain the perception as historic farm buildings, whose forms arise from their original, agricultural designs. Although a number of new openings would be needed in order to comply with building regulations (mainly in the south-east (rear) elevation), these would not impose on any existing features, and the overall effect would be to retain the high solid-to-void ratio, and not detract from the highly important views of the Hall's front. The open space to the south-east of the new dwellings has been deliberately kept undivided and unencumbered to retain something of the appearance of a farmyard, rather than domestic gardens.

- 6.7 The farm buildings' interiors make no contribution to the setting of the Hall, and modern adaptations mean that they are of only limited significance, but in any case it is inevitable that there would be some impact resulting from the domestic conversion of agricultural buildings; however, the proposals would nonetheless preserve their salient features, including the main structural divisions.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, this highly sensitive scheme represents a worthwhile opportunity to make a positive, long-term contribution to preserving and enhancing the setting of the grade II* listed hall, through the conversion of the two traditional but redundant farm buildings which are so prominent in views of it, and through the enhancement of the surrounding space through the removal of inappropriate, outlying, modern agricultural development.
- 7.2 Pre-application advice from Historic England received in February 2026 (ref: PA01205251) expressed concern that the scheme could cause a less than substantial level of harm to the significance of Fooden Hall through change to its setting, and that no heritage benefits from it would accrue to the listed building to outweigh that. Contrary to that position, the applicant strongly believes that establishing a viable, sustainable future for the barns and their immediate surroundings is key to achieving a successful future for the Hall, as described in paragraph 4.5 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement. It is also considered that the Historic England advice over-assesses the level of harm of the current scheme in terms of physical change, and under-acknowledges its public benefits in improvements to the setting of the Hall.

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Photo 1: Key view of the Hall, looking north from public footpath. Farm buildings proposed for conversion to right (A, B & C).



Photo 2: View from the north-west: track separating Fooden Hall (right) from building B (left)



Photo 3: North-west elevations of buildings A (left) and B (right)



Photo 4: Arched entrance and ventilation slits in north-west elevation of building A



Photo 5: Building A: south-east elevation.



Photo 6: Buildings A & C, looking south. Modern building in foreground would be cleared as part of landscaping



Photo 7: Building A interior: 20th century cross-wall enclosing shippon in north-east end



Photo 8: Building A: dated roof timber



Photo 9: Building B: north-west elevation



Photo 10: Building B: south-east elevation



Photo 11: Building C: south-east elevation



Photo 12: Building C: interior, looking south