

Heritage appraisal to support a planning application

For the conversion of Scotch Ones Laithe, Hellifield, North Yorkshire

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been produced to support an anticipated planning application to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA), for the conversion of a roadside field barn, known as Scotch Ones Laithe, to a dwelling. It was commissioned by the owner Craven Cattle Marts Ltd, through its agent WBW Surveyors Ltd, and a site visit was made by the writer on 3 October 2022.
- 1.2 The barn is a traditional building and so local planning policy requires the application to include a heritage statement.
- 1.3 The barn is of three bays, and is likely to date from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It has an L-shaped plan, with a shippon in the wide end, which still contains some timber and slate boskins, but its interior is otherwise devoid of historic fixtures. There is a twentieth century timber lean-to at the rear.

2 Location

- 2.1 Scotch Ones Laithe stands in Hellifield civil parish, some 750m east of the village, on the north side of the minor road to Otterburn (Malham Road), at NGR: SD 86338 56729. It is situated at about 160m above sea level, on a level site within an area of farmland, primarily grassland enclosed by dry-stone walls, fences and hedgerows. Opposite, to the south of the road, are the dwelling known as Gillian's Laithe, and the Skipton to Settle railway line.
- 2.2 The barn faces approximately south-west, towards a rectangular yard enclosed by dry-stone walls, to which there is a gateway from the road.

3 Current use

- 3.1 The building is in low intensity agricultural use.

4 Existing records

- 4.1 The barn is shown on the 1852 1:10560 scale Ordnance Survey map¹, with its current name, an L-shaped plan, and a foldyard to the west (figure 1). The nearby railway had been opened in 1849 and the adjacent road re-aligned to accommodate the new bridge over it, but this seems not to have affected the barn nor its immediate curtilage. No change is shown to the arrangement at the site on either the 1894 or the 1909 edition of the 1:2500 scale OS map² (figure 2).



Figure 1: OS 1:10560 map, 1852

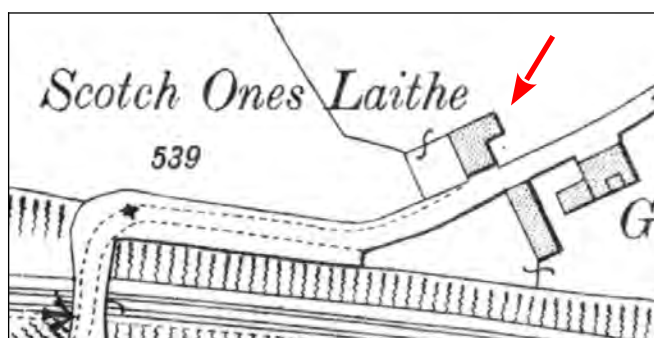


Figure 2: OS 1:2500 map, 1909

- 4.2 Current maps show the barn with the rear lean-to as infill at its east corner.
- 4.3 The building does not appear to be recorded in the YDNPA's Historic Environment Record³.
- 4.4 The precise origins of the barn's name are not known.
- 4.5 No designated or currently identified non-designated heritage assets are known to exist which might have a bearing on the application.

¹ Yorkshire, sheet 149, surveyed 1847-9. Copy not at original scale.

² Yorkshire, sheet 149.12; surveyed 1893, revised 1907. Copy not at original scale.

³ As searched via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

5 Setting

- 5.1 A dry-stone wall and the barn's south-east gable form the boundary to the adjacent road, opposite Gillian's Laithe (photo 1, below). A gateway through the wall, with dressed stone posts, provides access into the foldyard to the west of the barn, and there are two further gateways out from the yard, to the adjoining land. There are some modern sheep handling pens and runs to the north of the barn.

6 Barn

- 6.1 The barn is built from mortared rubble of local sandstone, laid in irregular courses, with small, square breathers in a number of places, and with squared quoins; the walls show very few signs of significant change since construction, and all of the existing openings appear to be original. The roof is local stone slate and overhangs at the verges, an unusual arrangement locally and one perhaps introduced during a re-slating. It is also an arrangement which appears not to have been advantageous for the integrity of the roof.
- 6.2 The building can be assigned to the category of "barns with wide shippons", for reasons which should be clear from the following account⁴.
- 6.3 The cart entrance in the south-west front has a timber lintel to the exterior, beneath a flagstone drip-band; the lintel has sockets in its underside for a pair of harr-hung doors, but nothing of them survives (photo 2). A smaller doorway to the left leads to the shippon: its lintel bears a shallow inscription reading "AB-1939-CH". A concrete pad within the yard, to the right of the cart entrance, suggests there was at one time an ephemeral structure adjoining there.
- 6.4 The north-west gable appears to have been built in a single phase (indicating that the L-shaped plan is original), and contains a former doorway (now window), and a mucking-out hole (photo 3). A triangular owl-hole is incorporated near the ridge, and there is a similar owl-hole in the roadside gable, which is otherwise blind (photo 4).
- 6.5 To the rear of the barn are the winnowing doorway, opposite the cart entrance, and a forking hole above, with monolithic jambs and internally hung shutter. (The position of the forking hole here is slightly odd, as it appears not to have been located over the hayloft.) The south-east side wall of the projecting bay has two feeding holes serving stalls in the shippon; the openings appear to be original, and one of them has hinge pintles for an external shutter (photo 5).

⁴ see Pacey, A 2009 *Yorkshire Dales Field Barns. Part 1: Types & Plans*, p21

These openings are another unusual aspect to the barn. The mid twentieth century lean-to now enclosing this area incorporates the roadside boundary wall, and is mostly constructed from vertical railway sleepers, with a corrugated iron roof. It would have provided additional livestock stalls.

- 6.6 The interior of the stone building forms a single open space, albeit with the remnants of a shippon and hayloft within the projecting northern part; these structures would no doubt have occupied the full width of the building originally, within this bay (photo 6). The surviving boskins have frames of local hardwood timber with elbowed heel-posts, and slate panels (Horton flags), and they form standings for four animals in two pairs, each pair being provided with a feeding hole in the wall to the front (photo 7). There are two softwood beams of more modern date supporting the hayloft (baulks) over them, and sockets in the gable wall indicate that two more boskins and hayloft beams have been removed, so the building would have held stalls for ten animals in total. The present arrangement raises the question as to why there should have been a doorway in the gable, and perhaps there was an internal division within the shippon at one time, meaning that the four stalls at the end were not otherwise accessible, a scenario which would also account for their feeding holes.
- 6.7 The shippon floor is laid with cobbles, and these extend into the threshing bay inside the cart entrance, as far as a low stone kerb between the threshing bay and the mewstead bay to the south-east.
- 6.8 The barn roof is borne on two bolted, king-post trusses which combine local hardwood and imported softwood timbers, most likely as a result of repair and replacement. The north-west truss (photo 8) has more local timber than the south-east truss: its hardwood parts include one of the principal rafters, the king-post, and its raking trusses, while the tie-beam and other principal rafter are of imported softwood. Similarly, the barn's purlins are a mixture of such timber, and are further evidence for repairs to the roof.

7 Statement of heritage significance

- 7.1 The building undoubtedly has some heritage significance, principally because of its aesthetic and historical values. It is a traditional field barn, of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, whose plan-form conforms with many other such barns in the region, and whose outer elevations appear very largely unchanged. It has a foldyard adjacent, which also appears essentially unaltered. The building contains some historic fixtures, although probably not in their original arrangement, and some aspects of the building imply it has a more complicated history than is at first apparent. Significance has been reduced

slightly by the addition of a small, twentieth century lean-to in non-traditional materials, and by the loss of internal structures and doors.

Stephen Haigh, MA
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Photo 1: Setting: view along Malham Road, from the south-west



Photo 2: Front elevation



Photo 3: View from the north



Photo 4: View from the south



Photo 5: Winnowing doorway and feeding holes, now within lean-to



Photo 6: Interior: view from south-east, towards former shippon



Photo 7: Interior: surviving boskins, with former doorway to left, and winnowing doorway to right



Photo 8: North-west roof truss, with mixture of timber types