

PROPOSED WORKS AT BAST HOUSE FARM COTTAGE

WALMERSLEY, METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BURY



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

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FEBRUARY 2026

GARRY MILLER *HERITAGE CONSULTANCY*

Providing heritage planning advice since 2002

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Garry Miller is a heritage advisor, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as 'scholarship as its best' by *Country Life* (June 2003), and 'well analysed and presented' in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 Buildings of England volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

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IMPORTANT LEGAL ADVISORY

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposal building is Bast House Cottage, Manchester Road, Walmersley, in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. The property is a fragment of a once-larger possibly late 16th century house, with a much-altered rear wing of the late 19th century. It is listed at Grade II.

Proposals have been submitted to Bury Metropolitan Borough Council for various external works to the application property. The heritage consideration arising is the proposal's impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the listed building. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and to assess the impact of the works upon it.

The property belonged to a moorland farmstead of likely yeoman (rural middle class) status. In the 17th century it was occupied by the Kay family and used for secret worship by Protestant dissenters. In the later 19th century the house was reduced in size and the present rear wing built, probably when a large new house (Bast House) was built alongside.

The Grade II designation of Bast House Farm Cottage denotes it is a building of national importance for its special architectural and historic interest. Its significance essentially derives from this special interest, which is that of a fragment of a once-larger moorland farmhouse probably of the late 16th century. It also possesses further historical interest for its connections with the Kay family and Nonconformist worship in Lancashire in the late 17th century. This significance is contained entirely in the surviving 16th century portion of the building. The rear wing, which was greatly altered during a probably late 20th century conversion to domestic use, consequently lacks intrinsic interest and is accordingly of low significance.

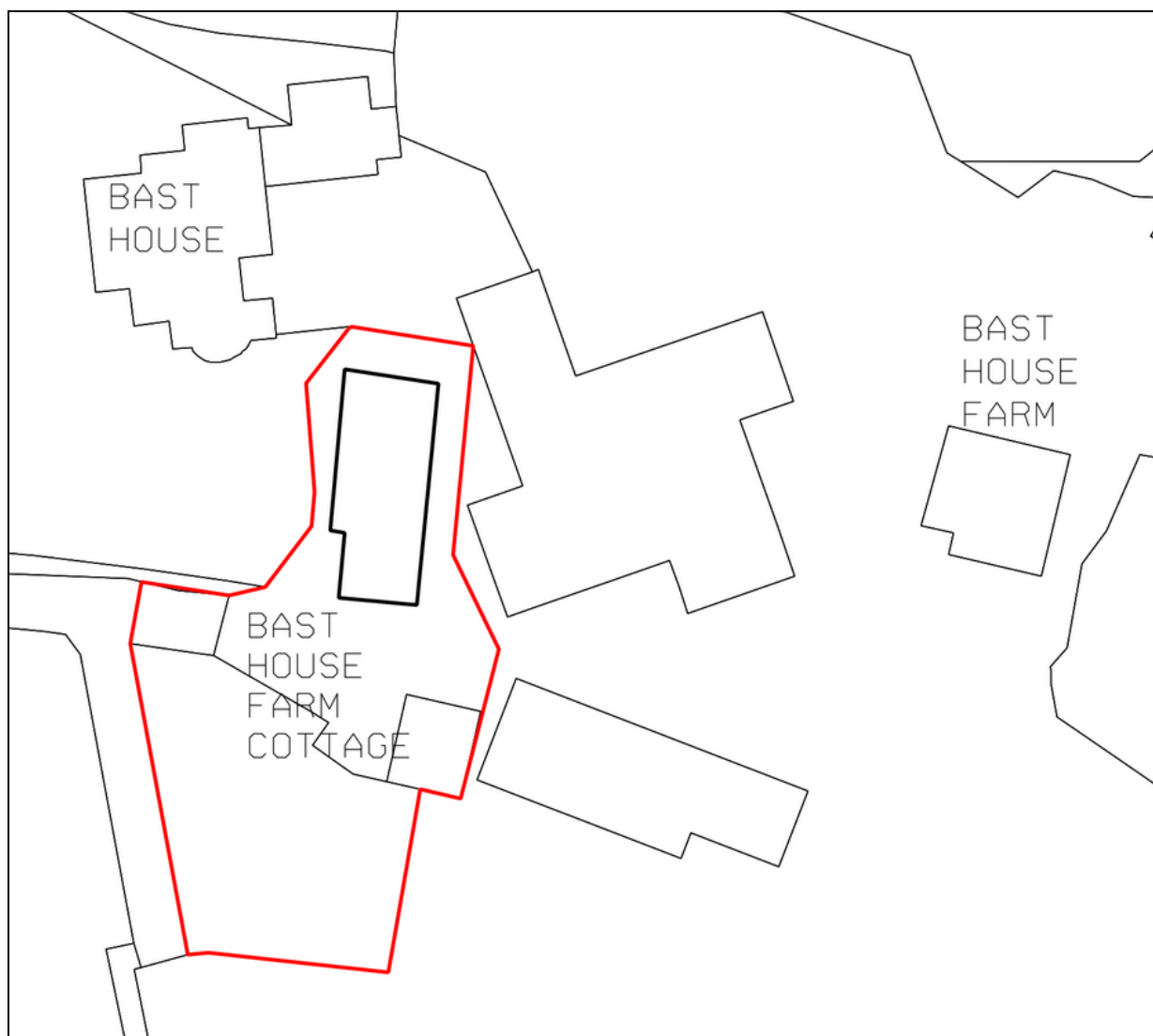
The submission relates to the following works:

- Replacement of existing windows with powder coated aluminium
- New first floor window on rear elevation
- Insulation to side elevation recessed gable to improve thermal efficiency

As will be examined in this report, it is concluded that none of the works will have a harmful effect upon the listed building, and will preserve its significance as the surviving fragment of a moorland farmhouse of probably late 16th century date. The proposals thereby satisfy the requirements of both national planning guidance and local heritage policy, and accordingly the proposal deserves favourable consideration.

2: THE SITE

The proposal building is Bast House Farm Cottage, Walmersley, in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. The property is a former farmhouse, now private residence, that stands on a hillside east of the A56 Manchester Road. It forms part of a former moorland farmstead whose original outbuildings to the east have now been converted along with new dwellings added. To the northwest is Bast House, which replaced the application building as the main house of the site in the later 19th century.



The application property



The application building, with Bast House beyond



The cottage and its converted outbuildings to the east

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

Heritage designation

Bast House Farm Cottage is listed at Grade II, having first been designated in 1966.

The proposal

Proposals have been submitted to Bury Metropolitan Borough Council for various external works at the property.

Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising is the proposal's impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the listed building.

Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 207 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) of the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised December 2024) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the listed building and to assess the impact of the proposal upon it.

In accordance with paragraph 207, it is considered the level of detail is proportionate to the importance of the proposal building and no more than is necessary to understand the impact of the proposal.

This report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation submitted in support of the proposal.

Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A brief account of the historical background relating to the site (Section 4)
2. A proportionate analysis of the listed building (Section 5)
3. A summary of its heritage significance (Section 6)
4. A review of the national and local heritage policies against which the proposal will be assessed (Section 7)
5. Analysis within this policy context of the proposal's impact upon the significance of the listed building (Section 8)

4: HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The property belonged to a moorland farmstead of likely yeoman (rural middle class) status, and in the 17th century was occupied by the Kay family. Following the dismissal of the Reverend Henry Pendlebury of Holcombe in 1662 over his refusal to accept the Book of Common Prayer, Richard Kay – one of his chief supporters – allowed his barn to be used for secret worship by Protestant dissenters. The house was thereafter used for Nonconformist services after the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689. Richard Kay the younger was one of the founders of a new chapel in Bury in 1719.

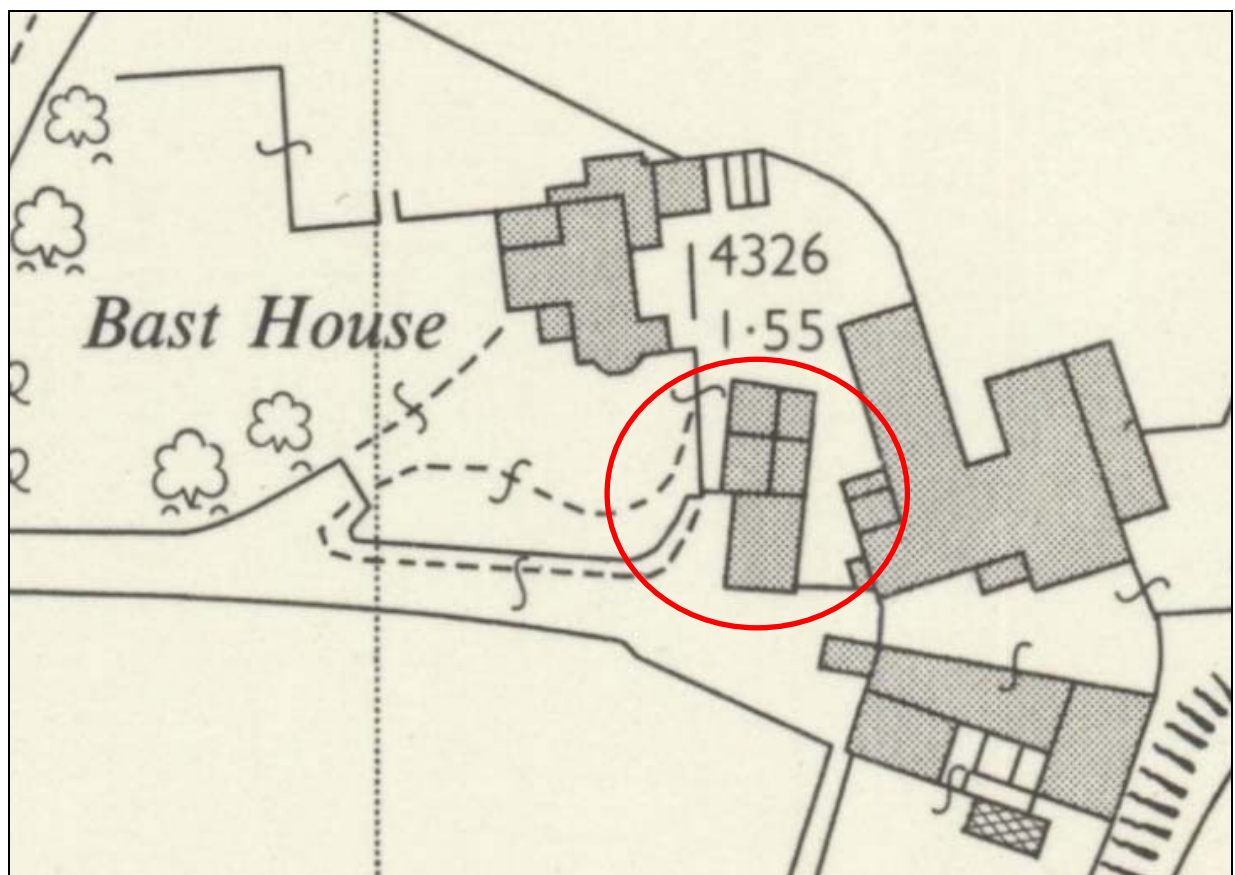
Map evidence shows the existing property is a fragment of a larger building that extended to the east and to the rear. The OS edition of 1844-1848 shows it occupied a staggered footprint consisting of a front range and another to the rear, with outbuildings to the east. During the later 19th century, a new house was built to the northwest and the original property cut back and rebuilt to form the present building. This appears to have involved shortening of the front range and adding a long new wing at right angles to the rear. The 1891 OS edition shows the latter was subdivided into four small units that suggest it was used as an outbuilding and not domestic accommodation.



The original larger footprint of the house, recorded by the six-inch OS map of 1844-1848



The 25-inch edition of 1891 shows the house had been rebuilt by this time



Little change is depicted by the edition of 1962

5: ANALYSIS OF THE APPLICATION BUILDING

Overview

Fragment of once-larger possibly late 16th century house with rear wing of late 19th century, the latter much altered and of little interest.

Description

The National Heritage List for England description is brief, stating the date to be early 18th century. It reads:

Probably early C18. Stone, right-hand end having brick buttressing and gable, the whole evidently once being part of larger house. Two storeys. Two windows with dripmould (right-hand one three-light with renewed stone mullions with labels, left-hand one with round-headed lights and a label, but first floor left-hand one blind and probably a date-panel). Other round-headed and mullioned windows on side walls. Slate roof. Later rear wing.

Further analysis

- a. **Date.** The date of the early 18th century is incorrect. The round-headed windows, a motif sometimes found in substantial houses of the Lancashire Pennines (especially the Burnley and Pendle area), suggest instead the late 16th century. The property is therefore likely to be of this date. The larger windows on the front elevation were probably of this type also, as the present mullions are replacements.
- b. **Evolution.** The description correctly notes the house was once part of a much larger building. This extended further east, as confirmed by the OS map of 1844-1848.
- c. **Rear wing.** The map evidence suggests it was in agricultural use originally, but its role is now domestic and its appearance one of piecemeal alteration. There are modern windows and doors, a mixture of stone and brickwork and some reused earlier details such as jambs and lintels, along with a single-storey modern porch on the rear elevation.



The front portion of the house is the only surviving fragment of the original building



The round-headed windows suggest a late 16th century date



The rear wing has been greatly altered during conversion to domestic use



Modern door and canopy on west elevation of the wing



All windows in the wing are modern



East elevation of the wing



Modern porch on rear elevation of the wing

6: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPLICATION BUILDING

Rationale

Paragraph 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Summary

The Grade II designation of Bast House Farm Cottage denotes it is a building of national importance for its special architectural and historic interest. Its significance essentially derives from this special interest, which is that of a fragment of a once-larger moorland farmhouse probably of the late 16th century. It also possesses additional historical interest via its connections with the Kay family and Nonconformist worship in Lancashire in the late 17th century.

This significance is contained entirely in the surviving 16th century portion of the building. The rear wing, which dates originally from the late 19th century but was greatly altered during a probably late 20th century conservation to domestic use, consequently lacks intrinsic interest and is of low significance.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Statutory duty

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 210 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 212 states that ‘great weight’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The relevant local planning policy is JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022-2029, adopted March 21, 2024, which requires (inter alia) that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national policy in the planning and design process; and integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place.

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

Summary of the works

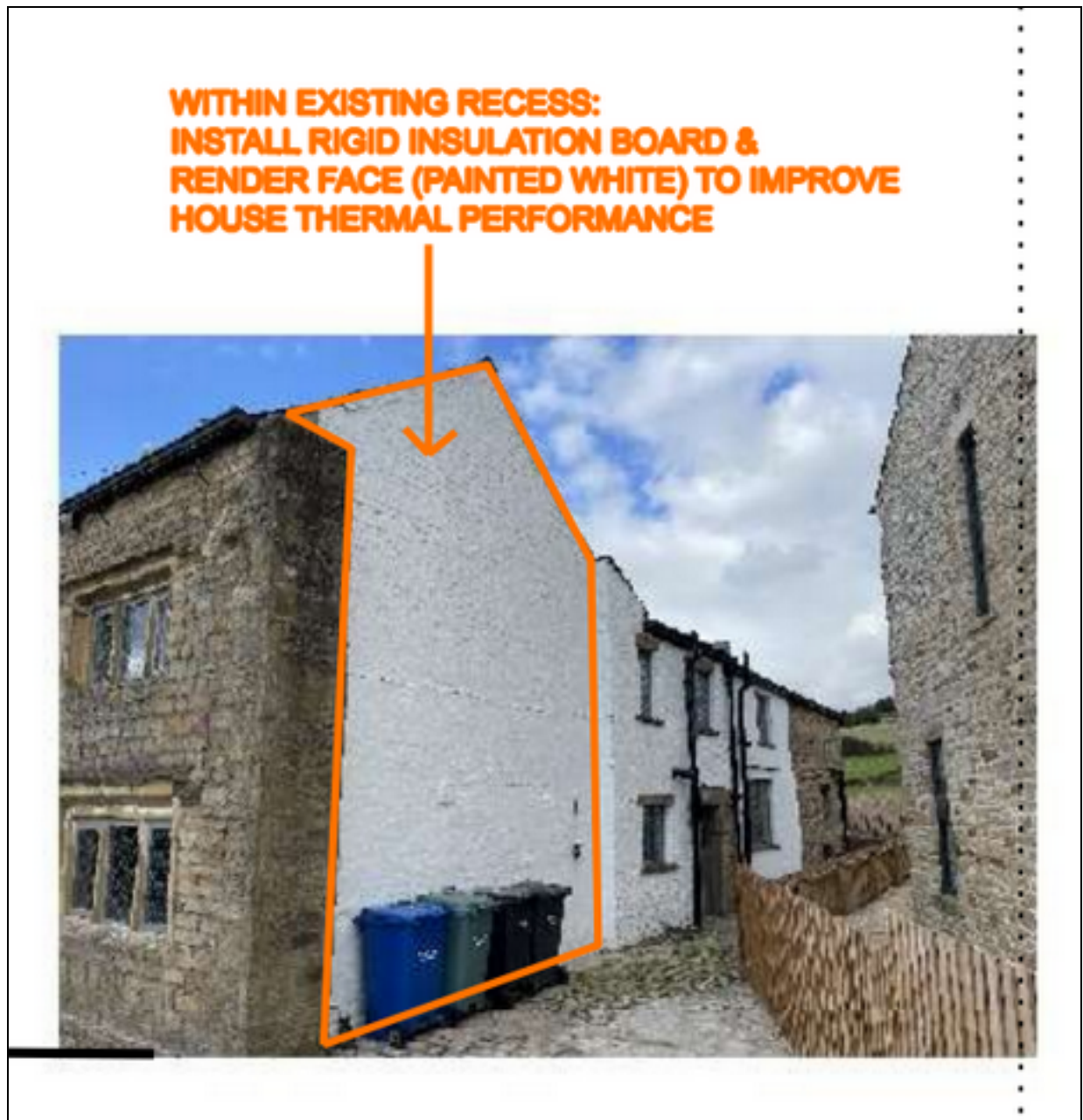
The proposal relates to the following:

- Replacement of existing windows with powder coated aluminium units
- New first floor window on rear elevation
- Insulation to side elevation recessed gable to improve thermal efficiency

A pre-application enquiry was held in 2025 and received a favourable response, with the planning officer commenting that that all the works would be acceptable as they would preserve the special historic and architectural interest of the listed building.

Their effect

- a. Window replacement.** None of the existing glazing in the listed building is original, dating from a probably late 20th century refurbishment. The exception is the two-light windows on the ground floor which has leaded glazing of an earlier date. This is to be retained. The proposed new glazing on the other windows will be of a like-for-like framing pattern. The use of aluminium rather than timber framing is proposed given that it will have a longer lifespan in this exposed moorland location. Its use in the rear wing is considered appropriate given that the extent of its alteration and consequent lack of interest, and also that none of its windows are historic. It is also considered appropriate for the windows of the original building, given that the glass in these windows would have originally have been fixed within metal frames wired to the jambs and mullions. The proposal will therefore have no adverse effect on the significance of the listed building.
- b. New rear window.** The window is to be located in the altered rear wing and not the original portion of the listed building, and as it is a relatively minor change there will be no harmful effect upon the listed building.
- c. Insulation of side wall.** The gable here is slightly set back owing to where the eastward continuation of the original building was sheared off. The present external wall is therefore probably a rebuilt internal crosswall that was never intended to be exposed. The proposal is to affix insulated board to this section of wall, which will be finished in lime-based render and painted white as at present. The works will result in no harmful effect upon the legibility and significance of the listed building, as this is essentially a blank expanse of wall devoid of any features of key importance. The works will also deliver the benefit to the property of greater thermal efficiency.



The proposed thermal insulation of the side wall

Concluding statement

For the reasons given above, it is concluded that none of the works will have a harmful effect upon the listed building, and will preserve its significance as the surviving fragment of a moorland farmhouse of probably late 16th century date. The proposals thereby satisfy the requirements of both national planning guidance and local heritage policy and accordingly the application favourable consideration.