

Rotherham Top Farm

Whittle-le-Woods

Chorley, Lancashire



DECEMBER 2023

HERITAGE STATEMENT
Report EH263/01

Rotherham Top Farm

Whittle-le-Woods

Chorley, Lancashire

Heritage Statement

for Primrose Holdings

DATE ISSUED:	December 2023
JOB NUMBER:	EH263
REPORT NUMBER:	01 Version (1.2)
PLANNING REF:	Pre-application
GRID REFERENCE:	SD 58091 20187

Eden Heritage Ltd © 2023

This report has been prepared by Eden Heritage Ltd with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, within the terms of the Contract with the Client. The report is confidential to the Client and Eden Heritage Ltd accepts no responsibility of whatever nature to third parties to whom this report may be made known. The copyright for this report is held by Eden Heritage Ltd and no part of this document may be reproduced, distributed or published without the prior written approval of Eden Heritage Ltd.

Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs

CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	7
1.1	Background	7
1.2	Location.....	7
2	Heritage Planning Policy Context	8
2.1	Heritage Assets	8
2.2	National Heritage Policy.....	8
3	Methodology	10
3.1	Scope of the Work.....	10
4	Baseline Assessment	11
4.1	Current Heritage Status	11
4.2	Historical Context.....	11
4.3	Site Description	15
4.4	Setting of Rotherham Top Farm	18
5	Statement of Significance.....	20
5.1	Assessment of Significance	20
5.2	Assessment of Impact	21
6	Conclusions.....	22
7	Bibliography.....	24
	APPENDIX 1: SITE VISIT PHOTOGRAPHS	26
	APPENDIX 2: FIGURES	48

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

Figure 3: Extract from the Plan of the Township of Whittle Le Woods in the Parish of Leyland (1840)

Figure 4: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1849-1928)

Figure 5: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1930-1967)

Figure 6: Modern satellite imagery (2009)

PLATES

Front cover: Photograph showing the principal elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 1: Extract from Yates' County Map of Lancashire, 1786

Plate 2: Extract from Hennet's Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1828

Plate 3: Undated view, looking north, showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 4: View looking south down Preston Road. The access track to Rotherham Top Farm is visible to right of photograph before the Spar

Plate 5: View looking west showing the access track to Rotherham Top Farm

Plate 6: View looking west from the access track from Preston Road showing the Grade II listed Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 7: View looking north from Lea Road showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse and its associated garden

Plate 8: View looking north-east showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse (the modern extension in particular) with the current pedestrian access path from Lea Road

Plate 9: View looking south-west showing the principal elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 10: View looking south-west showing the two-storey porch of the 17th century section of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 11: View looking north-west along the north-east elevation showing the projecting two-storey porch

Plate 12: North-east elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse showing the ground floor windows with continuous hoodmould

Plate 13: North-east elevation of Rotherham Top Farm showing the construction break between the 17th century fabric (right) and late 20th century extension (left)

Plate 14: Rotherham Top Farmhouse as seen from the north-west of the site

Plate 15: North-west elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 16: North-west elevation of Rotherham Top Farm with modern conservatory

Plate 17: South-west elevations of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

Plate 18: South-west elevation of the older section of Rotherham Top Farmhouse

- Plate 19: South-west elevation showing modern outshut partly utilising older stonework
- Plate 20: View looking north-east showing the south-west elevation of the modern extension to the house
- Plate 21: View looking north-west showing the south-east elevation of the modern part of the house
- Plate 22: View looking north-west showing the large inglenook fireplace with modern fireplace, and moulded bressummer, ground floor of the original house
- Plate 23: Detail of the bressummer (spanning the fireplace), and the two beams with ovolo moulding and chamfer stops, ground floor of original house
- Plate 24: View looking south-east showing the modern kitchen in the original part of the house
- Plate 25: View looking north-east showing the northern room on the ground floor of the original house; access to the conservatory is to left of photograph
- Plate 26: View looking north-west showing the interior of the conservatory
- Plate 27: View looking north-west showing the sitting room in the modern extension. The original external wall of the house is visible behind the staircase
- Plate 28: Original mullioned window which survives as a feature within the modern extension
- Plate 29: View looking south-east showing the sitting room with mezzanine in the modern extension
- Plate 30: Part of a former two-light window in the original south-east elevation of the house, now incorporated but truncated within the modern extension
- Plate 31: View looking north-west showing the first-floor corridor in the original part of the house. The doorway has been defined with modern panelling, but may respect an historic opening
- Plate 32: View looking south-west showing one of the exposed ovolo-moulded beams on the first floor
- Plate 33: One of the first-floor bedrooms in the original part of the house
- Plate 34: One of the first-floor bedrooms in the original part of the house
- Plate 35: Northernmost bedroom on the first-floor, original part of the house
- Plate 36: View looking south-west showing the wooden shed and car port to the west of the house
- Plate 37: View looking north-east towards the house showing the shed and car port with a former telephone kiosk to the south side included as a garden feature
- Plate 38: View looking north-east showing the large building to the north-west side of the site
- Plate 39: View looking north showing the domestic-style frontage to the large building in the north-west part of the site
- Plate 40: View looking south from within the site towards Lea Road
- Plate 41: View looking south from the northernmost part of the site, currently grassed over and bounded by established trees and hedges
- Plate 42: View looking north-east showing part of the existing garden and tarmac areas to the north of the house
- Plate 43: View looking south-east showing part of the raised lawn area and tree-lined boundary to the south-east of the house (Lea Road is in the background)
-

Plate 44: View looking north-east showing the house at White Hill Farm with No' 56 and 58 Preston Road to left on photograph on the opposite side of Moss Lane

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Primrose Holdings to compile a Heritage Statement to accompany a planning application at Rotherham Top Farm, Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley, Lancashire (Grid Ref: NGR SD 58091 20187). The proposals are to renovate the property known as Rotherham Top Farmhouse and construct new residential properties within the grounds (Figures 1 and 2).
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the Heritage Statement was to assess the heritage significance of the to assess the heritage significance of the Grade II listed building, Rotherham Top Farmhouse, and to assess the impact the proposals may have on the property and its setting, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 Whittle-le-Woods is located to the north of the town of Chorley. The village straddles the A6 which heads northwards to Preston. It is situated to the west of the M61 Motorway, and north of the main railway line that runs through Chorley and heads towards Preston via Buckshaw Parkway (Figure 1).
- 1.2.2 Rotherham Top Farm is located at the south end of the village, on the west side of the A6, opposite White Hill Farm and Moss Lane, and to the north side of Lea Road. Vehicular access to the site is possible from the A6, immediately to the north of a BP service station/Spar shop, and from Lea Road where there is also separate pedestrian access (Figure 2).

2 Heritage Planning Policy Context

2.1 Heritage Assets

- 2.1.1 The term ‘heritage asset’ is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as ‘a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest’ (MHCLG 2021).
- 2.1.2 Designated heritage assets protected by statutory legislation comprise scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, listed buildings and conservation areas. Nationally significant archaeological sites, monuments and structures are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979). Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are protected under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- 2.1.3 Non-statutory designated heritage assets, comprising registered parks and gardens and registered battlefields, are protected under national and local planning policy only. This is also the case for the remainder of the archaeological resource, including entries into a Historic Environment Record (HER) or local listing, as well as previously unknown features which may be recorded during the course of data collection in respect to a given development proposal.

2.2 National Heritage Policy

- 2.2.1 National planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was revised in July 2021. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favor of sustainable development. Sites of archaeological or heritage significance that are valued components of the historic environment and merit consideration in planning decisions are grouped as heritage assets; ‘These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’ (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.189).
- 2.2.2 The framework states that ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting’ (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.194). ‘Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’ (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.194).
- 2.2.3 NPPF draws a distinction between designated heritage assets and other remains considered to be of lesser significance; ‘great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)’ (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.199). ‘Any harm

to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens should be exceptional; assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional' (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.200). Therefore, preservation in-situ is the preferred course in relation to such sites unless exceptional circumstances exist.

- 2.2.4 With regard to non-designated heritage assets, Section 16.203 states that 'In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'. However, it should be noted that 'Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be subject to the policies for designated heritage assets' (MHCLG 2019, Section 16.194).
- 2.2.5 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible (i.e. copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant Historic Environment Record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository). However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted (MHCLG 2021, Section 16.205).

3 Methodology

3.1 Scope of the Work

- 3.1.1 In order to assess the heritage significance of the proposed development site, a rapid desk-based assessment of readily available sources was undertaken, in order to provide the historical context of the site. This assessment was undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) in *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (CIfA 2020) and *Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK* (2021).
- 3.1.2 The assessment of readily-available sources was undertaken online, and at Chorley Library and Lancashire Archives (for trade directories and local history publications), in order to provide some historical background for the property known as Rotherham Top Farm. At the time of the research, the local studies section of Chorley Library was not accessible due to staff shortages, therefore it is possible that relevant documentary material may exist that is relevant to the site, but could not be assessed as part of this report. An online search of the Lancashire Archives catalogue did not reveal any relevant entries relating to Rotherham Top Farm.
- 3.1.3 A site visit was also undertaken to assess the character, form and setting of the property, any associated features or structures and the wider site within the red line boundary shown on Figure 2.
- 3.1.4 In order to assess the heritage significance of the site, guidance provided by Historic England (2008) has been followed. Under the values presented within the NPPF this significance can be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. These values are broadly similar to the four principle values described in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008). This provides a useful methodology for assessing the significance of heritage assets and has been utilised within this assessment. The four principle values which contribute to overall significance are:
- Evidential Value: Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
 - Historical Value: Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present;
 - Aesthetic Value: Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place;
 - Communal Value: Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or from whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.
- 3.1.4 The heritage significance of Rotherham Top Farm is discussed detail in Section 5, along with an assessment of the possible impacts on heritage significance by the proposed development.
-

4 Baseline Assessment

4.1 Current Heritage Status

- 4.1.1 Rotherham Top Farmhouse was designated as a Grade II listed building in April 1967 (National Heritage List for England (NHLE) Ref: 1281043). The description reads:

“Farmhouse, 17th century, altered. Coursed sandstone rubble with quoins, slate roof with a chimney behind the ridge (two other chimneys at rear). Three-bay baffle-entry plan (recently extended at left end in similar materials). Two storeys; two-storey gabled porch at junction of second and third bays has plain doorway with large lintel, jambs of large stone blocks, former first floor window now blocked. Three windows on each floor, all with altered glazing; those at ground floor left of porch have a continuous hoodmould, chamfered surround, one remaining mullion to each, and now two and four lights; others are casements in altered openings. Right end wall has a blocked first floor doorway and evidence of former external steps where there is now a window. Rear has outshut to first bay (with a modern catslide roof), a window in the second bay which has a chamfered stone case, one remaining mullion, and a hoodmould; and a blocked doorway in the third bay. Interior: altered, but second bay retains large inglenook fireplace with ovolo-moulded bressummer, and beams which are also ovolo-moulded and stopped.” (NHLE Ref. 1281043)

- 4.1.2 The site is not located within a Conservation Area or in a Registered Park and Garden. An assessment of the National Heritage List for England, maintained by Historic England, has identified that there are no other designated heritage assets in close proximity to the site that need to be considered with regards to potential impact to significance and setting.

4.2 Historical Context

- 4.2.1 Rotherham Top appears to have been the location of a small settlement historically, and also a topographical location used to identify a point of reference. In the Victoria County History of 1911, when describing Whittle-le-Woods, it was noted that *“the principal road is that from Chorley to Preston which goes north by Rotherham Top and Waterhouse Green through the village”* (Farrer and Brownbill 1911, 32).
- 4.2.2 The listed building description refers to Rotherham Top Farmhouse as dating to the 17th century, indicating a form of settlement in the locality at that date, however the earliest consulted cartographic source to show buildings in the vicinity is Yates’ county map dating to 1786, with a group of three structures represented on the west side of the principal road, opposite Moss Side (Plate 1). Hennessey’s county map published in 1828 also shows several buildings in the general location of Rotherham Top Farm, but the scale of the mapping does not allow for accurate assessment of the structures which existed at this date (Plate 2).



Plate 1: Extract from Yates' County Map of Lancashire, 1786
(Source: National Library of Scotland)



Plate 2: Extract from Hennet's Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1828

- 4.2.3 The earliest consulted cartographic source to clearly show the buildings and landscape features at the site of Rotherham Top Farm is the tithe map, with accompanying schedule, which is entitled 'Plan of Whittle le Woods in the Parish of Leyland' and dates to 1840. Rotherham Top Farm is shown as Plot 524 on this map, with the apparent house shown to be accessed from what is now Preston Road, with a further building to the north-west, possibly representing farm buildings. Another structure, labelled as Plot 523, is shown to the north-east (the site of the current service station/Spar).
- 4.2.4 The following table provides information on the landowner and occupiers of these plots, as derived from the schedule:

Plot No.	Landowner	Occupier	Description	Acreage (acre, rood, perch)
523	Henry Howarth	Joseph Ollerton and others	2 cottages and gardens	0a or 24p
524	Lady Susanna	Henry Hodgkinson	House and garden	0a 2r 15p
502	"	"	Lower Pasture (arable)	4a 2r 8p
503	"	"	Higher Pasture (pasture)	3a 2r 14p
507	"	"	Great Meadow (arable)	4a 1r 16p
509	"	"	Peter Close (arable)	4a 2r 5p
510	"	"	Peter Close (arable)	3a 3r 21p
525	"	"	Little Meadow (meadow)	1a 1r 19p
526	"	"	Wheat Field (pasture)	4a 0r 24p
527	"	"	Little Meadow (pasture)	1a 2r 35p
Total acreage				29a 2r 35p

- 4.2.5 This information indicates that the existing house at Rotherham Top Farm was seemingly in existence in 1840 and formed part of a small farmstead of just under 30 acres that was owned by Lady Susanna Hoghton. The building to the north-west formed part of this small farmstead, with fields (some of which contained ponds) surrounding it to the north, west and south. The building labelled as Plot 523, immediately to the east, was under different ownership and consisted of two cottages with gardens. Two buildings are shown on the opposite side of the road, in the location of White Hill at the junction of Preston Road and Moss Lane (Figure 3). This map shows that in the mid-19th century Rotherham Top was a small settlement of four dwellings (two with associated farm buildings).
- 4.2.6 The 1841 England Census records four separate houses at 'Rotherham Top' but does not specifically name 'Rotherham Top Farm'. A Charlotte Hodgkinson is listed as a farmer at Rotherham Top, possibly the widow of, or a relation of, Henry Hodgkinson.
- 4.2.7 The Ordnance Survey map published in 1849 shows the same form of buildings represented on the Tithe Map of 1840, but provides additional information on names. The house now known as Rotherham Top Farm (house) is labelled as 'Lowe's', and the dwelling is not shown as long as it now is, although there is a small projection against the south-west elevation. Gardens or an orchard are shown to the east and south-east sides, and the site was still accessed from Preston Road. A detached building to the north-west of the farmhouse is presumed to be the associated agricultural structures relating to the small farmstead. The building that was identified on the 1840 Tithe Map as being two cottages, to the east of Rotherham Top Farm, is annotated as the 'Oddfellows Arms' (Figure 4a).
- 4.2.8 The England Census from 1861 continues to list a Catherine Hodskinson (possibly a mis-spelling) as a farmer of 16 acres at Rotherham Top, residing with her daughter Elizabeth, son Robert and two farm servants. In total, this Census Return records six separate inhabited houses at Rotherham Top. Elizabeth Hodgkinson is listed as a farmer at Rotherham Top in an 1864 trade directory (Kelly's Directory 1864), which may indicate Catherine had either died or retired.

- 4.2.9 In 1871, only four inhabited houses are listed at Rotherham Top in the England Census, two of which have the head of the families listed as farmers, Edward Robinson and Thomas Schofield; one may have been at Rotherham Top Farm, with the other at White Hill Farm although neither are specifically named. The other two houses were inhabited by a twister and a beerseller (Thomas Webster), possibly one being the Oddfellows Arms which is labelled on the Ordnance Survey map of 1849 (Figure 4a). Rotherham Top Farm is specifically named in the 1891 Census, when Henry Blackledge (age 34) is listed there as a farmer, residing with his three young children, his sister and his nephew.
- 4.2.10 The Ordnance Survey map published in 1895 shows the house at Rotherham Top Farm as shorter than it now is, with the possible farm buildings still present to the north-west. A small structure is shown between, with apparent pens to the north-east side, which may represent pig sties. The building to the east is no longer labelled as the 'Oddfellows Arms' (Figure 4b).
- 4.2.11 The larger-scale Ordnance Survey map published in 1911 provides clearer information on the form of the buildings at 'Top Rotherham Farm', with the house shown with small extensions to the north-west (possible external stair?) and south-east. The small building to the west has been extended, and the two square features to the north-east side are characteristic of pens or runs for pig sties. The larger building to the north-west may have been a barn, with possibly a cowhouse and stabling, structures which would have been necessary for a small farmstead (Figure 4c). By this date, the site was occupied by Robert Dickinson (farmer, age 50), with his wife Sarah and son John (England Census 1911), when the farm was listed as 'Rotherham Top Farm'.
- 4.2.12 On the Ordnance Survey map of 1928, the site is labelled as 'Fairies Farm', with the buildings within the site boundary being essentially the same as they were in 1911 (Figures 4c and 4d).
- 4.2.13 The site continued to be labelled as 'Fairies Farm' up until at least 1960, as shown from the Ordnance Survey mapping (Figure 5). From the middle to the 20th century the previously agricultural land which surrounded the site began to be developed for housing. Part of Lea Road to the south seems to have been laid out by 1947 (Figure 5b), with houses certainly present by 1962 (Figure 5c). Changes to the buildings within the site boundary had occurred by 1967, as what may have been agricultural structures to the north-west of the house had seemingly been removed and replaced by a large building by this date, although the house itself remained shorter than it is now (Figure 5d).
- 4.2.14 An undated photograph of Rotherham Top Farmhouse, possibly dating to the 1960s or 70s, shows the stone-built south-east gable of the house with a modern sheds to the west and north. The south-east gable is asymmetrical, and has a three-light mullioned window on the ground floor with hoodmould, a first floor window with hoodmould (mullion missing), with a possibly inserted window to the west, and mullioned window lighting the roof space. There is a projecting two-storey porch against the north-east elevation which has a blocked two-light mullioned window at first floor level (Plate 3).
-



Plate 3: Undated view, looking north, showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse
(Source: Lancashire Red Rose Collections)

4.2.15 Modern satellite imagery from 2009 shows that there are two vehicular access points to Rotherham Top Farm, from Preston Road and from Lea Road. The house had been extended by this date, with a large modern shed to the north-west, and further sheds to the west. There is a large grassed area to the north of the house, with gardens to the east which are bounded by trees which screen the property from Preston Road and the service station (Figure 6).

4.3 Site Description

4.3.1 A site visit was undertaken on 14th September 2023 to inspect the Rotherham Top Farm and its surroundings (Figure 2). Photographs from the site visit are included in Appendix I for reference.

4.3.2 Rotherham Top Farm is located on the west side of Preston Road, from where there is vehicular access located immediately to the north of a BP service station/Spar shop. The property is not clearly visible from the Preston Road access point, due to trees and foliage which defines the western boundary of the service station and due to a slight curve in the access track to the site. From Preston Road, there is therefore no clear view of the house, it is only once the viewer heads westwards towards the property that the house comes into view (Plates 4-6).

4.3.3 The house is visible from Lea Road which forms the southern boundary of the site. From here, the garden has no boundary fence or hedge, so the dwelling is easily viewed although from this direction it is clearly the modern extension that is predominantly in the view, rather than the older fabric. There is a pedestrian access path from Lea Road leading to the property (Plates 7 and 8).

4.3.4 Rotherham Top Farmhouse is a two-storey building that is constructed of coursed sandstone with

quoins and it has a modern slate roof with three chimney stacks. There are clearly two phases to the building, the older 17th century section to the north-west, and a late 20th century extension to the south-east. The main entrance to the property is through a two-storey gabled porch against the north-east elevation. The doorway is plain, with a simple square head, and above a former mullioned window with hoodmould has been infilled and replaced with a modern plaque with the name of the house and cockerel motif (Plates 9 and 10). There is a small ground floor window in the north-west side of the porch, with another in the south-east side. A former first floor mullioned window (as shown on Plate 3) has been replaced by a modern opening (Plates 9-11).

- 4.3.5 To the north-west side of the porch there is one bay which has windows at ground and first floor level, both of which contain modern fenestration with any former mullions and hoodmoulds having been removed (Plate 10). To the south-east side of the porch there are two ground floor windows, the nearest to the porch is of four lights with one surviving stone mullion and chamfered sides, whilst the southernmost is of two lights separated by a stone mullion. Both of these windows have a continuous hoodmould above (Plate 12). At first floor level above there are two windows with modern lintels; any sign of historic stone mullions, hoodmoulds and reveals have been removed from these openings (Plate 9).
- 4.3.6 There is a clear construction break between the historic part of Rotherham Top Farmhouse and the late 20th century extension, although the new addition has been constructed in coursed sandstone and shares the same ridgeline as the older part (Plates 9 and 13). The modern extension to the former farmhouse has plain square fenestration in the north-east elevation (Plate 9).
- 4.3.7 The north-west elevation of the house is partly obscured by a modern conservatory with stone plinth, but it was possible to note the presence of a blocked first floor mullioned window and an apparent later first-floor blocked doorway with a modern window to its west side (Plates 14-16). The blocked doorway may have related to the presence of a possible external set of stairs noted on the historic 19th and early 20th century mapping (Figure 4).
- 4.3.8 The south-west elevation of the historic part of Rotherham Top Farmhouse is partly obscured by foliage, but a two-light mullioned ground floor window is visible, with the remains of a hoodmould, and a modern opening at first floor level, possibly in the location of an earlier example (Plates 17 and 18). To the south-east side of this there is a modern outshut which has a door in its north-west side providing access to a utility room (Plate 19). This outshut appears to utilise historic fabric, which may indicate that there was already an extension to the older part of the building against this elevation.
- 4.3.9 To the south-east side of this outshut, the majority of this part of the house is the modern extension which was possibly added in the 1970s or 80s. Whilst the extension has been constructed in the same type of sandstone, shares the same ridgeline and has some fenestration which appears to match the historic windows, there are differences to this part of the dwelling which distinguish from the older

fabric. For example, the south-east elevation, which is asymmetrical, has a set-back section which allows a large window to provide natural light into the sitting room, and in the south-west elevation there is a large long window which is reminiscent of the historic mullioned window in the north-east elevation (Plates 20 and 21). This fenestration means that the south-west and south-east elevations have the appearance of being the principal sides of this part of the house (both can be seen from Lea Road) compared to the windows in the north-east elevation of the modern extension, which are much more utilitarian (a distinct contrast to the older part of the building, where the north-east side is the main elevation). A doorway in the south-west elevation provides additional access into the interior of the building.

- 4.3.10 The interior of the building can be accessed by one of three doorways; the original entrance in the two-storey porch (Plate 10); the modern doorway in the outshut (Plate 15) or the door in the south-west elevation of the modern extension (Plate 20).
- 4.3.11 It is clear that the interior of the original part of the building has been altered, as noted in the listed building description, although there are some historic features surviving. For example, in the ground floor room in the second bay there is a large inglenook fireplace with ovolo-moulded bressummer, and large beams orientated north-west to south-east (Plates 22 and 23). The south-east end of this room is now occupied by a modern kitchen (Plate 24), however this appears to historically have been a separate room as suggested by the chamfer stops present on the beams.
- 4.3.12 There were no features of historic interest noted in the room to the north-west side of the inglenook fireplace, apart from boxed-in beams (Plate 25). It is from this room where access is provided into the conservatory (Plate 26).
- 4.3.13 The original south-east elevation of the house (as shown on the historic photograph reproduced as Plate 3) is visible from a sitting room located in the modern extension. The three-light mullioned window survives as a feature complete with its hoodmould (Plates 27 and 28). This sitting room, although modern, is an interesting example of a 1970s / 80s interior, with considerable use of wood and the presence of a mezzanine which allows natural light to flow into the space from the large window in the south-east elevation (Plates 27 and 29).
- 4.3.14 Access to the first floor is via the staircase located in the modern extension (Plates 27 and 28). No evidence was visible for the original staircase in the older part of the house, it may have been located in an outshut against the south-west elevation, as there does not appear to have been enough space against the inglenook fireplace as is often the case with baffle, or lobby-entrance, dwellings of this type (see Brunskill 2000, 68-69).
- 4.3.15 At the top of the staircase, part of a former two-light mullioned window with hoodmould is present as a feature, now truncated by a modern dividing wall (Plate 30). This window is visible on the photograph reproduced as Plate 3, but when that image was taken it had already lost its mullion.

The corridor which runs along the western side of the first floor has a doorway which has been defined by modern wooden panelling; the head of this doorway appears to be similar to a Tudor arch, therefore this may be an original or at least historic opening which has been respected by the modern alterations (Plate 31).

- 4.3.16 The only other historic features noted on the first floor were the presence of the same form of ovolo moulded wooden beams already seen on the ground floor, although on the first floor they are orientated north-east to south-west (Plate 32) (some are boxed-in). Plates 33 to 35 are images of the bedrooms within the oldest part of the house, all of which have washing facilities whether its an en-suite or provision of wash-hand basin (the first floor of the projecting two-storey porch has been converted to an en-suite for one of the bedrooms).
- 4.3.17 Rotherham Top Farmhouse is located within a large plot which contains gardens and outbuildings (Figure 6). Immediately to the west of the house there is a large wooden shed with adjoining car port, and a greenhouse of late 20th century date (Plates 36 and 37). To the north-west side of the site there is a large brick-built structure, which is light-industrial in character when viewed from the south-west, but which has a domestic-looking frontage when looking north-west (Plates 38 and 39). Vehicular access to this large building appears to have been possible by the driveway which leads to Lea Road (Plate 40). There was no evidence noted within this building for any historic fabric which may have related to the earlier, possible agricultural structures, which occupied this part of the site historically (see Figure 4).
- 4.3.18 To the north and south-east of the site there are lawned areas which are bounded by trees and foliage (Plates 41-43). The area to the south-east of the site is raised above the ground level of the rest of the site (Plate 43), and there is a pond against the eastern boundary which separates the site from the service station on Preston Road.

4.4 Setting of Rotherham Top Farm

- 4.4.1 As part of the site visit, an assessment was made of the setting of Rotherham Top Farm. The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced' (Historic England 2017, 2). The setting is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (MHCLG 2021, 71).
- 4.4.2 The setting of Rotherham Top Farm relates to the large plot in which it is set, which is partly gardens and partly 20th century structures and features. Outside the site boundary, there are 20th century residential properties in close proximity and the modern service station on Preston Road, with no evidence for the former rural and presumably tranquil agricultural landscape in which it was formerly situated (Figure 6). There are some historic properties in close proximity, such as the house and

former agricultural buildings at White Hill Farm (historically Whitehead Hill) on the opposite side of the road, and the late 19th century No's 56 and 58 Preston Road on the north side of Moss Lane (in existence by 1895, see Figure 4b and Plate 44). However, in general the surroundings are of a residential character of semi-detached and detached properties with gardens and boundaries.

- 4.4.3 Views of Rotherham Top Farm are limited from Preston Road, but from Lea Road it is visible due to the lack of a garden boundary, although the original historic elevations cannot be viewed and experienced from this direction due to the existence of the 20th century extension (Plates 7 and 8).

5 Statement of Significance

5.1 Assessment of Significance

- 5.1.1 Significance (for heritage policy) *“is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting”* (MHCLG 2021, 71-72). The heritage interests referred to in national planning policy broadly relate to the ‘heritage values’ referred to in Conservation Principles which are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal (Historic England 2008).
- 5.1.2 Rotherham Top Farm has archaeological (evidential) and historical interest as it provides evidence for settlement at Whittle le Woods dating back to at least the 17th century. It also provides evidence for a relatively small farmstead which may have only required agricultural buildings to operate at subsistence level. The original house has some archaeological evidence for its historic character through the use of traditional building material, survival of large decorative beams, the inglenook fireplace and blocked openings. There is a clear construction break between the old and new fabric, which allows for a clear interpretation of the development of the building, evidence for which is also provided by historic mapping and photographs.
- 5.1.3 The house has aesthetic and architectural value through its principal elevation with two-storey porch, mullioned windows and the presence of hoodmoulds. The property is best viewed from the access track off Preston Road where the historic principal elevation can be clearly seen and understood. From this direction, the modern structures to the north and east are not visible, allowing an unencumbered view towards the property.
- 5.1.4 The utilitarian modern buildings present to the west and north of the house do not positively contribute to the significance of the Grade II listed property, however they do not particularly detract from how Rotherham Top Farmhouse is viewed as they are not clearly visible in views from Preston Road and Lea Road.
- 5.1.5 The historic setting of Rotherham Top Farm has been eroded through residential development has occurred around it from the middle of the 20th century. In its current form, the property is set in a large plot which is partly occupied by modern buildings and partly by lawns, with residential properties situated to the north and west, a service station to the east and Lea Road to the south. Although the plot contains structures which do not contribute positively to how the building is seen, the large plot in which Rotherham Top Farmhouse is set does distinguish the house as one that is different from those which surround it. However, the Grade II property is no longer viewed and experienced in relation to the other historic buildings on the opposite side of Preston Road, or the rural landscape in which it formerly stood.

5.2 Assessment of Impact

- 5.2.1 The proposals will involve the renovation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse and conversion into two 2 dwellings with a new rear single-story extension to the extended part of the building, the replacement of the conservatory with a garden room to the rear of the listed building, and the construction of new dwellings within the grounds on the site of existing structures and garden areas.
- 5.2.2 The renovation of the Grade II former farmhouse would involve the subdivision of the property, but most historic elements such as the windows with hoodmoulds, blocked openings and internal features (bressummer, moulded beams and former windows of the original building) will remain and be incorporated into the design to ensure the character and evolution of the building will still be visible. Windows will need to be removed at the rear of the building for the new extensions, but those in the extended part of the building are not in their original position and have been reused.
- 5.2.3 Removal of the modern conservatory against the north-west elevation would better reveal presence of the blocked first floor mullioned window and apparent later first-floor blocked doorway, which are currently obscured. The proposed new extensions are to the rear of the property so would not be visible from the access track off Preston Road where the historic principal elevation can be seen. These would be lower in height than the listed building and not dominate in views of this elevation.
- 5.2.4 The new dwellings within the ground will be constructed along the northern part of the site which is currently occupied by the large building shown on Plates 38 and 39 and an area of lawn (Plate 41). Two dwellings will be positioned to face towards the Grade II listed house, making the historic property the focus of the new development. The removal of the 20th century building will not have a detrimental impact on the significance of Rotherham Top Farmhouse as it is of modern construction, utilitarian in character and does not contribute positively to how the Grade II house is viewed and experienced.
- 5.2.5 A new dwelling is proposed to be constructed on the site of the 20th century wooden shed, car port and greenhouse, located to the west of the house. In order for this not to have a negative impact on Rotherham Top Farmhouse, this new build should be sufficiently distanced from the historic house to ensure views are not blocked or restricted and should be of a size and scale that means it is not visible when looking at the site from the access track off Preston Road, or dominate views from Lea Road.
- 5.2.6 It is proposed that a single new dwelling is constructed to the south of Rotherham Top Farmhouse, on the site of the raised area of lawn that is visible from Lea Road. This will have a similar ridge height and will be orientated so that the Grade II property can still be viewed from Lea Road.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 An assessment has been made of the historical development and the existing structures at Rotherham Top Farm. The Grade II listed house which is located within the site boundary dates to the 17th century, and historically was a small farmstead situated at Rotherham Top along with a small number of other properties in a rural landscape on the main road north of Whittle le Woods. Historic mapping shows the site was surrounded by fields up until the middle of the 20th century, when residential development began in close proximity changing the character of the area. In the second half of the 20th century, Rotherham Top Farmhouse was extended south-eastwards, and any farm buildings which appear to have been associated with the house (as shown from the historic mapping) were removed.
- 6.1.2 The site visit has identified that Rotherham Top Farmhouse is stone-built and consists of two construction phases, with evidence for blocked openings evident. Historic features such as mullioned windows with hoodmoulds, bressummer and inglenook fireplace, and moulded beams survive, along with windows relating to the earlier house still surviving and incorporated as features in the extension. It is recommended that these are incorporated into the new extensions where possible.
- 6.1.3 The house is set in a large plot that contains 20th century structures which do not contribute positively to the attributes which form the significance of the dwelling. The setting of Rotherham Top Farm is one of a residential character, with the site being surrounded by late 20th century dwellings and a service station on Preston Road. The property is best viewed from Preston Road, where the historic principal elevation can be easily seen, although views are possible from Lea Road towards the modern addition to the building.
- 6.1.4 The proposals entail the renovation of the existing house into two new dwellings. This would involve the retention of historic openings and features, with no change to the principal elevation which faces towards Preston Road. New dwellings are proposed to be constructed within the grounds, involving the removal of 20th century buildings and structures which do not contribute positively to the significance and setting of the Grade II house. These new dwellings will be constructed with stone facing to match the historic property, and will be orientated in such a way as to face towards the former farmhouse, making it the focus of the site. They will be located on part of the site which is not visible from Preston Road and will therefore not be present in views.
- 6.1.5 The new dwelling to the west of the historic house, on the site of the existing wooden shed and car port, will need to be of such a scale and massing that it is not visible in views of Rotherham Top Farmhouse from Preston Road, and does not dominate how the property is seen from Lea Road.
- 6.1.6 The new dwelling proposed to be constructed to the south of Rotherham Top Farmhouse, on an area which is currently raised lawn will be angled so that it does not obscure or compete in views of the

Grade II listed property, and allows some of the green space that currently exists to be retained.

- 6.1.7 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposals would not cause substantial harm to the Grade II listed Rotherham Top Farmhouse as its archaeological, historic, aesthetic and architectural values will remain. Consideration will need to be given to the design of the dwellings to the west and south of the historic property to ensure that the impact to the setting and views is minimised, allowing the former farmhouse to still be seen within an enclosure which distinguishes it from the 20th century housing which surrounds the site.

7 Bibliography

Primary Sources

Yates' Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster 1786 (National Library of Scotland)

A Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster from an accurate survey in the years 1828 and 1829, G Hennet 1830 (National Library of Scotland)

Plan of the Township of Whittle le Woods in the Parish of Leyland 1840 (The Genealogist)

Ordnance Survey Map 1849, 6" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheet LXXVII

Ordnance Survey Map 1895, 6" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheet LXXVII.NE

Ordnance Survey Map 1911, 25" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheets LXXVII.3 and 4

Ordnance Survey Map 1928, 25" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheet LXXVII.3 and 4

Ordnance Survey Map 1930, 6" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheet LXXVII.NE

Ordnance Survey Map 1947, 6" to 1 mile scale, Lancashire Sheet LXXVII.NE

Ordnance Survey Map 1962, 1: 10 000 scale, Plan SD52SE

Ordnance Survey Map 1967, 1: 10 000 scale, Plan SD52SE

Secondary Sources

Brunskill, R W 2000 *Houses and Cottages of Britain: Origins and Developments of Traditional Buildings*. London: Victor Gollancz

Cifa 2020 *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Cifa 2021 *Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists/IHBC/IEEMA

Farrer, W and Brownbill, J 1911 *The Victoria County History of the Counties of England: Lancashire, Volume 6*. Reprinted by Dawsons in 1966 for The University of London Institute of Historical Research

Historic England, 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*

Historic England, 2017 *The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (Second Edition)

Historic England, 2018 *Listed Buildings and Curtilage: Historic England Advice Note No.10*

Kelly's Post Office Directory of Lancashire 1864

MHCLG 2021 *National Planning Policy Framework: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Revised July 2021

Websites

Lancashire Red Rose Collections:

<https://redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk/index.php?WINID=1695717534739> – Accessed September 2023

National Heritage List for England (Rotherham Top Farmhouse):

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1281043> – Accessed September 2023

National Library of Scotland:

<https://maps.nls.uk/> – Accessed September 2023

APPENDIX 1: SITE VISIT PHOTOGRAPHS



Plate 4: View looking south down Preston Road. The access track to Rotherham Top Farm is visible to right of photograph before the Spar



Plate 5: View looking west showing the access track to Rotherham Top Farm



Plate 6: View looking west from the access track from Preston Road showing the Grade II listed Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 7: View looking north from Lea Road showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse and its associated garden



Plate 8: View looking north-east showing Rotherham Top Farmhouse (the modern extension in particular) with the current pedestrian access path from Lea Road



Plate 9: View looking south-west showing the principal elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 10: View looking south-west showing the two-storey porch of the 17th century section of Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 11: View looking north-west along the north-east elevation showing the projecting two-storey porch



Plate 12: North-east elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse showing the ground floor windows with continuous hoodmould



Plate 13: North-east elevation of Rotherham Top Farm showing the construction break between the 17th century fabric (right) and late 20th century extension (left)



Plate 14: Rotherham Top Farmhouse as seen from the north-west of the site



Plate 15: North-west elevation of Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 16: North-west elevation of Rotherham Top Farm with modern conservatory



Plate 17: South-west elevations of Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 18: South-west elevation of the older section of Rotherham Top Farmhouse



Plate 19: South-west elevation showing modern outshut partly utilising older stonework



Plate 20: View looking north-east showing the south-west elevation of the modern extension to the house



Plate 21: View looking north-west showing the south-east elevation of the modern part of the house



Plate 22: View looking north-west showing the large inglenook fireplace with modern fireplace, and moulded bressummer, ground floor of the original house



Plate 23: Detail of the bressummer (spanning the fireplace), and the two beams with ovolo moulding and chamfer stops, ground floor of original house



Plate 24: View looking south-east showing the modern kitchen in the original part of the house



Plate 25: View looking north-east showing the northern room on the ground floor of the original house; access to the conservatory is to left of photograph



Plate 26: View looking north-west showing the interior of the conservatory



Plate 27: View looking north-west showing the sitting room in the modern extension. The original external wall of the house is visible behind the staircase



Plate 28: Original mullioned window which survives as a feature within the modern extension



Plate 29: View looking south-east showing the sitting room with mezzanine in the modern extension



Plate 30: Part of a former two-light window in the original south-east elevation of the house, now incorporated but truncated within the modern extension



Plate 31: View looking north-west showing the first-floor corridor in the original part of the house.
The doorway has been defined with modern panelling, but may respect an historic opening



Plate 32: View looking south-west showing one of the exposed ovolo-moulded beams on the first floor



Plate 33: One of the first-floor bedrooms in the original part of the house



Plate 34: One of the first-floor bedrooms in the original part of the house



Plate 35: Northernmost bedroom on the first-floor, original part of the house



Plate 36: View looking south-west showing the wooden shed and car port to the west of the house



Plate 37: View looking north-east towards the house showing the shed and car port with a former telephone kiosk to the south side included as a garden feature



Plate 38: View looking north-east showing the large building to the north-west side of the site



Plate 39: View looking north showing the domestic-style frontage to the large building in the north-west part of the site



Plate 40: View looking south from within the site towards Lea Road



Plate 41: View looking south from the northernmost part of the site, currently grassed over and bounded by established trees and hedges



Plate 42: View looking north-east showing part of the existing garden and tarmac areas to the north of the house

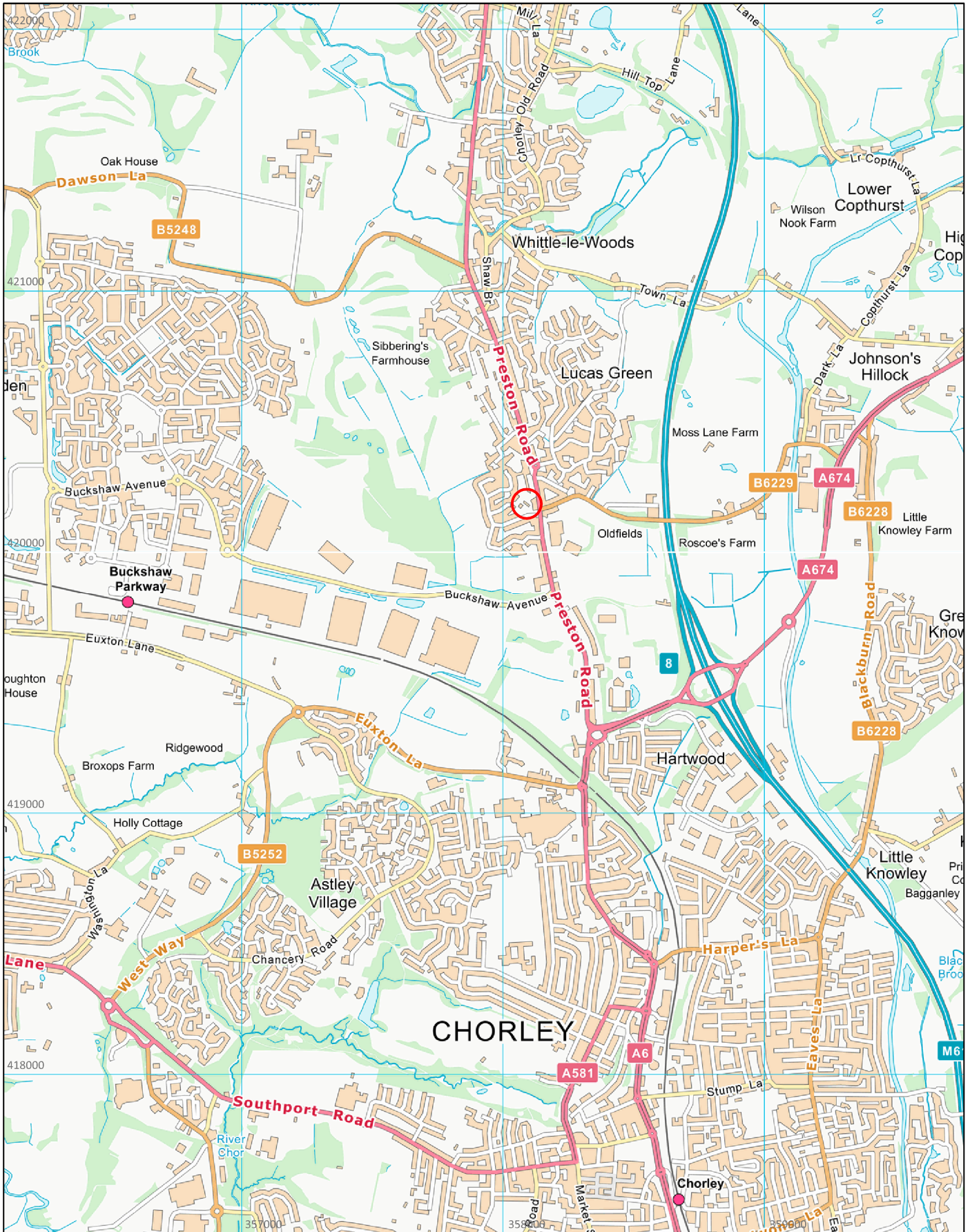


Plate 43: View looking south-east showing part of the raised lawn area and tree-lined boundary to the south-east of the house (Lea Road is in the background)



Plate 44: View looking north-east showing the house at White Hill Farm with No' 56 and 58 Preston
Road to left on photograph on the opposite side of Moss Lane

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES






 <p>Eden Heritage Ltd 2023</p>	PROJECT: Rotherham Top Farm, Whittle-le-Woods Chorley, Lancashire	KEY:  site location
	CLIENT: Primrose Holdings	 <p>Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)</p>
	REPORT: EH263/01	
	SCALE: 1:20,000 at A4	
	DRAWN BY: MDR	
DATE: July 2023		

Figure 1: Site Location.







 <p>Eden Heritage Ltd 2023</p>	<p>PROJECT: Rotherham Top Farm, Whittle-le-Woods Chorley, Lancashire</p> <p>CLIENT: Primrose Holdings</p> <p>REPORT: EH26301</p> <p>SCALE: 1:5,000 at A4</p> <p>DRAWN BY: MDR</p> <p>DATE: July 2023</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> site outline</p> <p> listed building</p>	 <p>Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)</p>
---	--	--	---

Figure 2: Detailed Site Location.

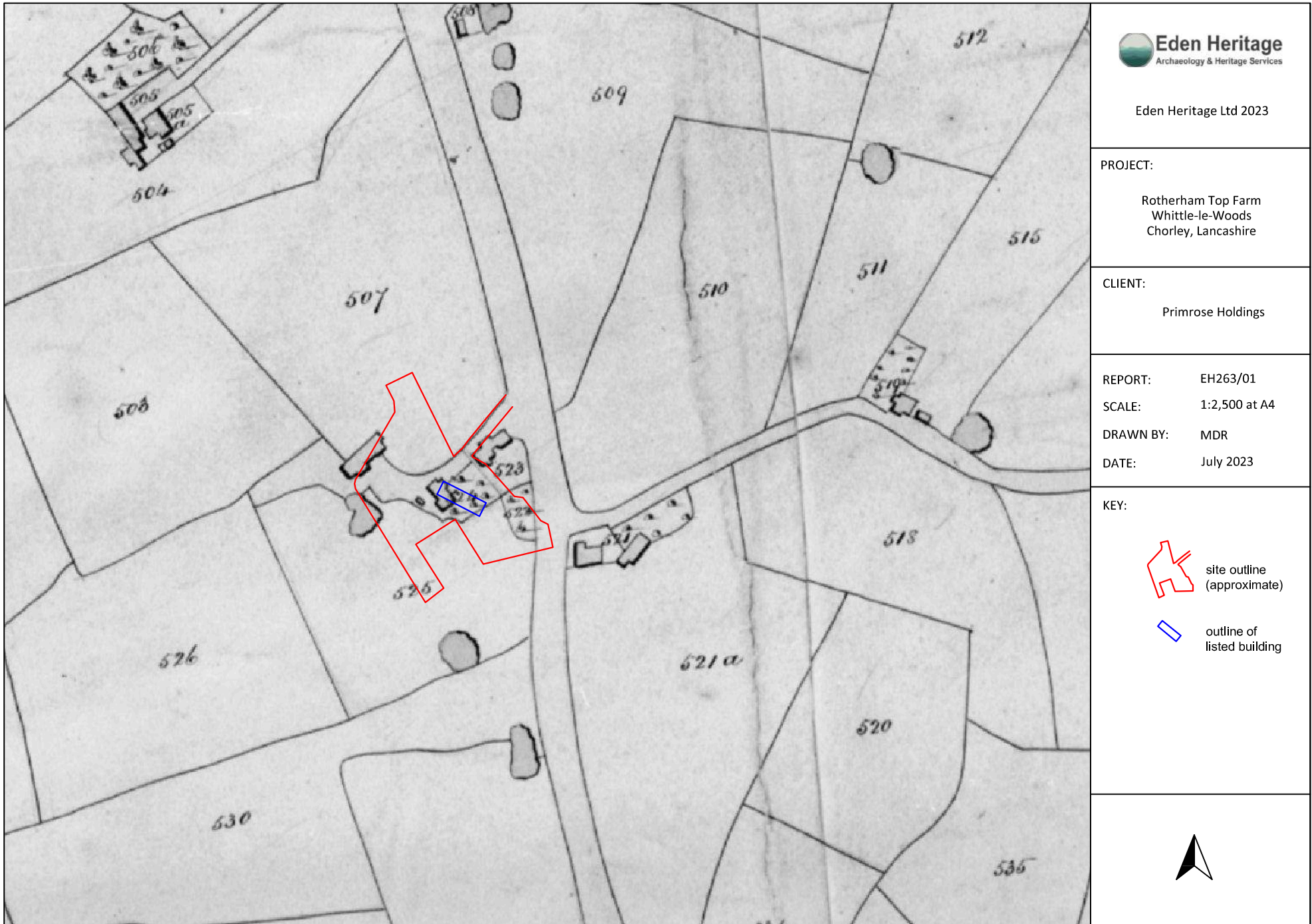


Figure 3: Extract from the Plan of the Township of Whittle Le Woods in the Parish of Leyland (1840).

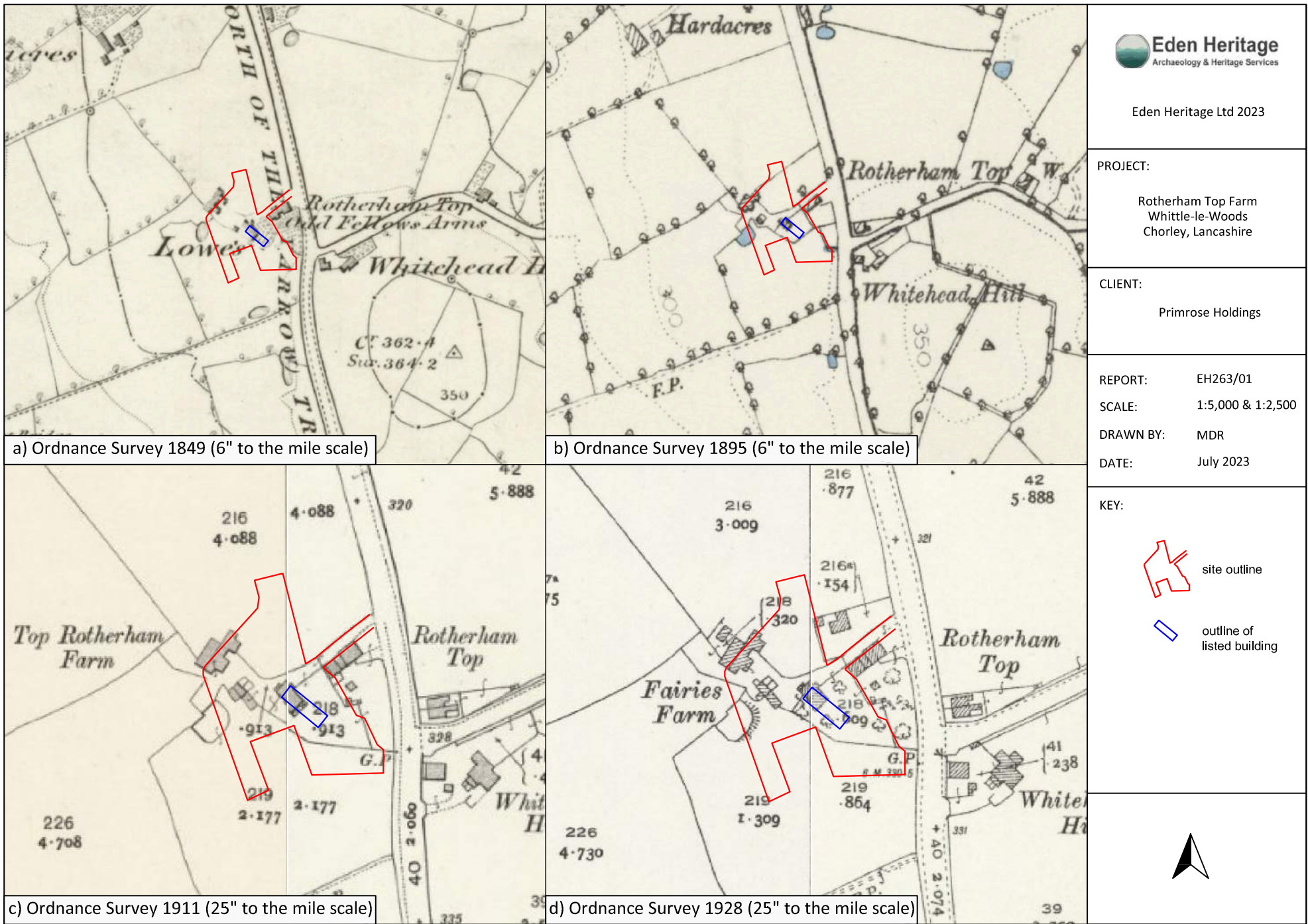


Figure 4: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1849-1928).

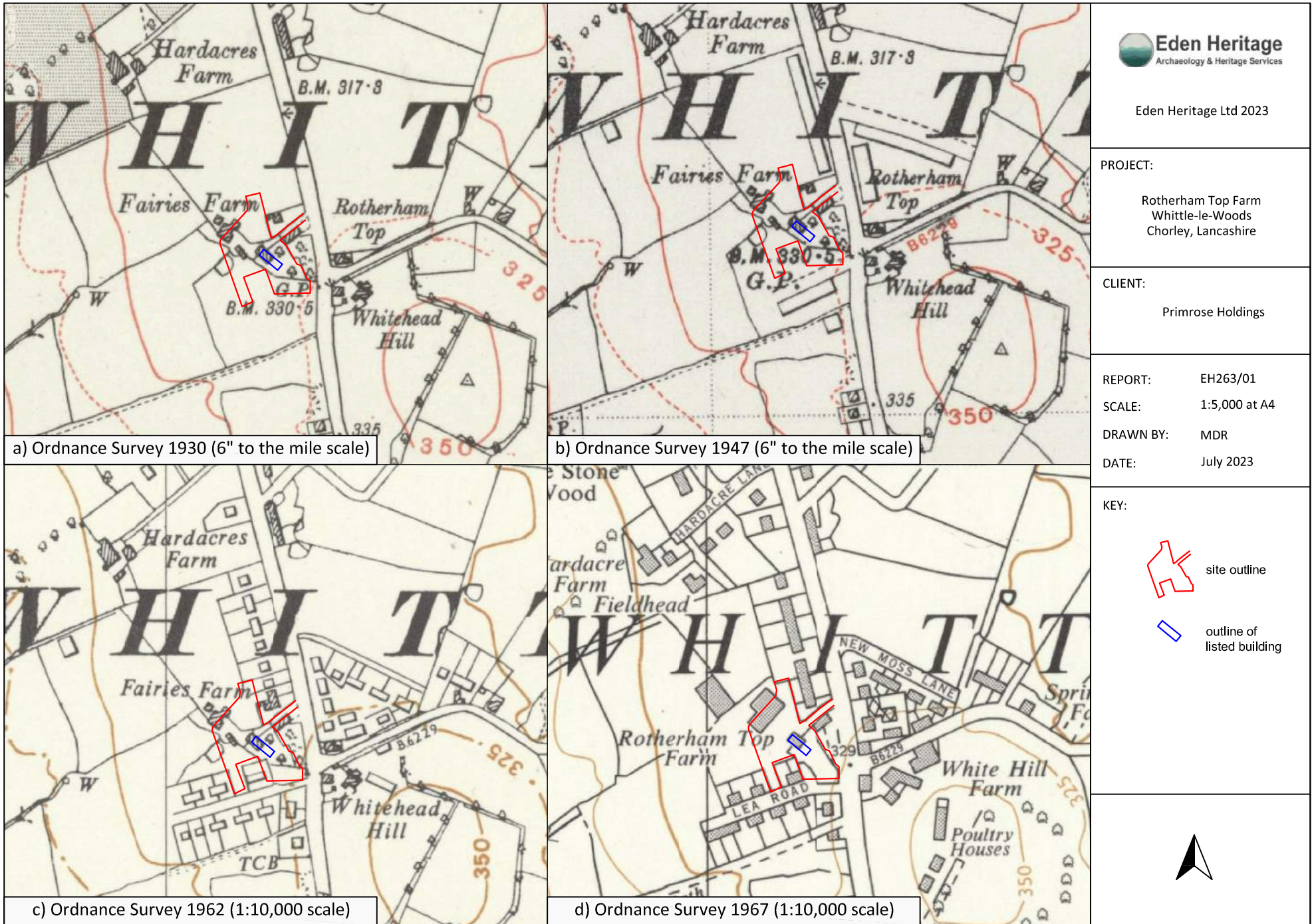


Figure 5: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1930-1967).



PROJECT:

Rotherham Top Farm
Whittle-le-Woods
Chorley, Lancashire

CLIENT:

Primrose Holdings



REPORT: EH263/01

SCALE: Not to scale

DRAWN BY: MDR

DATE: July 2023

KEY:

-  site outline
-  outline of listed building



Contains Google
Earth data (2023)

Figure 6: Modern satellite imagery (2009).

**Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based
Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey**

**Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs**

