

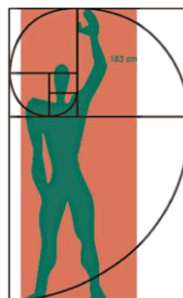
THE BOAT INN

ERBISTOCK

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Rob Burns

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Boat public house at Erbistock is grade II listed, and was originally two separate structures, converted into a single use building at some point in the 19th century. Constructed in the 17th century, the buildings have evolved from domestic use to a public use, and are associated with the windlass crossing of the river Dee. The list description is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The site is within the Erbistock conservation area, although there are no other heritage designations in or around the proximity of the site, and references to the site on the Coflein database and in the Clwyd-Powys Regional Historic Environment Record, are limited to the listed building entry for the Boat Inn.
- 1.3 The area has seen little change from its existing 19th century character, due to its relative isolation, and with little development pressure. However, the Boat Inn is currently closed, having failed as a public house, despite its picturesque location and the inherent quality of the buildings themselves, and requires substantial investment in order to provide a sustainable use.
- 1.4 This document forms part of the submission for changes to the fabric of the building, and the retention of its use as a public house. As a heritage asset any application is required to address the provisions within the Planning Policy Wales document (2016), and should conform to Conservation Principles (Cadw, 2011) concerning heritage and enhancement of the historic environment. The significance of the asset is described in this report, and the impact of the change to the building is assessed.
- 1.5 This report has been prepared by Rob Burns, formerly with Historic England as firstly Guardianship Archaeologist and then Historic Areas Inspector, and latterly as the Urban Design and Heritage Manager for Liverpool City Council. Since forming Burns Urban Design and Heritage as an independent consultancy, projects have included Conservation Management Plans for a series of historic buildings, and masterplanning in World Heritage Sites in the UK, as well as a series of impact assessments. The author has a degree and post-graduate degrees in Archaeology and Urban Design, and over 35 years of extensive experience in all aspects of the historic built environment, both in the UK and abroad.

2. HISTORY AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The modern settlement of Erbistock is located in a loop of the River Dee on its northern bank, less than 2km west of Overton. The village is reached by a minor lane road leading south of the A539 that links Whitchurch with Llangollen, and terminates at the river, and onward travel from that point was via the ferry at the Boat Inn. Topographically, the settlement has its lowest point at the river Dee, with the church of St Hilary and the Boat Inn immediately above the river terrace, and the land then rises up northwards before it levels out on the plateau above. Erbistock is derived from Old English terms meaning 'Erp's place', though the element stoc can also carry the more specific meaning of a dairy farm or even a secondary or outlying settlement. It was first recorded in Domesday Book in 1086 as Erpestoch, and by 1291 was referred to as Erbystok, very similar to the modern form. Very little is known of the early history of Erbistock, although the location of the ferry crossing, and the proximity to good agricultural land could both be cited as reasons for the establishment of the settlement. A third reason is the location of the church, which was formerly dedicated to St Erbin, and was referenced in the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535. The parish was carved out of a larger landholding belonging to the church at Bangor-on-Dee, and Erbistock will originally have been a chapel dependent on the mother church, a situation more likely to have occurred in the pre-Conquest era. Firmer evidence of a mediaeval date for the settlement is provided with the 19th century tithe maps. Open fields lay immediately to the north of the church, to the north-east, and perhaps to the east where the grounds of the rectory seem to have supplanted an earlier field pattern. Open field strips suggest the presence of individual farmers whose lands were interspersed with those of their neighbours, and the proximity of the fields to the church suggests that their dwellings were close by. It is likely then that there were more houses along the lane leading down to the church than there are today and this represented the nucleated or semi-nucleated community of Erbistock. By 1770 the dwellings had thinned out, for an estate map of that date shows a similar pattern of settlement to the present day with the small cluster of buildings around the church on the riverside and a few dispersed farm buildings and cottages to the north. During the 17th and 18th centuries the large residences at Manley Hall and Erbistock Hall were founded by wealthy families moving into the area. The church, dedicated to St Hilary, was entirely rebuilt in the standard Gothic style in 1860, the only survivals from an earlier age being the Romanesque font, a chandelier that is likely to be 18th-century, and several wall memorials. The dates of its predecessors have not been established, but there was a church here in 1692 which was at least partially constructed in timber, and Figure 22 in the body of this report shows the previous church in 1794. This was described as a 'neat modern edifice in the Grecian style of architecture' by Samuel Lewis in 1833 (A Topographical Dictionary of Wales, 1833). The modern churchyard is rectilinear, almost rectangular, but there are hints in the alignment of its northern boundary of a smaller and perhaps more curvilinear enclosure in earlier times. Excluding the church, two buildings are of historic interest. The Boat Inn situated just to the west of the church, date is wholly of

17th-, 19th- and 20th-century construction. Originally two buildings now converted to one, it takes its name from a former ferry across the Dee. Portions of the Old Rectory (Grade II) can be dated to the late 17th or early 18th century, though most of the building is late 18th-century. Elsewhere in the parish, Grove Farm, Manley Hall, Erbistock Hall and, on the far side of the river, Llan-y-cefn are all 18th-century and earlier. No features of archaeological interest were noted during the survey that was conducted as part of the original field assessment by the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust, in 1992. It must be assumed that any archaeological deposits relating to the putative medieval settlement lie beneath, or in the immediate vicinity of, the present buildings. The tithe map shows that the fields edging the settlement on the north consisted largely of a former open field system made up of the characteristic elongated strips, sometimes termed quilllets. Palmer and Owen in 1910 noted that three closes were called 'the village fields'. (A History of Ancient Tenures of Land in North Wales and the Marches, A.N. Palmer and E. Owen, 1910). Residual elements of these quilllets still survive to the east of Glebe Cottage, but there are no indications of the ridge and furrow found elsewhere in Wrexham Maelor.

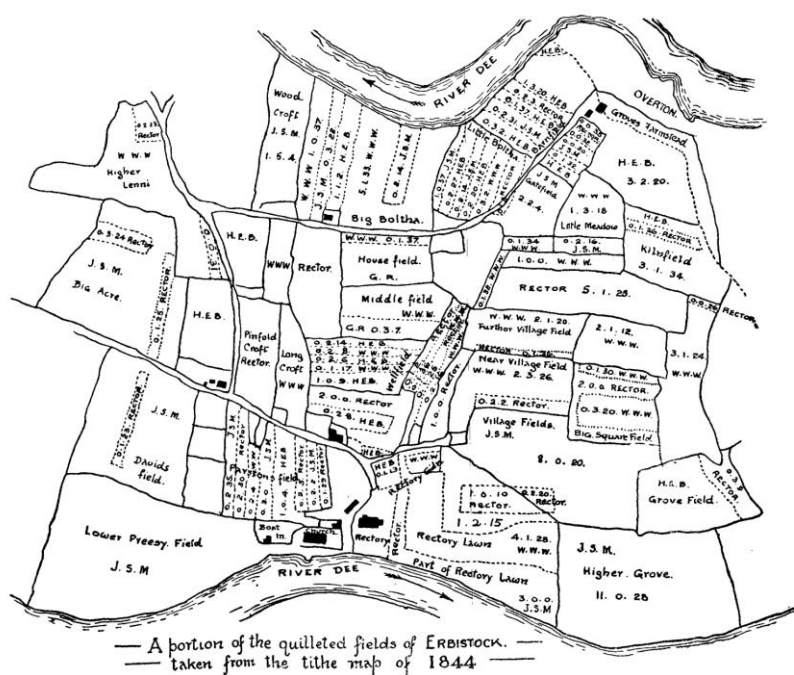


Fig 1- Tithe Map of 1844 (Palmer and Owen), 1910.

- 2.2 The Boat Inn comprises a series of buildings, located on the banks of the river Dee, and is grade II listed (Appendix 1- list description). The listing dates the building as 17th century in origin, and the evolution of the building as comprising two cottages which were later converted to a public house, associated with the ferry crossing. The windlass for the ferry is still extant, although it is of later date. The building has been substantially re-modelled through the course of its history, with the interior largely of 19th and 20th century date, with many of the timbers re-used. It has been extended to the west with a single storey structure, which effectively joins the listed building with the associated outbuildings. To the north (rear)

of the property, a series of later 19th and 20th century extensions have been constructed in order to facilitate the growing dining trade for the public house. The Boat Inn is currently redundant following an unsuccessful trading period, and requires some further re-modelling to ensure it has a sustainable future, and the historic buildings are secured for the future.

- 2.3 There is no evidence available which would confirm that the building is of 17th century date, and extensive historic map and tithe maps regression has not produced a definitive origin. Similarly, the re-purposed interior, with re-used timbers and an altered plan-form does not provide enough diagnostic evidence to confirm a date. However, the existing plank and batten door to the rear of the current bar area, which leads to the kitchens, has strap hinges of a form which suggest a late 17th/early 18th century date. Whilst the door has been re-hung, its re-use in this location does suggest that a structure of this date is likely (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2- door to rear of existing bar



Figure 3- door showing detail of strap hinge

- 2.3 The plan form of the eastern part of the building suggests a later version of the Snowdonia house type, with roofs constructed of trusses and purlins, in this case staggered butt purlins, stone walls of random rubble construction, with a centrally placed doorway and segmental arch. However, there may also be evidence of a cross passage in the eastern house, which suggests adaptation of an earlier house type, and the typical two storeys associated with the Snowdonia house type has been achieved with the insertion of dormers. The former parlour area has a lateral fireplace inserted on the eastern gable, with range and large bressumer above (Figure 4) and the possible western wall of the cross passage divides the building into two rooms at ground floor (Figure 5). A newel stair has been inserted to the south of the fireplace, which is of nineteenth century date.



Figure 4- range and bressumer. Post-1870 range with slow combustion grate set low on the hearth, and long and narrow opening.



Figure 5- dividing wall, east building

2.4 This wall consists of re-used timbers with an infill of mixed plaster, which trail examination showed to be cementitious. It could be anticipated that any original cross-passage wall would have comprised either of wattle and daub work, or plank and muntin panelling, and the combination of re-used roofing and ceiling timbers as uprights for the wall (Figure 6), coupled with the hard plasterwork, with animal hair accretions, suggesting late 19th century work. Whilst the differences in the floor surfacing between the two rooms, (slate flooring to the eastern room, timber to the west, and the slight drop from one room to the other, implies a deliberate differentiation and the location for a dividing wall, the existing wall, with its oak wainscoting and nineteenth century glazed panels indicates that this is a later construction, perhaps replacing an earlier version. The stained glass panels (Figure 7) are set into pointed arch openings, and have a stylised quatrefoil pattern, with leaded margins. The wainscot panelling has also been adapted to fit the space, with the part of the panelling cut awkwardly with no bottom rail, suggesting it was from elsewhere (see Figure 5). Ceiling beams, like the bressumer above the range, are chamfered with basic brooch stops, or poorly detailed lambs tongue stops, suggesting a later 17th century date (Figure 8). However, many of the beams are re-used, with visible slots and peg holes illustrating that they are not in the original positions.



Figure 6- slots visible on lower side of beam, suggesting adapted re-use



Figure 7- stained glass insert



Figure 8- ceiling beam with simple chamfered stops. Timber packing to the lateral tie-beam illustrates re-use and re-positioned timbers.

- 2.5 Although it is not clearly evident, the east building was of L-shaped plan, with an outrigger to the north-west corner, to the rear of the existing bar area. The thick walls, and the 17th century door are residual elements of the outrigger, outlining the plan form which has been subsequently compromised with the twentieth century accretions to the north. Subsequent map regression analysis shows the outrigger in place (Figure 9). Figure 10 shows the site in 1900, with no other outbuildings, providing a pre-commencement date to the series of extensions to the north, and illustrating that they are either of twentieth century construction, or the survey for the O.S map was undertaken as the buildings were under construction.



Figure 9- OS map, 1879, with the site circled, and showing the L-shaped buildings.

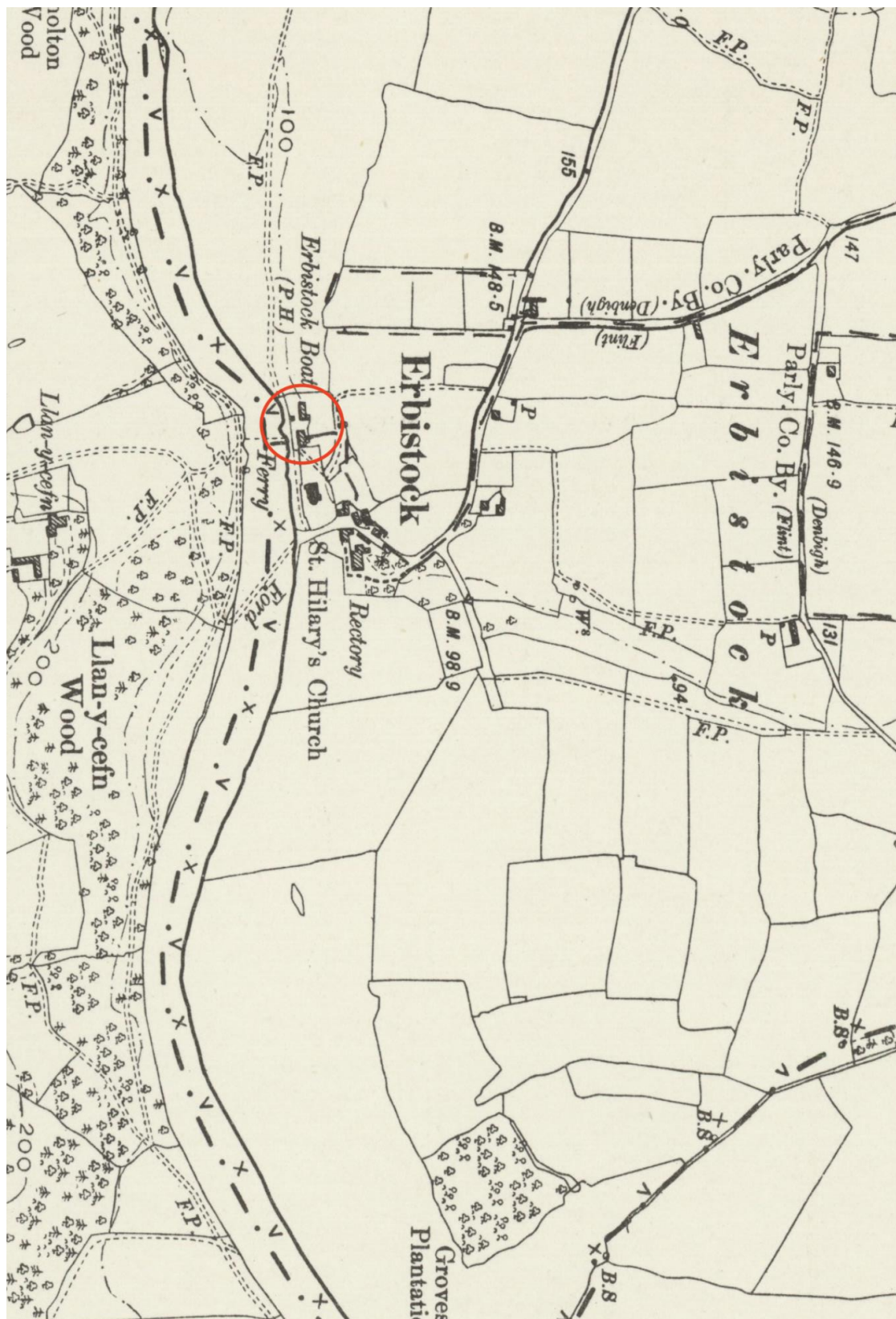


Figure 10- OS map, 1900

2.6 The location of the rear door to the outrigger, tucked behind the current bar area, is in general alignment with the main entrance to the south elevation, and whilst this does not confirm

evidence of an earlier cross-passage, it increases the possibility that this was the original arrangement. The outrigger is not visible externally, with the north west corner of the main building finished with large quoins, and a brick extension with blocked, single light window visible. This implies that the outrigger has either been partially re-built in brick, or that it returned and did not join the building in the corner, and this scenario is the more likely (Figure 11).



Figure 11- north west corner of the east building, from St Hilary's churchyard.

- 2.7 The western room in the east building has a single window to the southern, and a lateral fireplace to its west wall, (Figure 12) which appears to have been inserted at a later date. To the north, a single light, chamfered window has been blocked. (Figure 13). The floor appears to have been raised slightly above the east room, and boarded out with timber. A doorway has been inserted which links to the western building. (see Figure 12).



Figure 12- later fireplace



Figure 13- blocked window

- 2.8 The western building has retained its original doorway, located to the eastern end of the south elevation, but the main feature of note is the large, orthogonal bay window, with leaded lights. This is a nineteenth century insertion as earlier images illustrate that a simple two-light window was located in this position (Figure 14). However, by 1910, the bay window is shown on further images (Figure 15).



Figure 14- The Boat Inn, from *The River Dee, its Aspect and History*, J.S. Howson, 1889 (The image used in Howson's publication is a woodcut also dated 1873 in other sources).



Figure 15- Postcard of Erbistock, c.1910.

- 2.9 The bay window has a large, timber relieving beam above, which would have been partially hidden when the building was limewashed, as shown in Figure 15. However, there is a possibility that the beam related to an earlier, short-lived configuration, with a large door opening to the south elevation. There is the hint of this in an undated postcard, which appears to show such a door in this location (Figure 16).



Figure 16- undated postcard

- 2.10 Whilst this may appear to be unlikely, and the undated image is simply poor rendering skills, there is further evidence which may support the arrangement. The north wall of the west building shows that the north-west corner is of random rubble construction, matching the south and gable elevations (Figure 17). However, immediately adjacent to the opening in the wall made when the later extensions were constructed, the wall is of a completely different coursed masonry construction, and is also narrower than the other walls which form part of the building (Figure 18).



Figure 17- part of northern return wall of north exterior wall, in western building, now internalised.



Figure 19- modern construction in west building.

- 2.11 The existing plan illustrates this arrangement, and also shows a former doorway now infilled (Figure 20). It also illustrates how the opening for the bay window, and the opening in the north wall align, and the treatment of the openings as curved, rather than straight, a feature also seen in the original entrance on the south elevation. Taken together, the evidence suggests that the bay window opening may once have been a door, with a corresponding door on the northern elevation. These large openings may have related to the operational function of the ferry, perhaps as boat storage, or for provisions and equipment. The sequence of buildings appears to be that the east building is the first to be constructed, as evidenced by the butt- joint and set-back at the junction between the west and east buildings (Figure 21). The original building may be that seen in the illustration by Francis Jukes of 1794 (Figure 22), which seems to show only a single building. At some point after the construction of the east building, the west building was built against its gable wall, but to a set-back. The plan forms,

with the entrance doors in different locations, are slightly different, suggesting an evolution of favoured layout. It appears that when the two buildings were converted into a single use building, the western building was raised at the eaves with brickwork, to alter the pitch, and allowing for a single roof across both buildings (Figure 23). Figure 14 also shows that in 1889 at least, the ferry was associated more with the west building, with direct access from the river via a flight of steps, which were later re-configured to form a dog-leg, as exists now.

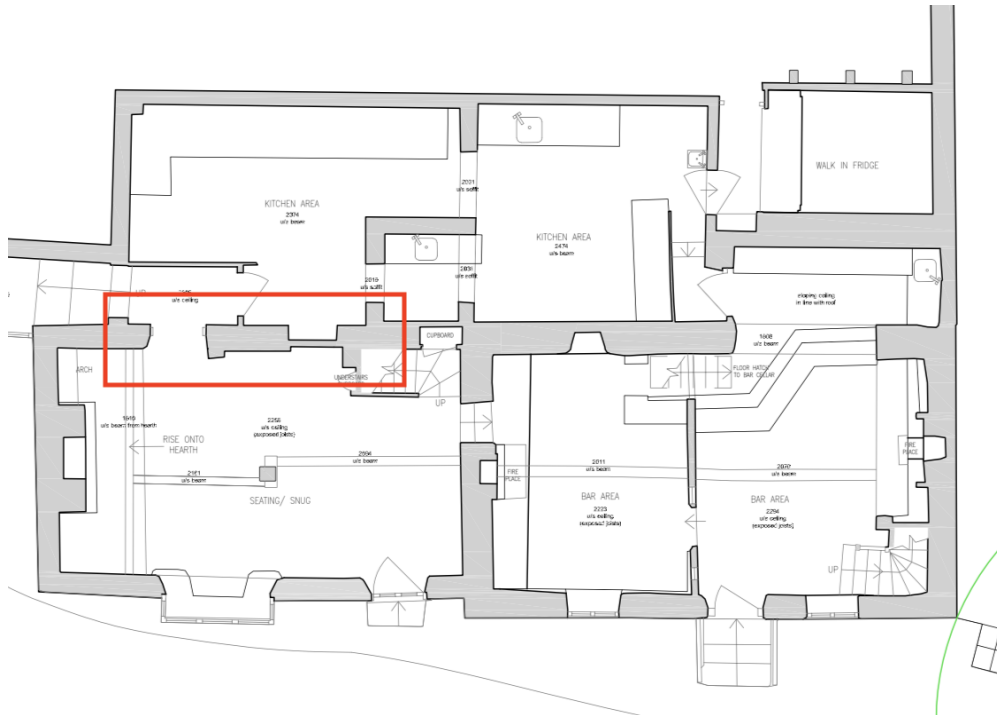


Figure 20- existing plan, with the northern wall marked in red. (Shack Architecture)



Figure 21- butt-joint between the east and west buildings, south elevation.



Figure 22- Erbistock Church, with Boat Inn to the rear- Francis Jukes, 1794



Figure 23- brick coursing at eaves level, west building.

- 2.11 The former barn building to the west of the domestic buildings is shown in the O.S maps of 1879 and 1900 (Figures 9 and 10), and is also shown on early illustrations (Figure 24).

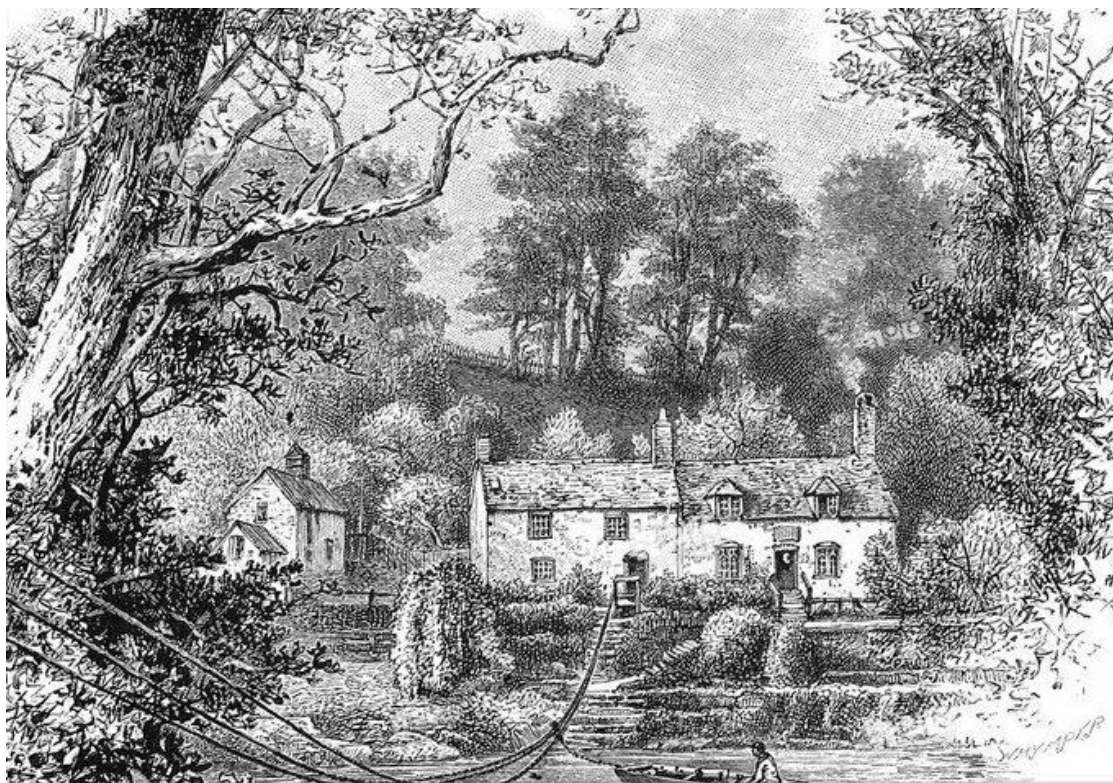


Figure 23- Erbistock woodcut, second half of 19th century.

- 2.12 The building was used for agricultural or storage purposes, with a hayloft on the first floor, with venting shaft, as shown in Figure 23, and further evidence of first floor usage is clear from the retained external stair at the northern end of the building, and the blocked doorway on the eastern elevation, which is clearly shown in Figure 24. Figure 23 also shows a single storey building with pitched roof attached to the southern gable of the building, but does not include the existing east-west orientated single storey building attached to the western elevation of the barn, which still remains on site. Whilst this has been substantially altered, and bay windows have been provided to its southern façade, it is likely to post-date the barn, and date from the late nineteenth century.
- 2.13 The series of accretions and extension to the north of the main building, and constructed in red brick, are early twentieth century in date. The ensemble is set into an earlier quarry to the north.

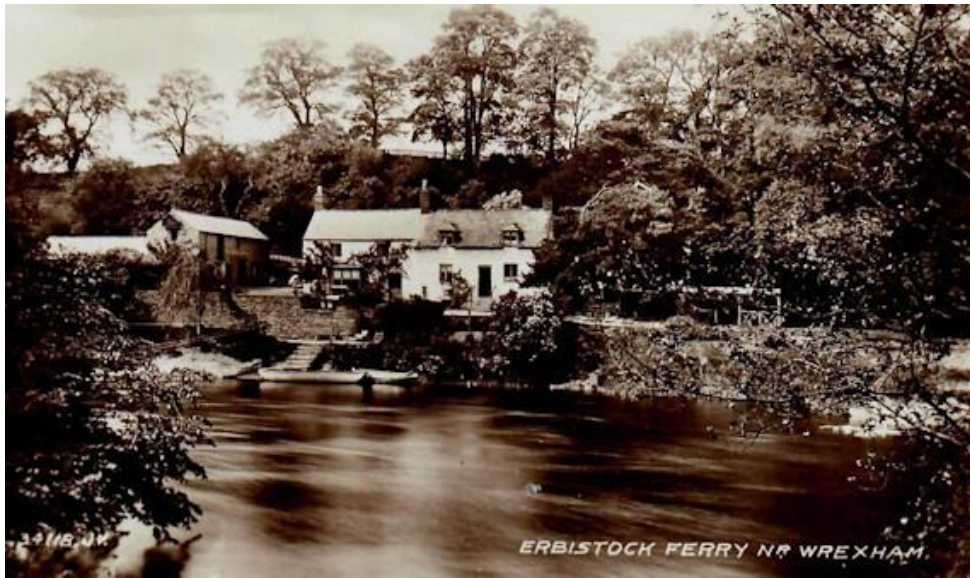


Figure 24- undated postcard showing east elevation of the associated outbuildings.

3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1 The property is evidence of historic, adaptive re-use of former dwellings and ancillary structures into a public house, as well as illustrating the importance of the ferry crossing over the Dee. Its picturesque setting has provided inspiration for artists and photographers, and a number of images exist which show the buildings. The significance of the building is not just reliant on its intrinsic merit, as a designated, grade II listed building, but also as part of the evolution of Erbistock and its conservation area, and the adaptive re-use of the buildings from domestic, and ferry use, to public house is reflected in the changes made to the fabric of the building.
- 3.2 The property has seen numerous alterations in the past, and these are illustrated in the accompanying plans by Shack Architecture, reproduced in Figure 25, which are provided here for information, and ease of reference

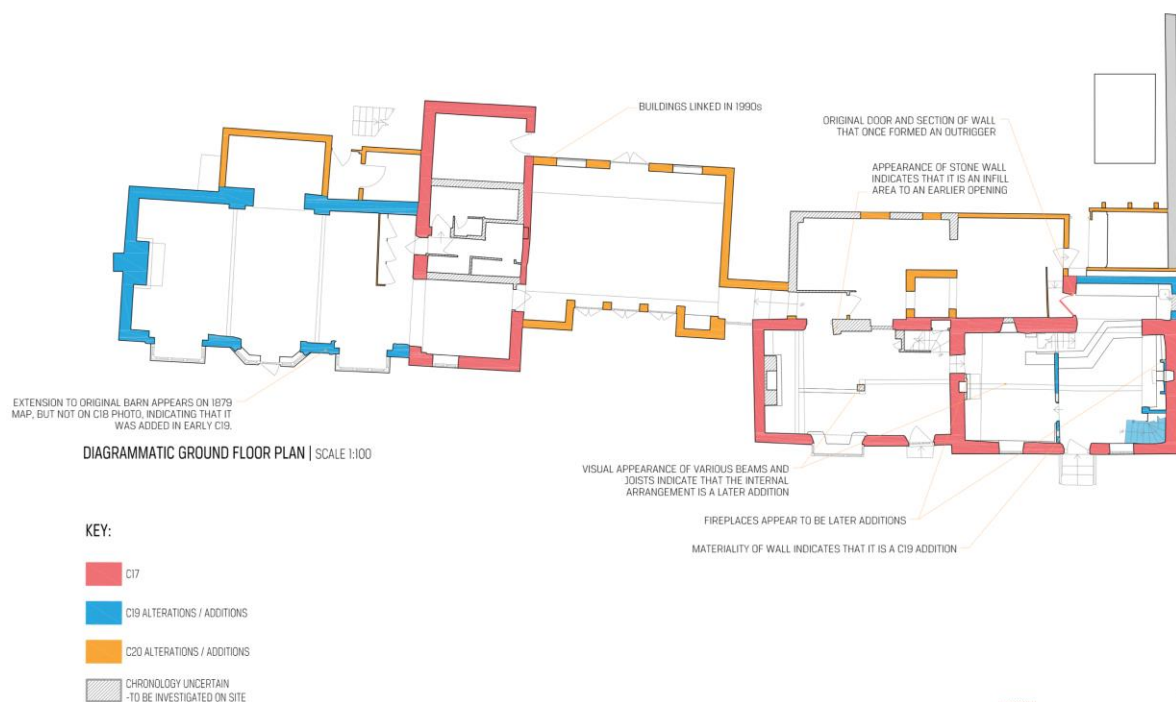


Figure 25- building chronology (Shack Architecture).

- 3.3 Appraised against the methodology for assessment of cultural significance in *Conservation Principles* (Cadw, 2011), the following values are identified:

Evidential Value

- 3.4 The building was constructed in the 17th century, but has been heavily adapted, and its interior is largely of the 19th century. Many of the timber members found throughout the building have been salvaged and re-used from elsewhere, and adapted to new purposes.

The plan-form was originally an L-shape and there are residual elements of this arrangement. Of particular interest is the plank door to the rear of the existing bar area, which appears to be of 17th century date, and may be in its original position, although re-hung. Other diagnostic features which provide a similar date are the larger ceiling beams with debased lambs tongue or flat chamfer profiles, as well as the possibility of the existence of a cross passage in the east building, as part of a variation on the Snowdonia house typology.

The adaptations to the building illustrate the changing narrative of use, with the possibility that the two original buildings were merged to take advantage of the increasing popularity of the ferry crossing, with refreshment provided for visitors and the possible use of the west building used specifically for ferry purposes, with domestic accommodation above.

Adaptations to the building illustrate how longevity and sustainability are built-in to the building, and how changes to the fabric can refresh and re-purpose the building.

Historic Value

- 3.5 The building is of historical interest for its association with the ferry across the river Dee, and as part of the collection of buildings which together form the Erbistock conservation area. Its construction in the 17th century illustrates the growth of the area from the late mediaeval period. Its later history revolves around the growing importance of the ferry as an attraction for visitors, and the merging of the buildings into a single unit associated with the ferry is evidence of the development of tourism and the appreciation of the 'picturesque'. The number of images and postcards dating from the 18th and 19th centuries featuring the building, the ferry and the church of St Hilary are evidence of the burgeoning interest in 'rural' scenes as part of the picturesque and romantic movements.

Aesthetic Value

- 3.6 The building is grade II listed, and its vernacular character, with random rubble walls, well-proportioned fenestration and series of cellular rooms with open fires, are all part of its aesthetic appeal. Despite the fact that many of the timbers are re-used within the building, the combination of dark timber, the slate floor and the chimney pieces all contribute to a rural idyll that is attractive to many visitors. The limited palette of materials, the simple interiors, and the strong sense of continuity and history all contribute to the 'cwtch' appeal of the Boat Inn, and its rural location and the setting by the river Dee are also part of its charm. The attractiveness of the building was well understood by the owners who changed the use of the building from domestic or ferry to a public house, and the works undertaken to convert the premises have built on that fundamental appeal of rural Welsh house. Whilst the twentieth century additions have not been designed with the same sense of continuity, they do offer a more functional, and 'back of house' aesthetic, and it is the combination of the traditional cottage and the utilitarian which is a common juxtaposition with agricultural buildings within the area.

Communal Value

- 3.7 The communal value of the building relates to the public role played by the buildings, as a asset for community benefit. The change of use to a public house has ensured that the building can be experienced as a visitor attraction, rather than a private house. Its link with the ferry, and the retained winch adjacent to the river, is a unique element to the building, and the sense of history associated with the building is part of its community value

4 POLICY AND GUIDANCE

4.1 In relation to the historic environment, Planning Policy Wales (2017) states that the Welsh Governments objectives are:

- *conserve and enhance the historic environment, which is a finite and non-renewable resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales;*
- *recognise its contribution to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life, and its importance as a resource to be maintained for future generations;*
- *base decisions on an understanding of the significance of Wales' historic assets; contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the past by making an appropriate record when parts of a historic asset are affected by a proposed change, and ensuring that this record or the results of any investigation are securely archived and made publicly available;*
- *protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites in Wales;*
- *conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy;*
- *safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved;*
- *preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, while at the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous;*
- *preserve the special interest of sites on the register of historic parks and gardens in Wales; and • conserve areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales.*

4.2 Para 6.5.11 relates to development proposals in respect of listed buildings, stating that:
There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The aim should be to find the best way to protect and enhance the special qualities of listed buildings, retaining them in sustainable use. The continuation or reinstatement of the original use should generally be the first option, but not all original uses will now be viable or appropriate. The application of development and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility where new uses have to be considered in order to secure a building's survival or provide it with a sound economic future

4.3 Para 6.5.13 calls for the justification of proposals effecting listed buildings:
Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals and show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary. This should be included

in a Design and Access Statement, which will be proportionate both to the significance of the building and to the degree of change proposed. It is generally preferable, for both the applicant and the local planning authority, if related applications for planning permission and listed building consent are considered concurrently. Consideration of proposals for a listed building should be made on the basis of a full, rather than an outline planning permission. Planning permission alone is insufficient to authorise works to a listed building. Appropriate conditions may also be attached to any listed building consent. These might for example include the submission of a conservation method statement for specific works or the protection of historic fabric, or archaeological recording work.

4.4 Technical Advice Note 24 states that:

5.13- When determining a listed building consent application, the local planning authority should consider the following issues:

- *The importance and grade of the building and its intrinsic architectural or historic interest.*
- *The physical features of the building which justify its listing and contribute to its significance, (for example its form and layout, materials, construction and detail) including any features of importance such as the interior, which may have come to light after the building's inclusion on the list.*
- *The contribution of curtilage and setting to the significance of the building, as well as its contribution to its local scene.*
- *The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the building.*
- *The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial community benefits for example, by contributing to the area's economy or the enhancement of its local environment.*

It further states that:

5.14- Many listed buildings can sustain a degree of sensitive alteration and extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Past changes that reflect the history of use and ownership may themselves be aspects of the special interest of the listed building. When applicants and the local planning authority assess the heritage values and significance of a listed building, which is the subject of a consent application, they must consider the sensitivity of that building to the proposed changes. Sustaining the special interest and significance of a listed building through the process of alteration, extension or re-use is exacting, and should

always be based on specialist knowledge and skill in order to realise the benefits that well-designed interventions can bring.

- 4.5 The Boat Inn has been identified in the Erbistock conservation area appraisal as a positive attribute, with the following description:

The Boat Inn

4.12 Early O.S. maps show the lane continuing straight ahead at this point down to a ford in the river. Today the area is grassed over but it is possible to see where the ford crossed to the opposite river bank.

4.13 A separate entrance with wooden gates has been created to The Coach House. At the entrance of the driveway to the Boat Inn, a 5 bar wooden gate and post and rail fence have been erected. These simple boundary treatments reflect the rural character of the area. The Boat Inn is a Grade II listed building set in a wonderful position overlooking the River Dee. Formerly two cottages of 17th Century origin it is built of random courses of red sandstone rubble. The pitched slate roof has flush verges and sandstone ridges. The east building has 19th century additions in the form of brick chimneys and dormer windows. Windows are cast iron multi-paned casements with cills flush to the external wall and later low brick arches on the lower storey. The brick arch is mirrored above the original central entrance, which has a panelled door and is reached by sandstone steps. A low entrance to the basement lies to the left of the steps. The left hand building also has cast iron multi-paned casements, with cills flush to the external wall with 19th century additions including a wooden, six panelled door and a box bay window to the ground floor.

4.14 The setting of the Inn is enhanced by the cobbled frontage. An historic stone mounting block survives at the front right hand corner of the Inn which would have been used by guests and ferry passengers mounting or dismounting their horses or carts. Landscaped gardens lead down to the River, with topiary bushes which add formality without detracting from the rural feel. The outdoor seating area is sympathetic to its surroundings due to its low-key appearance and the use of natural materials such as wooden benches, gravel pathways and sandstone edgings. Interesting features include the original windlass for the ferry located at the top of the original stone ferry steps which lead down to the river on both riverbanks.

4.15 The exposed, locally distinctive red sandstone escarpment to the rear of The Inn creates a dramatic backdrop, which enhances the setting.

4.16 The Boat Inn has been extended by linking the public house to the adjacent 19th century barn with a glass and sandstone extension. It has been designed to be in sympathy with the original buildings, respecting their character scale and detailing. The two-

storey barn is set at right angles to the other buildings, built of sandstone rubble with quoins, pitched slate roof, flush verges and sandstone ridge tiles. Windows are a mixture of cast iron casements and timber frames. A single storey extension runs at 90 degrees to the barn with two box bays and a third box bay French window.

4.17 The adjacent open fields are important in retaining views of the valley and the River Dee. They can be crossed by a public footpath running alongside the riverbank. A wooden post and rail fence marks the southern boundary of the car park once again reflecting the rural character of the area.

5 ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The proposal is for a series of interventions within the building, and for the demolition of some of the later outbuildings and their re-provision. Full plans have been submitted as part of the suite of documents accompanying this Heritage Impact Assessment. Works to the interior include the removal of the nineteenth century bar; the unblocking of the single light window shown in Figure 13; the unblocking of the window in the brick extension in the north east corner of the building, shown in Figure 11; the provision of a new opening adjacent to the window in Figure 13; the provision of a 'viewing panel' within the cross wall separating the two rooms in the east building; and the opening up of the infilled doorway on the north wall of the west building. In addition, a new toilet block is proposed as part of the grouping of the agricultural buildings to the west of the listed building, and a new porch and glazed link to the twentieth century infill building which connects the listed building to the former barn. It is also proposed to re-establish the ferry connection across the river Dee.
- 5.2 The assessment has demonstrated that whilst there are residual elements of the original buildings remaining, such as the 17th century door to the rear of the existing bar area, the interior is essentially 19th century and later in date, and many of the timbers are re-used. This includes the existing dividing wall, which is located in what originally may have been a cross-passage. However, the wall is entirely 19th century in date and any intervention would not lead to the loss of original fabric. Its role is as a device for creating cellular spaces within the east building, and the proposal to provide a viewing window will still retain that division. The viewing panel will be accommodated entirely within the 19th century plaster wall, and the timbers and wainscoting will be retained as part of the current arrangement.
- 5.3 Opening up the early windows in the outrigger and on the north wall of the east building are both positive benefits of the proposals, as they reinstate earlier features, with the single light window likely to be an original opening.
- 5.4 The provision of a new entrance through the original north wall of the east building will lead to some loss of fabric, but this is linked with the relocation of the bar area to the north of the building, and this allows for the reinstatement of the original 17th century doorway as a key feature, which is currently hidden behind the existing bar arrangement. The history of the building also illustrates how openings have been created and along the whole length of the northern wall over time, and the proposal is the latest iteration of this process. The reinstatement of the currently infilled doorway in the northern wall of the west building, as part of the proposals, illustrates how the building continues to evolve, and the re-opening will not lead to the loss of any original fabric.

- 5.5 The removal of some of the twentieth century accretions to the north of the building, which were provided on an ad-hoc basis, and which are at best utilitarian, is also beneficial to the asset. Their replacement with a series of simple, coordinated extensions will allow for a huge improvement in the management and servicing of the Boat Inn, in structures which are clearly contemporary, and are secondary and ancillary to the listed building. They will allow for the landscaping of the quarry to the rear of the building, exposing visitors to hitherto hidden qualities of the conservation area. This will be supported by the provision of a rear terrace, with glazed link.
- 5.6 The new toilet block will lead to the loss of the timber steps leading to the first floor hayloft entrance to the barn, but the new arrangement of a first floor access retained, resonates with the original, in an agricultural building which has seen many alterations, and which sits within the curtilage of a listed building, rather than listed in its own right.
- 5.7 The proposals are compliant with local and national advice and policy on the historic environment, and the proposals represent minimal intervention into the listed building, which will help to secure its future. Such works are recognized as appropriate in TAN 24, provided that the special interest and significance of the listed building is sustained.
- 5.8 There are no conflicts with advice given in the conservation area appraisal, and the proposals represent minimum intervention, in order to bring the building back into sustainable use.
- 5.9 In conclusion, the significance of the building relates to its plan form, detailing, materiality and narrative of adaptation and re-purposing, alongside its association with the operating of the ferry across the river Dee. The proposals will not have a negative impact on these elements of significance, and with the potential of re-establishing the ferry, will see a substantial improvement to both the building and the conservation area. The proposals are crucially beneficial to the listed building and the conservation area, and are compliant with relevant policies and advice.

Appendix 1- List description

NPRN 27127

Map Reference SJ34SE

Grid Reference SJ35504132

Unitary (Local) Authority Wrexham

Old County Denbighshire

Community Erbistock

Type of Site PUBLIC HOUSE

Broad Class COMMERCIAL

Period Post Medieval

Site Description Close to the site of a former ferry crossing on the River Dee. The building appears to date from the 17th century and was remodelled in the 19th and late 20th centuries. It is now a public house and restaurant. Sandstone rubble walls, slate roof and brick stacks. Formerly 2 houses, that to the left with a 2-storey 2-window front with a brick rebuilding visible at the eaves. The entrance is to the right, with a later door and bay window. Upper floor windows are cast-iron multipaned casements. The house to the right is single-storey over a basement with 19th-century hipped dormers to the attic, and dressed stone quoins. There are steps up to the central entrance, with low entrance to the basement to the left. The interior has been remodelled and the two houses converted into one. The ground floor rooms have heavy chamfered and stopped beams, with a fireplace with bressumer in the right hand section, and a 19th-century winding stair. The upper floor has a partially exposed and altered roof truss.

Source: DE/DOM/SJ34SE, from the Cadw listed buildings database

J. Archer, RCAHMW, 23.11.2004