



Figure 1 (left). The Agerskov House seen from the south. Photo by the author.

Figure 2 (right). The so-called arkengaf of the north façade. This segmental dormer above the main entrance is a traditional feature of West Schleswig vernacular architecture. Photo by the author.

#### 4.1 Agerskov House, Hornsgårdsvej 7, 6510 Gram

The Agerskov House was constructed around 1682 according to dendrochronological dating. It is a fine example of the vernacular architecture of West Schleswig, as it is a so-called *gårdstuehus* (a one-winged farm building, in which one end makes up the dwelling and the other the stable). The Agerskov House is east-west orientated, approximately 24 metres long and 7 meters wide, with whitewashed walls and a thatched roof. In keeping with the tradition of the region, the main entrance is marked with an *arkengaf* (a segmental dormer with a hatch into the hayloft), see Figure 2. The entrance room was used as a threshing floor and, moreover, divides the building into stables (west) and dwelling (east). Until 1992, the Agerskov House was a property of Gram Slot. In 1997, the building became listed and at the same time, a conservation was carried out.<sup>1</sup> The Agerskov House still functions as a dwelling; it is, however, currently between tenants.

<sup>1</sup> Jørgen Overby, '1700-tallet. Fra træhus til stenhus', *Sønderjysk Månedsskrift*, no. 3, 1997: p. 64; Jørgen Overby, 'Agerskovhuset' (Leaflet made for *Det særlige Bygningssyn* (The advisory board of the Secretary of Cultural Affairs and thereby, also the Agency for Culture and Palaces), Jørgen Overbys Tegnesteue A/S, n.y.).

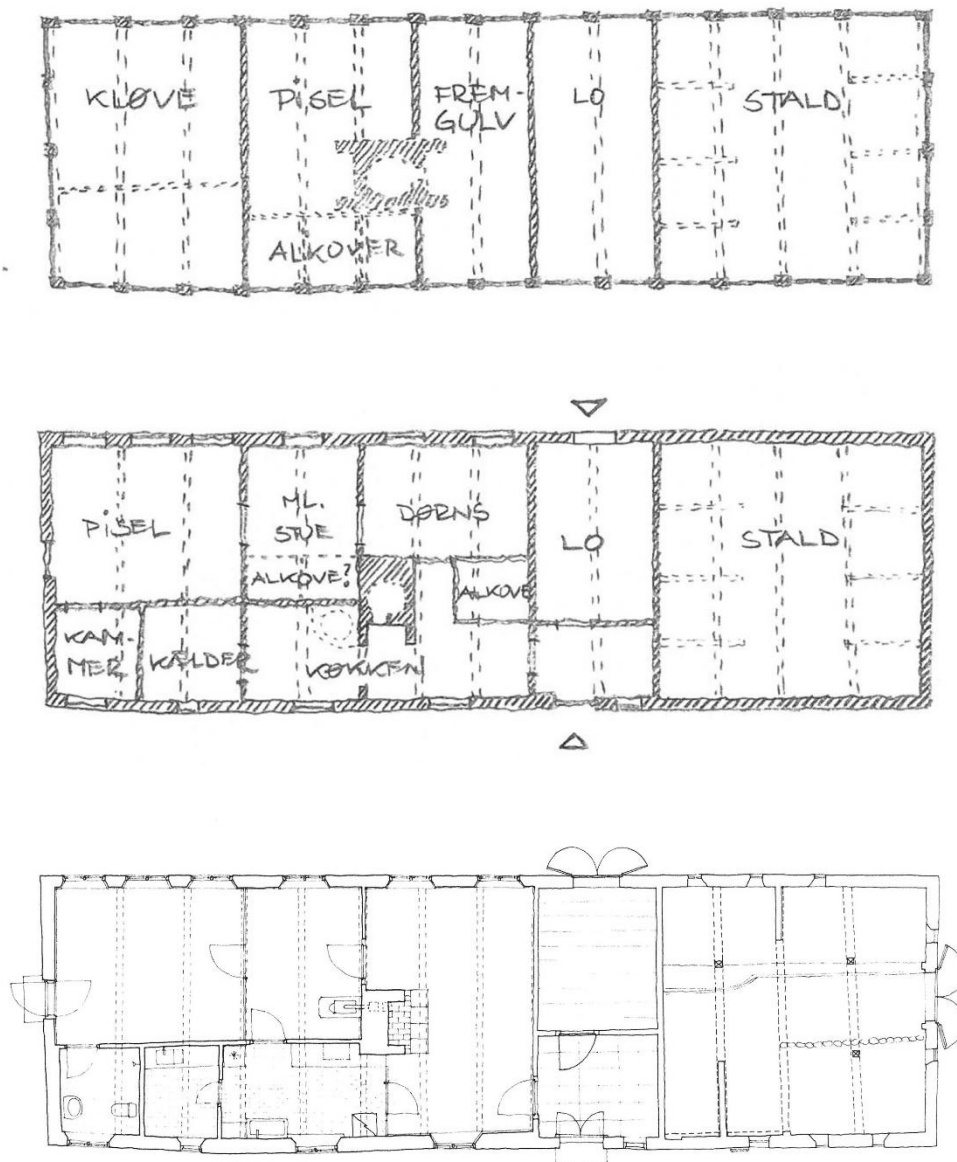


Figure 3. Layouts of the Agerskov House.

Top: A reconstruction of the original layout of 1682.

Middle: A reconstruction of the layout after the rebuilding in 1783, in which the post-and-plank construction was substituted with baked bricks.

Bottom: The layout after the conservation of the late 1990's.

Note that north is downwards. Drawings by Jørgen Overby.

### Flexibility and adaptation

The Agerskov House was originally built as a so-called *bulhus*, which can be translated into post-and-plank construction.<sup>2</sup> Inside the building, traces of brackets between the tie beams and now missing wall posts tell

<sup>2</sup> Post-and-plank constructions are characterised by horizontal wall planks fitted into grooves in the posts. Such constructions require large amounts of oak timber, for which reason they were prohibited in 1554 and 1577 with the exception of South Jutland. In this region, repair to existing post-and-plank constructions was allowed. The construction of post-and-plank buildings did, however, not cease until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The cease is likely related to the spreading of brick building from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, which was aided by the influence of Frisian building (Curt von Jessen, ed., *Landhuset: byggeskik og egnspræg, gode raad om vedligeholdelse og istandsættelse* (København:

the story of this particular, wooden construction. In 1783 (according to dendrochronological dating), the post-and-plank walls were replaced with brick-building.<sup>3</sup> Based on the building archaeological investigations, it is most likely that the original division of the building into dwelling and stable has been preserved and, additionally, only few changes have been made to the layout of the dwelling, see Figure 3. In relation to the conservation, the outer walls were padded with ¼ moler brick as insulation and then covered with panelling.<sup>4</sup> Such panelling is in keeping with West Schleswig vernacular architecture.

### *Robustness*

The changes made to the building indicate that the house has a robust structure. Furthermore, the materials of the Agerskov House are traditional, vernacular materials such as timber, including oak in heavy dimensions, brick, reed and boulders. Materials are used wisely to minimise problems, such as, for instance, boulders to prevent ascending damp from the soil. The climate responsive design is reflected in the east-west orientation of the building,<sup>5</sup> as the prevalent wind comes from the west. The wide eaves of the thatched roof protect the base of the roof and the half-hipped gables are resistant to wind pressure. Thatched roofs are not particularly durable and have an average lifespan of around 20-50 years, depending on the orientation.<sup>6</sup>

### *Maintenance and repair*

The building needs to receive regular maintenance. This includes surface treatments such as whitewash and linseed paint (windows, doors etc.). Thus, essential building components are preserved at the expense of the deterioration of paint and whitewash. Furthermore, building materials and elements can be repaired.

### *Significance*

The significance relates to the architectural and cultural-historical values of the Agerskov House, such as, for instance, the exterior which reflects the vernacular architecture of West Schleswig.<sup>7</sup> In the interior, preserved building elements add to the identity of the house, such as the fireplace in the *fremguld* (the first room in a dwelling, usually connected to the kitchen). Additionally, materials and components of the conservation are chosen carefully in order to support the identity of the building. This includes e.g. the reuse of old doors of contemporary, now demolished buildings, floor tiles of Oland from the old pharmacy in Gram are reused in the entrance room and, finally, the kitchen and scullery are paved with reused quarry tiles.<sup>8</sup>

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Gyldendal, 1975), p. 47; Peter Brogaard, 'Gårde og huse', in *Landbrugets huse*, edited by Peter Brogaard, Hakon Lund and Hans Edvard Nørregaard-Nielsen (København: Gyldendal, 1985), p. 29). Regarding the Agerskov House, its origin as a post-and-plank dwelling is rare and moreover, it indicates the wide distribution of such buildings in earlier times (Overby, '1700-tallet. Fra træhus til stenhus', p. 64).

<sup>3</sup> The bricks were probably manufactured by the then resident Jens Jørrensen Thielbrenner (last name: Brick-baker) (Overby, '1700-tallet. Fra træhus til stenhus', p. 64).

<sup>4</sup> Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen, 'Hornsgårdvej 7, Gram\_redigeret', 2020 (right of access to documents regarding the listed Agerskovhuset, Hornsgårdvej 7, Gram. Pdf retrieved from Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen), p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> An offshoot of the orientation is the layout of the building with south-facing living rooms that benefit from the sunlight during daytime.

<sup>6</sup> Kulturstyrelsen, *Information om bygningsbevaring: stråtage* (2011), p. 1, accessed 11 November 2020, [https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/SLKS/Omraader/Kulturarv/Bygningsfredning/Gode\\_raad\\_om\\_vedligeholdelse/4\\_5\\_Straatage.pdf](https://slks.dk/fileadmin/user_upload/SLKS/Omraader/Kulturarv/Bygningsfredning/Gode_raad_om_vedligeholdelse/4_5_Straatage.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> The vernacular architecture of West Schleswig (brick-building and a thatched roof) is appreciated in Denmark. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Foreningen af 3. december 1892* (The Association of 3 December 1892 whose members were architects and architectural students) toured in Denmark, measuring historic monuments and vernacular architecture. Their trips to South Jutland influenced the emergence of the so-called *Bedre Byggeskik*-style of circa 1915-30.

<sup>8</sup> Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen, 'Hornsgårdvej 7, Gram\_redigeret', p. 81.