

BARN AT SLACKWOOD FARM, SILVERDALE, LANCASHIRE

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Adrian Waddingham

Planning ref.:
09/00367/CU, 09/00368/LB

NGR: SD 47444 74589

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Non-Technical Summary

Following submission of a planning application for the conversion of a barn at Slackwood Farm, a level 3 building recording of the structure was requested by the Planning Officer at Lancashire County Council, Doug Moir. The barn is accessed from New Road, Silverdale, Lancashire, and lies within the curtilage of the Grade II* listed farmhouse. The building recording aims to provide a permanent record of the structure, provide information about its historical development, and assess the significance of the surviving fabric.

There is little detailed documentary evidence regarding the origins and early history of the farm and barn at the site, however, Slack-wood is mentioned as early as 1632 and later documentary sources suggest that an earlier farmstead on the site was replaced in the early 18th century. The earliest map of the site shows that the barn existed in 1830, and it is likely that it dates from the 18th.

A total of six phases of development and alteration were evident within the structure of the barn, the largest of which occurred between 1830 and 1845 when the barn was raised in height and lengthened with an additional outshut. The original structure appears to have been designed as a hayloft over animal housing and a cart shed, with the only upper floor access being through a pedestrian door on a natural bank at the west gable end. This bank was subsequently removed to facilitate the addition of another shippin at this end and a new bank was created on the north side; this, in combination with the addition of a wagon door in this elevation, enabled the upper floor to be used as a threshing area. It is possible that these major changes to the barn's structure and function related to the removal of another building evident on a map of 1830; this structure seems to have been replaced by an orchard by the time that the tithe map of 1846 was produced.

The barn is unusual due to its degree of alteration, which effectively changed it from an atypical variant bank barn, to a fairly conventional bank barn with an upper threshing floor. It is unfortunate that this phase of re-building involved the re-roofing of the barn, as the original truss timbers and style may have allowed a more accurate date of origin to have been postulated. It also seems unusual to have a barn that changes from an early emphasis on dairy to a mixed arable and dairy focus, although this may be the result of the loss of a second barn at the site.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Adrian Waddingham for commissioning the project and Elaine Blackett-Ord (Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture) for providing as existing drawings of the site. Additional thanks are due to the staff of Lancashire Record Office in Preston for help with accessing their archives. Further thanks are also due to Doug Moir, Planning Officer (Archaeology), Lancashire County Council, for approving the project design.

The building recording was carried out by Sam Whitehead, who also produced this report and its illustrations, along with Tom Mace. The report was edited by Dan Elsworth, Tom Mace, and Jo Dawson. The project was managed by Dan Elsworth.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

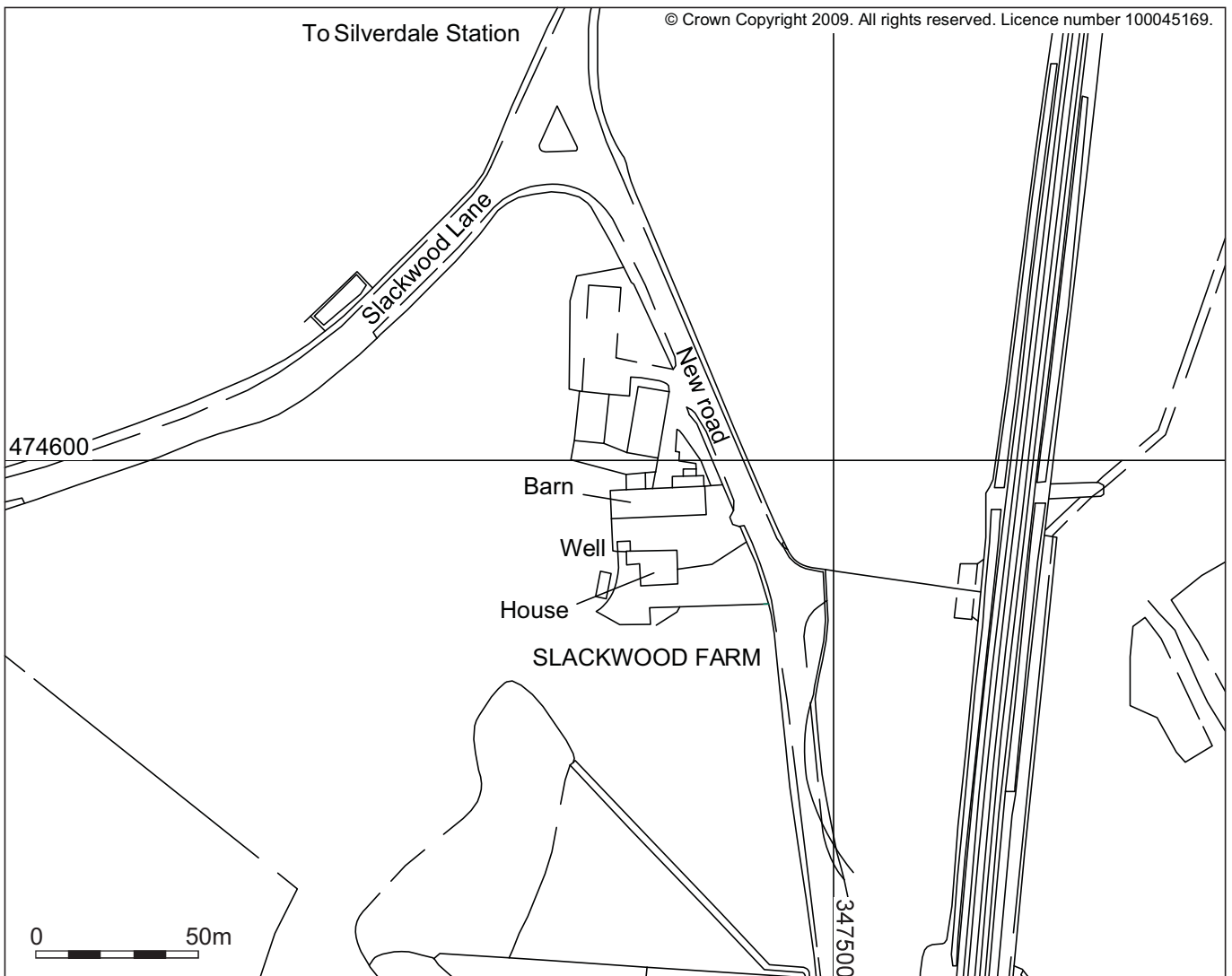
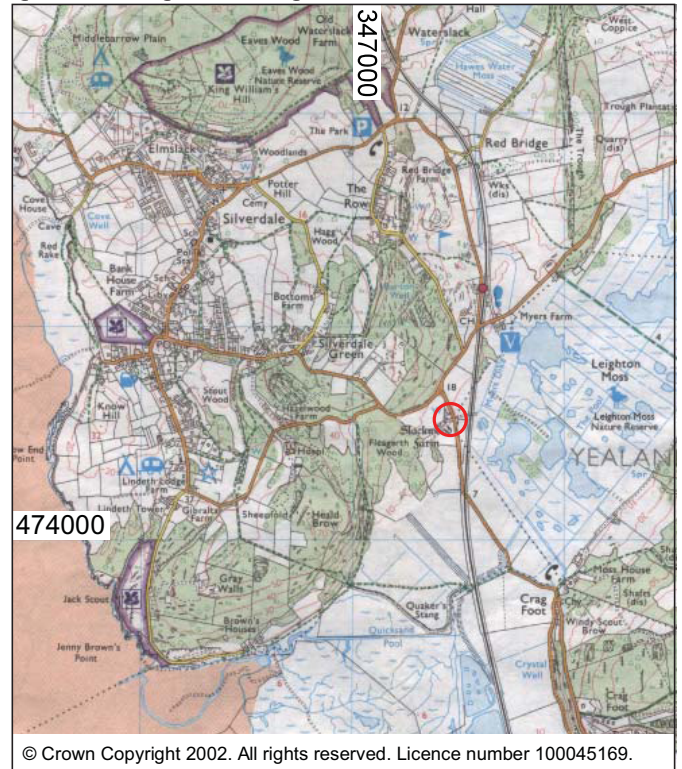
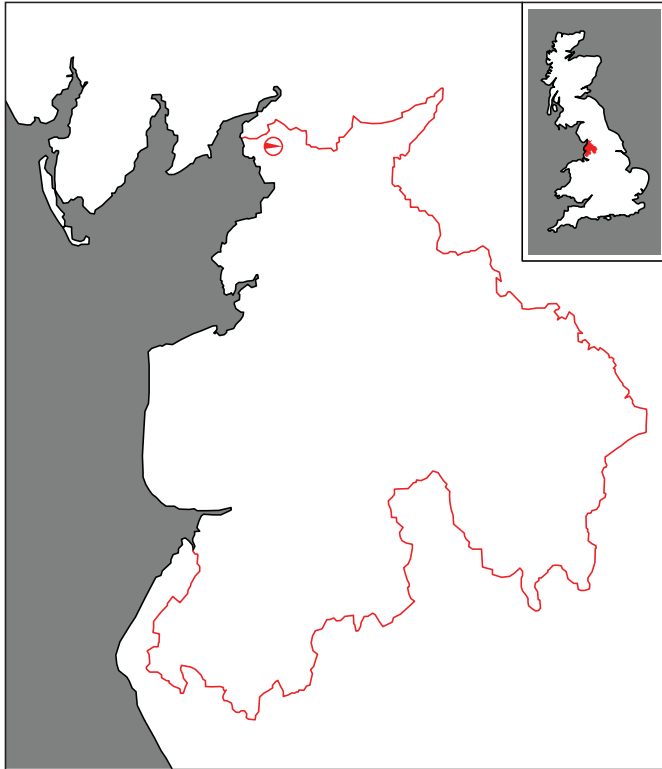
1.1.1 Prior to the submission of a planning application (Ref Nos. 09/00367/CU and 09/00368/LB) by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture on behalf of Adrian Waddingham (hereafter 'the client') for the renovation of a disused barn at Slackwood Farm, New Road, Silverdale, Lancashire (NGR SD 47444 74589), a programme of archaeological recording was requested by Lancashire County Council. The barn is in the curtilage of the Grade II* Listed house at Slackwood, and after consultation with Doug Moir, Planning Officer (Archaeology), Lancashire County Council, it was confirmed that an English Heritage Level 3-type recording was appropriate (English Heritage 2006). A project design was produced by Greenlane Archaeology (see *accompanying CD*) in response to this outlining the manner in which the work would be carried out.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Slackwood Farm is situated in the parish of Warton, and on the west edge of Leighton Moss. The Lancaster to Barrow-in-Furness railway line passes just to west of the site. Approximately 1km north-west is the hamlet of Silverdale Green, and Slackwood Farm is within the Arnside-Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is part of the Morecambe Bay Limestones area (Countryside Commission 1998, 69).

1.2.2 The underlying solid geology is dominated by carboniferous limestone (Moseley 1978, plate 1). The solid geology is overlain by glacially derived boulder clay (Countryside Commission 1998, 72).

1.2.3 Although the area generally consists of undulating coastal pasture, there is woodland to the west of the site and mosslands to the east (*op cit*, 71). The site lies approximately 15m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2002).



Client: Adrian Waddingham

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Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprises three separate elements, photography, written records and drawings, which in combination are intended to provide a suitable record of the structure in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006), and the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a). The building recording was carried out in accordance with the project design (see *accompanying CD*), and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007; IfA 2008b). A desk-based assessment report was carried out prior to the building recording (Greenlane Archaeology 2009) and the elements that are relevant to this barn recording have been incorporated into this report (see *Sections 3.1-3.4*).

2.2 Building recording

2.2.1 The building recording was carried out to English Heritage Level-3 type standards (English Heritage 2006). This is a largely descriptive investigation, with a relatively detailed level of interpretation of the phasing and use of the buildings, incorporating evidence compiled during the desk-based assessment. The recording comprised three parts:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs:** photographs of the main features of the building were taken in both 35mm and medium format black and white films, 35mm colour slide film, and colour digital format. A selection of the digital photographs are included in this report, along with a plan of the locations of the photographs taken in the different film formats (see Figure 6 and Figure 7);
- **Drawings:** drawings were produced by hand-annotating 'as existing' plans of the building produced by the clients architect, provided by the client's agent in a digital format. These comprised:
 - 1 ground and first floor plans at 1:100;
 - 2 'as existing' elevations of all external aspects, at 1:100;
 - 3 cross-sections were also drawn from scratch on site at a scale of 1:50.

2.3 Archive

2.3.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design (see *accompanying CD*), and current IfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Lancashire Record Office in Preston on completion of the project. A copy of this report will be deposited with the client, one with the client's architect, one with the Lancashire County Historic Environment Record (HER), and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a record of the project will be made on the OASIS scheme.

3. Summary of the Desk-Based Assessment

3.1 Background History

3.1.1 **Introduction:** a fuller account of the historical background to the site of Slackwood Farm has been presented in the desk-based phase of this assessment (Greenlane Archaeology 2009). The following information has been extracted from the desk-based assessment and is relevant to understanding the development of the barn.

3.2 Owners and Occupiers of Slackwood Farm

3.2.1 **Owners:** details of the early owners are very scarce; the deeds, the primary source of this kind of information, unfortunately do not provide any details prior to 1917. It is likely that the earliest named occupiers, the Walling family, were also the owners, especially as William Walling was said to have rebuilt the house in the early 18th century (see Section 3.2.2 below), but this is by no means certain – they are mentioned in connection with the property from as early as 1632 and most probably owned it from at least this date. The earliest owner recorded with any certainty is a Howard Thomas Nelson, who is listed in the tithe schedule of 1848 (LRO DRB 1/195 1848). An estate map held at Leighton Hall (Leighton Hall Archive 1857) shows that it had become part of their estate between 1848 and 1857. The deeds indicate that the Slackwood was held by the Gillow and Reynolds of Leighton Hall until the recent sale to the client in February 2009, during which time it evidently was mortgaged at least once and held in trust for a considerable period of time during the early 20th century.

3.2.2 **Occupiers:** the earliest documentary evidence to identify the occupiers of Slackwood is from 1632 when the burial of Jennet Walling ‘of the Slack Wood’ is recorded in the parish registers for Warton (Lancashire Online Parish Clerks n.d.). This is presumably the same Jennet Walling whose will of that year left 40s to her servant Issabel Cornthwaite (Mourholme Local History Society 1998, 110). It is evident from other entries in the parish registers that a number of other families were also connected to the property during the later 17th to early 19th centuries, although the Wallings predominate throughout the early part of that period. A summary of this information is present in Table 1 below (there are undoubtedly other entries that relate to Slackwood but only those in which the property is specifically named have been included). It would appear that at times more than one family was resident at Slackwood but there is in general a clear transition of occupancy from the Walling family to the Huttons by the 1770s, with perhaps one family in between for a short time. The Huttons seem to have remained until at least 1845, although they are not apparently named as resident in the census of 1841.

3.2.3 In c1707 it is reported that damage was done by travellers to the property of William Walling at Slack-wood although the nature of this is not clear (LRO QSP/954/6 c1707). John Lucas, writing in his *History of Warton Parish*, compiled between 1710 and 1740, states that:

‘William Walling, Gent; whose estate is contiguous... [with Flegarth, and] ...bears the Name of Slack-wood... has pull’d down the Old Habitation of his ancestors, and built a neat House on the same Ground’ (Ford and Fuller-Maitland 1931, 49).

3.2.4 Lucas goes on to say that William Walling was the Chief Constable of the Hundred in c1700 (*ibid*), and he was clearly a man of some importance in the local area. His will, dated 1754, describes him as a ‘gentleman’ (LRO WRW/R496b/100 1754), although in a document of 1742 he is referred to as a ‘yeoman’ (LRO DDC 105 1742). His estate was passed to his son, Thomas, who seems to have acquired additional property in the area in 1742 (*ibid*) and 1759 (LRO DDC 115 1759). He appears to have died in 1763 leaving his estate to his brother William, residing in London, and a Henry Wilson of Over Kellet (LRO WRW/R500/23 1763). Details (dated 1769) added to a document dated 1759 confirm that Thomas was deceased and mention his only daughter Mary Walling, who appears to be married to a Richard Salisbury by 1769 (LRO DDC 115 1759). It is not clear at what point the Walling family’s connection with the property ended, although it may have been following Mary’s remarriage or its passing to Thomas’s brother. The 1848 tithe schedule (LRO DRB 1/195 1848) lists the occupier as a Thomas Parkinson, and a long list of other families are named as at least occupiers following the Wallings, not least the Huttons. A will of 1787 states that John Jackson, a weaver and resident of

Slackwood, died intestate (LRO WRW/R505/35 1787); it is recorded in the parish registers that he drowned but it is not clear what his connection with the property was.

3.2.5 During the 19th century the census provides the most detailed account of the occupiers; the full details are presented in Appendix 2 of the desk-based assessment report (Greenlane Archaeology 2009), and are summarised as follows. The 1841 census does not identify the property by name but by 1851 it is recorded that William Croft and his wife occupy Slackwood, though it is unclear whether they are owners or tenants. The family is still resident in 1861; by 1871 they have seven children, and they are still recorded as running the farm in the 1881 census. The census for 1891 shows that the farm is now occupied by John Longmire and his family; he is still resident in the 1901 census. Kelly's Directory lists Longmire as still being resident at Slackwood in 1913 (Kelly 1913, 976). By 1918 Samuel Hodgkinson is resident at the farm (Kelly 1918, 905), and he is there until at least 1924 (Kelly 1924, 994).

3.2.6 Slackwood was occupied by a number of other tenants while owned by Leighton Hall, including Douglas Fishwick, who was at Slackwood from at least 1952 and was preceded at the site by his father. Douglas and his wife, Barbara, were married in 1952 and remained at Slackwood until his death in 1976. Barbara's recollections of Slackwood are presented in Appendix 3 of the desk-based assessment report (Greenlane Archaeology 2009); they reveal that although some additions were certainly made while she was resident, they were largely minor and comprised the addition of outshuts for storing milk, including the one on the north side of the barn, and the like. The farm was evidently still quite basic at this time, however, as it had no mains electricity or a proper bathroom, and there was an external wash house and Lister engine providing power. Many of these alterations were made during the ownership of Leighton Hall, which also oversaw the addition of the silage clamp on the north side of the barn, and the creation of the engine house and milking parlour (Richard Reynolds pers comm.) Two cowhouses were also added to the north of the barn, and from 1977 onwards a falconer was housed at the site who kept his birds in the small building adjacent to the north-west corner of the house (Richard Reynolds pers comm.). A photograph dated c1945 showing the west end of the north elevation of the barn provides some detail of the building at this time (Plate 1) – it demonstrates that the lean-to outshut against the west elevation was present by this date and that the concrete block addition to the west end of the north elevation had yet to be built, which corresponds with the anecdotal evidence that this cannot have been built before 1952 (see Appendix 3 in Greenlane Archaeology 2009)). There also appears to be a smaller, perhaps timber, structure in its place.



Plate 1: Part of a photograph dated c1945 showing the west end of the north elevation of the barn (after Wood 1946)

3.2.7 Following the death of Douglas Fishwick a planning application was submitted in 1977 with the intention to divide the house into two dwellings but apparently this was never carried out (see *Section 3.4* below). More recently Slackwood was left vacant and has become derelict; in 2005 proposals were made for the Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to make use of the building in order to provide new office space, educational facilities, and craft workshops (Arnside and Silverdale

AONB 2006, 2007). This, however, never occurred (Arnside and Silverdale AONB 2007) and by at least 2009 the site was placed on the *Buildings at Risk Register* (English Heritage 2009).

3.3 Map Regression

3.3.1 **Hennet 1830:** although Hennet's map is not very detailed (Plate 2) it does name the site and shows two buildings, which might correspond to the farmhouse and the barn to the north. A further building is shown to the south-east and there are what appear to be access tracks from the north-west and south.



Plate 2 (left): Extract from Hennet's map of 1830



Plate 3 (right): Extract from the Tithe map of 1846

3.3.2 **Tithe map of 1846:** the tithe map (LRO DRB/1/195 1846) shows the positions of the farmhouse and outbuildings in detail (Plate 3). It also shows additional features for the first time, such as associated outbuildings to the east and west of the house, an area of woodland (perhaps the orchard listed in the accompanying schedule (LRO DRB/1/195 1848)) to the south, and a lane providing access to the south, which is only hinted at on Hennet's plan. Curiously the barn and house appear strangely proportioned compared to their present arrangement. The barn seems much wider on this map and the house appears to be rectangular in plan rather than square as it is now. It is not certain if this is an accurate representation, however.

3.3.3 **Ordnance Survey 1848:** this is the first Ordnance Survey map and, although its scale means that Slackwood is very small, it clearly shows the house (with what is presumably a garden attached) and barn, plus a small outbuilding to the east of the house and what might be another to the west (Plate 4). It is notable that, in comparison to the slightly earlier Tithe Map, the barn and house appear to have taken on their present proportions – that is the barn seems much thinner compared to the house, and the house is more square in plan. There also appears to have been some reorganisation of the outbuildings to the west shown on the Tithe Map – one appears to now be roofless, while the other seems to have become incorporated into the adjoining field boundary.



Plate 4 (left): Ordnance Survey map of 1848

Plate 5 (right): Ordnance Survey map of 1891

3.3.4 Leighton Hall Archives Estate Map 1857: this map clearly includes Slackwood Farm within the estates held by Leighton Hall, demonstrating that they owned it by this date (see *Section 3.2.1* above). The map is relatively detailed, but shows the buildings in much the same way as they appear on the Tithe Map; indeed, they are so similar that the estate plan may in fact be partially if not completely based on it. As a result the house appears quite narrow while the barn appears very wide, unlike the way in which they are depicted on the first Ordnance Survey map (Plate 4).

3.3.5 Ordnance Survey 1891: this is the earliest map to show the site in great detail. The house and barn are depicted clearly and there is even an internal division shown within the barn (Plate 5). The house is clearly square in plan and the barn is rectangular - the outshut at its west end is not evident but it may have simply not been depicted.

3.4 Conclusion

3.4.1 Documentary evidence indicates that there has been a dwelling at the site from at least 1632, and that an earlier farmhouse, or perhaps the entire farmstead, was replaced in the early 18th century. There are no documentary sources that identify the date at which the barn was constructed, but it seems reasonable to assume it developed at the same time as the house. Henket's map shows that the barn was certainly present as early as 1830 and it seems likely that it originates in the rebuilding that took place in the 18th century.

4. Building Recording

4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 The barn was located due north of the farmhouse creating a rectangular east/west yard, which was bounded on the west by a field boundary and to the east by New Road (see Figure 1). There was also further yard space on the north side of the barn.

4.1.2 The barn comprised one large building with two floors (see Figures 2-5): the ground floor comprised five separate rooms including an added mono-pitched shippon at the east end and a slurry pit had also been added to the east side of the north elevation. The first floor was originally a single undivided space to which had been added a second mono-pitched outshut on the west side of the north elevation (forming Room 6). The main barn was constructed from limestone rubble which incorporated very occasional gritstone and sandstone pieces. The floors of the five lower rooms were a mixture of bare earth, cobbles and most frequently concrete, the roof was clad in corrugated asbestos sheeting and modern composite tiles had been used on the eastern shippon.

4.1.3 At some point prior to the addition of the outshuts the barn had been raised in height by approximately 1.70m, although it was still evidently spread over two levels prior to that. It seems likely that this work corresponded with the addition of the eastern shippon; this involved the removal of a bank at this end of the barn that had originally facilitated access directly to the first floor. However, the addition of a bank to the north side of the barn at this time meant that the building remained a bank barn; it was simply changed from a variant bank barn into a regular bank barn.

4.2 External detail

4.2.1 **Introduction:** the four external elevations of the main barn (incorporating Rooms 1-4 and 7) shall be described individually in this section; the outshuts will be then be fully described after each of the elevations to which they have been appended.

4.2.2 **North elevation:** due to the addition of the bank along most of this side of the barn, the visible part of this elevation only comprised the upper floor level which corresponded to Room 7 (Plate 6) and Room 6, which obscured the west part of Room 7 (Plate 7) - the original barn (see Figure 2). It would appear that the only part of this elevation that was not banked was the east end; however, the lower level of this end of the elevation had been subsequently obscured by a concrete slurry tank (Plate 6). The main feature of the north elevation was the central wagon door which had a flattened limestone arch and limestone quoins. This doorway could only have been added after the bank was added to this side of the barn, and, due to its height, after the walls had been heightened; cracks occurring around the west side of the doorway and some modern re-pointing to the jambs further suggesting that it was not an original feature of the building. To the east of the doorway there was a row of four square vents half way up the wall which would originally have been close to the original wall top; higher level vents had also been incorporated into the added upper section of wall of which two were still visible externally. The majority of the elevation to the west side of the doorway had been hidden behind the relatively recent addition of a shippon (Room 6). A fenced and gated enclosure had been added to the east of the shippon and this explained the concrete skin on the wall of the barn between the wagon doorway and the shippon. One of the lower level vents was evident just above this concrete skin; the rest had evidently been hidden behind the shippon.

4.2.3 **Shippon:** this building (Room 6) was constructed from concrete blocks that had been rendered with cement on the east and north elevations. The mono-pitch roof was clad in corrugated asbestos which suggests that the re-roofing of the main barn and the construction of this outshut were roughly contemporary. The eastern elevation of this building housed a tall and wide central doorway with a modern timber lintel, otherwise it was entirely plain. The north elevation housed a tall pedestrian width doorway that had been blocked up most of the way to form a small window at the top (Plate 7). The blocking had been completed with concrete blocks and rendered with cement in keeping with the rest of the elevation. There was a lintel over the doorway that was constructed from a small length of steel 'I'-beam. The west elevation contained a single pedestrian doorway; a concrete step had to be climbed to permit access to Room 6, which suggests that, along with its width, it was for human use only.

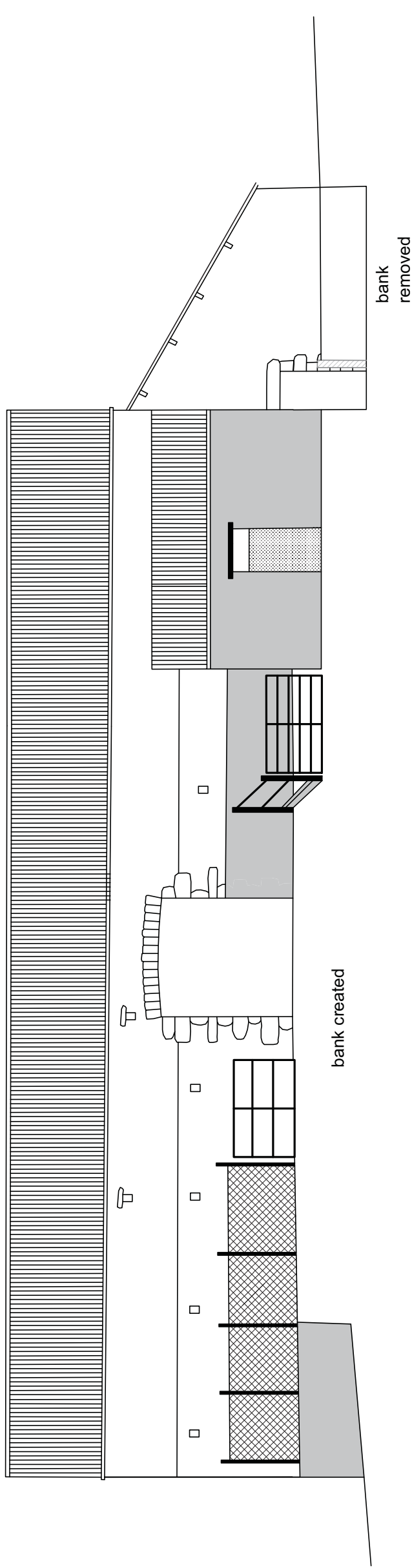


Plate 6 (left): East end of the north elevation

Plate 7 (right): Room 6 at the west end of the north elevation

4.2.4 West elevation: this elevation was largely hidden behind an outshut (see Figure 3), but its original features were clear from within that building (Room 5). There was a pedestrian doorway at the north end of the west elevation of the main barn, which accessed the upper floor (Room 7) and was over 2m above the floor of Room 5 (Plate 8). The height of this door suggests that the addition of the east outshut had involved the removal of a natural bank at this end of the barn. It was evident from the ground level on the exterior north and west sides of Room 5 that it had been sunk below ground level, presumably so cattle could access it from the farmyard to the south. The doorway into Room 7 had an irregularly shaped, roughly squared oak lintel that was hand finished and appeared to be original, and a plank and batten door was still attached to the timber doorframe. In the central section of this elevation there was a roughly square pitching door; this was originally located just under the original gable apex before the wall height of the barn was raised. This pitching door was now crammed in just under the mono-pitch roofline of the added shippon (Plate 9), its timber plank door had been sawn horizontally so the lower half still opened outwards, and this suggests that Room 7 was still in use as a hayloft when the shippon was added. Approximately below the pitching door there was an inserted pedestrian door through which access to Room 4 could be gained. The jambs of the doorway were constructed from red bricks and these had also been used to partly block the doorway to within 0.20m of the top. The remaining part of this elevation was plain excepting the whitewashed render that had been added when it became an internal wall; the rebuild around the inserted half-truss timbers was also clearly evident. The top of this gable end elevation was visible over the roofline of Room 5; this part was entirely plain and noticeably lacked an owl hole in its original and raised phases.

NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

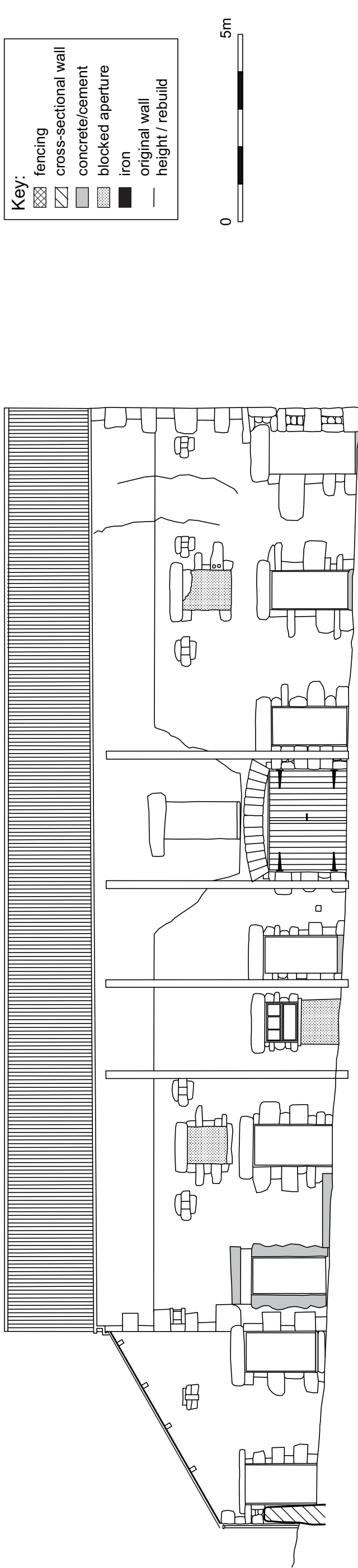
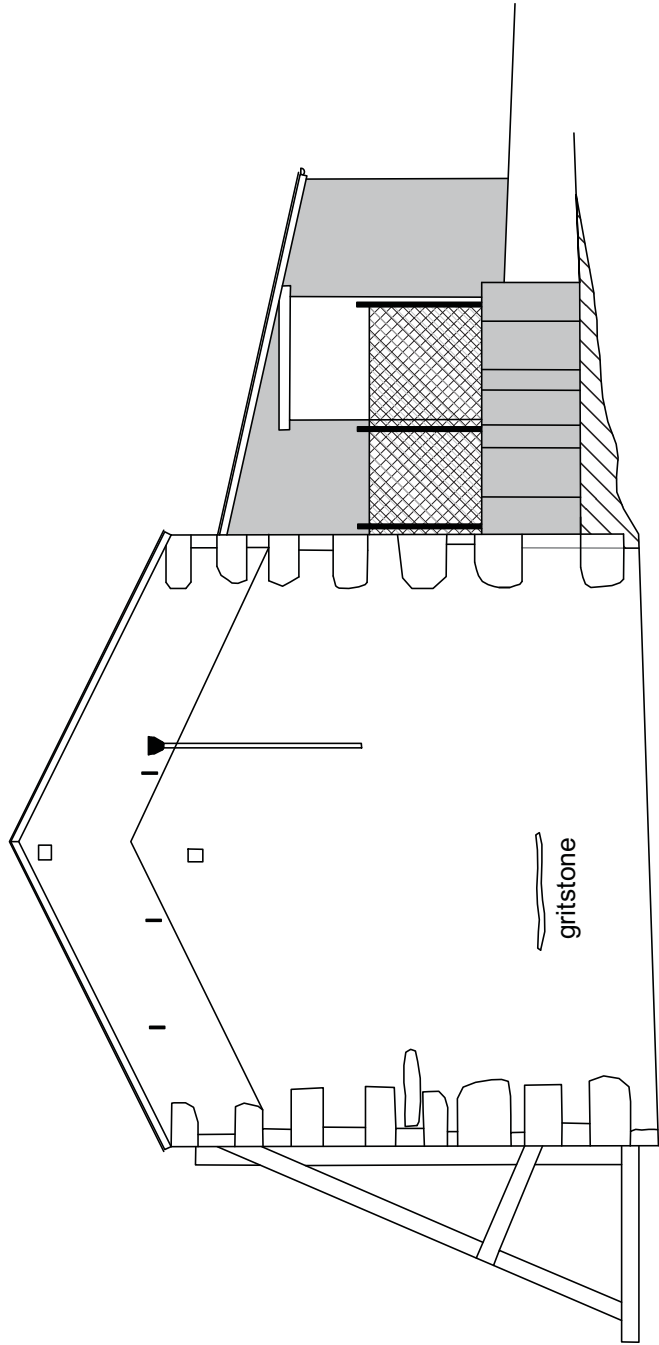


Figure 2: North and south external elevations

EAST ELEVATION

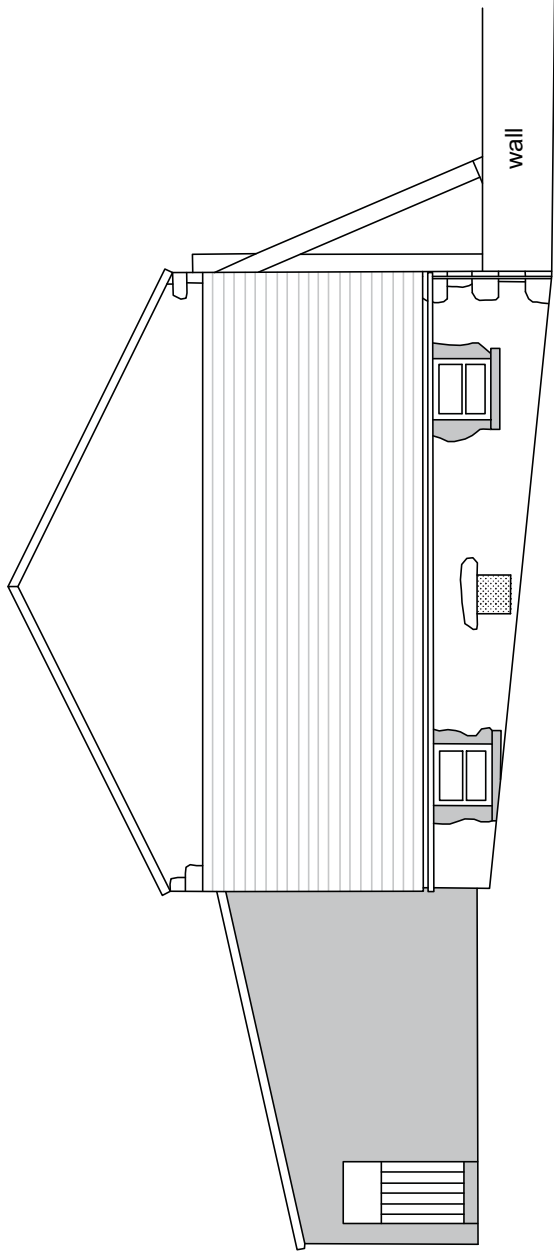


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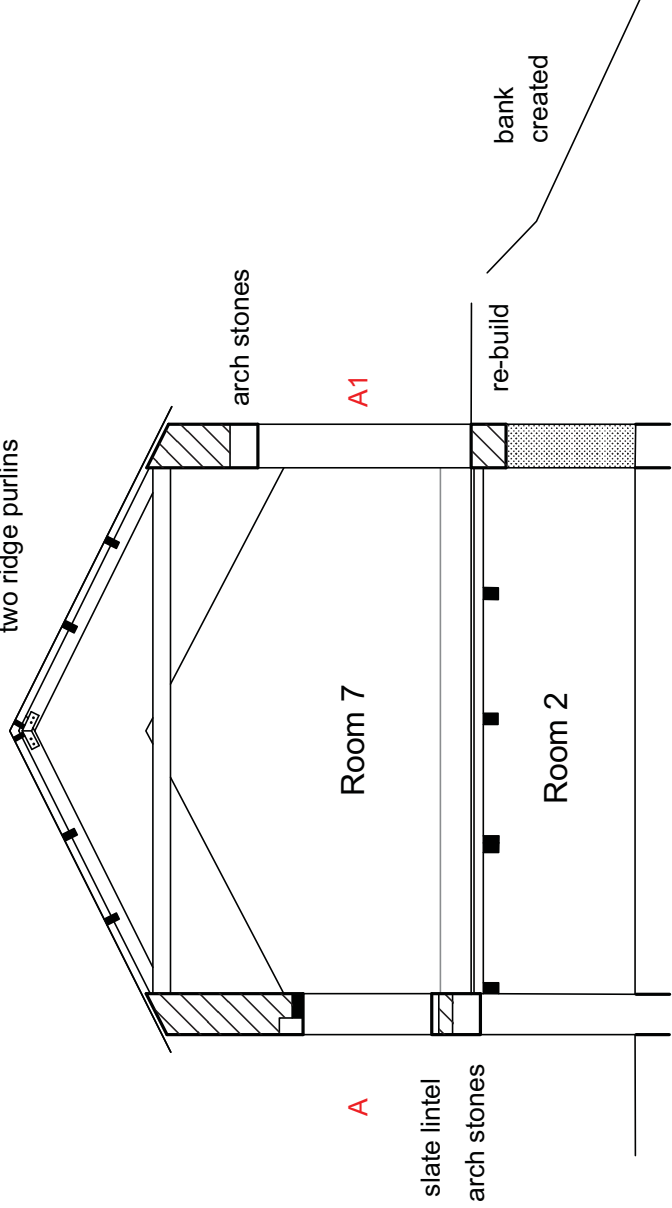
- original wall height / rebuild
- fencing
- base of concrete tank
- concrete/cement
- iron
- blocked aperture



WEST ELEVATION



Cross-section A, looking west



Key:

- cross-sectional timber
- blocked feature
- step up at west end
- cross-sectional wall
- original wall height



Cross-section B, looking south

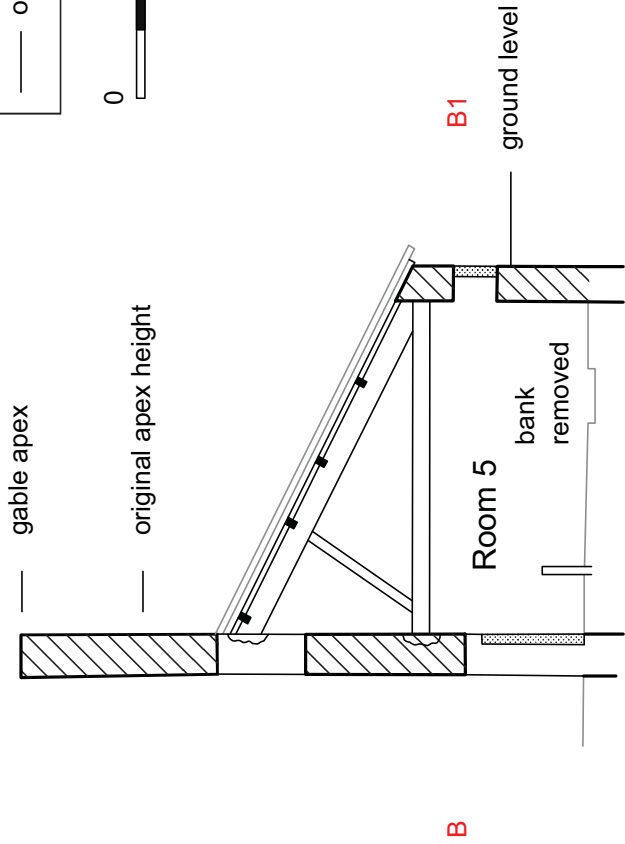




Plate 8 (left): Original access to the upper floor in the west elevation of the main barn

Plate 9 (right): Inserted door and upper pitching door in the west elevation of the main barn

4.2.5 **Shippon:** this shippon (Room 5) was constructed from limestone rubble and had been re-roofed with modern composite tiles and plastic guttering. The north elevation was largely buried beneath a bank which represented the original ground surface in this area. A passage had been cut through the bank at the east end of this elevation to facilitate pedestrian access from the north side of the main barn; this passage sloped downwards to the south. The passage was formed by the west wall of Room 6 and a concrete block wall revetted the bank on the west side. This doorway accessed the feeding passage of the shippon on the east side and was clearly intended for human use only. The elevation was otherwise plain. The west elevation was once again largely buried and the only features were two inserted windows that flanked a single original square window that had been blocked with red bricks. The inserted windows were identical and the red bricks that formed the jambs suggested that they were added when the smaller original window was blocked up. The inserted windows had concrete sills and simple timber frames which loosely held a single pane of glass; it would appear that initially they held an inward opening top ventilator over a lower single fixed pane. The south elevation of the shippon had two doorways: the eastern doorway allowing access into the feeding passage which led out through the single doorway on the north side of the room; the west doorway allowed the cattle into their stalls at the west side of the shippon. Both doorways were original and had limestone lintels and quoins, quoins on the west end of Room 4 clearly illustrated that this shippon (Room 5) was a later addition to the original barn. The only other feature on this elevation was a narrow slot vent which was located above and slightly to the west of the eastern doorway.



Plate 10 (left): Lean to shippon, Room 5, from the north-west



Plate 11 (right): Outshut (Room 5) from the south

4.2.6 **South elevation:** this elevation fronted the farmyard and was two floors in height along its entire length (Figure 2). This elevation is described in sections that relate to the individual rooms that comprise the ground floor, starting from the west end at the junction with the shippon (Room 5), which was described in Section 4.2.5. The upper floor area (Room 7) will be described in conjunction with its ground floor counterpart.



Plate 12: South elevation, from the east end

4.2.7 Room 4 had two doorways; the west one had clearly been inserted when the concrete block subdivision (Room 4a) was created (Plate 13). This doorway had cement render around the jambs, there was a square cut timber lintel over the door and a concrete lintel above that. The eastern doorway was original with whitewashed limestone quoins and lintel; over the doorway there was a blocked pitching door that would have allowed hay to have been passed into the loft above (Room 7). The pitching door was flanked by square vents (the east of which was over Room 3) and there was one at the west end of this section of the elevation; these were part of the original (lower) barn construction. As with all the external elevations the junction where the original wall was raised was clearly evident.



Plate 13 (left): West end of the south elevation with blocked pitching door over Room 4/4a



Plate 14 (right): Blocked doorway, Room 3

4.2.8 Room 3 was immediately to the east of Rooms 4 and 4a and had two doorways; the west one had been inserted and then partially blocked at a later date to form a window. It appeared from the timber casement of the window that the doorway had been inserted then converted to a window quite early on; the lack of quoins in the lower part of the doorway showed it was not original (Plate 14). The timber casement held a three-light inward opening top ventilator which was guided between timber fan-shaped guides to a wooden stop, below this was a single lower fixed light. The eastern door was in close proximity to the one just described and had whitewashed quoins; both doorways had whitewashed limestone lintels.

4.2.9 Room 2 was approximately in the centre of the barn and had a wide arched wagon doorway that was almost as wide as the interior space. Immediately above the doorway there was a pedestrian sized doorway that accessed Room 7, which appeared to have been inserted or at least substantially enlarged despite its limestone quoins and lintel (Plate 15). This is indicated by the way that the lintel for this aperture was higher than the roofline of the original barn; its sill was also below those of the pitching doors to the east and west. The wagon door had been fitted with modern plank and batten doors.

4.2.10 Room 1 was the largest ground floor room and was evidently designed as a shippon; there were three original ground floor doorways spaced evenly along the elevation with a pitching door over the central one (Plate 16). Each doorway had substantial quoins and a limestone lintel; the central doorway gave access to the feeding passage and was flanked by doors that gave cattle access to their stalls. The upper pitching door had rudimentary quoins which were a mixture of limestone and red sandstone; an iron hook affixed to a quoin on the east side would have related to a timber door. The pitching door had largely been blocked with limestone rubble and the occasional brick, though a small irregular aperture

still existed at the top. There were square slot vents on either side of the pitching door and a further one close to the east end of the barn.



Plate 15 (left): Wagon doorway of Room 2 under an inserted winnowing door of Room 7



Plate 16 (right): shippon, Room 1

4.2.11 **East elevation:** this elevation was very plain (Figure 3), though the original gable line of the early barn was visible (Plate 2), along with a length of downpipe and a hopper; these clearly related to the previous level of the roof of the barn. The hopper appeared to be cast iron and the downpipe was made from asbestos cement. The original owl hole was evident under the original gable line, and a new owl hole had been added below the new apex which suggests that a considerable amount of hay was being stored here.

4.3 Internal detail - ground floor

4.3.1 **Room 1:** each of the four elevations were rendered and whitewashed in keeping with the use of this space as a shippon. The arrangement of the shippon was evident on the floor with two parallel post and rail fences partitioning the central feeding passage from the stalls at the east and west ends. At least one of these rails was constructed from a re-used timber beam, with joist slots that had been numbered. The stall areas and the feeding passage were cobbled; the dung channel and slight plinth on either side had been concreted. This was the only lower floor room where the ceiling had been removed. Three beam slots were evident in the east elevation, and the sawn beam ends were evident in the partition wall at the west side of the room. The joist slots in the north and south elevations still contained sawn, squared, softwood timbers that appeared to be 19th or 20th century in date.



Plate 17 (left): Room 1, from the south-east



Plate 18 (right): Room 1, from the north-west

4.3.2 The north elevation had an area of blocking in the centre that corresponded to the feeding passage and may originally have been a pedestrian doorway. No quoins were evident, however, to the sides of the concrete blocks that had been used to block the aperture or possible damaged area in the wall. There was a small irregular shaped oak lintel over the blocks which did not appear wide enough to span the width of a doorway (Plate 17). To the east and west of the feeding passage a small iron trough was affixed to the wall, labelled 'Fordham Selfill'.

4.3.3 The east elevation was plain except for a central alcove in the wall which had a whitewashed oak timber lintel (Plate 18). It seems possible that this was a part blocked window as its location seemed to correspond to a slab of stone in the exterior wall, but there was no other evidence on the exterior for a blocked window or quoins, so it seems probable that this feature was a purpose built alcove. A second owl hole had been added when the wall height was raised, suggesting that hay or other crops had subsequently been piled up at this end of the barn, and that it would have had an upper floor at this time.

4.3.4 The south elevation housed three doorways, all of which were original with substantial quoins and irregular hand finished oak lintels that were set immediately below the joist sockets along this elevation.

4.3.5 The west elevation was formed by a stone partition wall that was apparently keyed into the south elevation of the barn, although possibly not into the north elevation. This whitewashed wall was featureless.

4.3.6 **Room 2:** this room was accessed through the wagon doorway and comprised a narrow space with a compacted earthen floor, which might have overlain an earlier cobbled surface. There was a square of concrete in the centre of the floor, as well as a concrete base in the south-west corner. The ceiling comprised three east/west beams supporting modern narrow softwood boards. The ceiling beams were modern square cut softwood timbers as were the joists, the most southerly of the three beams had two 'v'-shaped markings at the east end (see Plate 19). The room was being used for storage purposes at the time of the study; it would have presumably originally formed a cart shed.



Plate 19 (left): South beam of Room 2

Plate 20 (right): Blocked pedestrian doorway in the north elevation of Room 2

4.3.7 The north elevation was plain except for a blocked pedestrian doorway (Plate 20); this would have been rendered obsolete when the bank was added to the north side of the barn. It would appear that the ceiling had been inserted in this part of the barn, or at least altered, as the lintel over this blocked door must have been removed to allow the joist sockets for the floor above.

4.3.8 The east elevation was entirely plain; it seems likely that this wall was originally built to separate off the purpose built shippon to the east.

4.3.9 The south elevation largely comprised the wide wagon door which was biased to the east side of the room. Once again the ceiling level appears too low in relation to this door (as with the north end of the room), and the southern east/west beam is lower than the underside of the arch. It was also evident that there were no joist holes in the wall itself at this end of the room which would also suggest that this ceiling may have been added or lowered.

4.3.10 The west elevation comprised a stone partition wall; this was possibly inserted although it was difficult to be certain about this. There was a blocked pedestrian doorway towards the north end which appeared to have been blocked in two stages, the majority using limestone rubble which had been rendered and whitewashed and the upper third using bare concrete blocks.

4.3.11 **Room 3:** this room had most recently been used as a shippon, and there were four stalls constructed from fairly modern softwood timber that were arranged against the west wall. The three east/west beams were square sawn modern softwood and supported similarly modern joists. The ceiling boards were a mixture of modern, narrow (0.16m) replacements and some older boards that were approximately 0.26m wide. The floor of the room was grooved concrete and the dung channel was to the

east of the stalls; this arrangement lacks a feeding passage but would have utilised hatches in the ceiling so the hay or straw could be fed down to wall mounted mangers from above.

4.3.12 The north elevation was whitewashed and rendered and plain except for a window that was located slightly nearer to the west end (Plate 21). The loose earth bank created to the rear of the barn could be seen through the window; the timber casement was still in the window and contained three square lights set over a single lower light.

4.3.13 The east elevation was plain excepting the blocked doorway that was referred to in *Section 4.3.10*, the oak lintel was evident on this side and was roughly hand squared and whitewashed.

4.3.14 The south elevation had a doorway at the east end which was well quoined and original with a roughly squared oak lintel. There was a window a short distance to the west of the doorway which was formed by a half blocked doorway; the window had a casement that was identical to that on the north elevation and a concrete sill. The blocking in the lower half of this former doorway was stone rubble, and from the exterior it was evident that this doorway had been inserted prior to being partly blocked up. It would seem likely that the window was formed when the bank to the north of the barn was added, putting the window in that elevation out of use; it is less clear what the inserted doorway was added for in the first place given the current configuration of this room.

4.3.15 The west elevation was entirely plain; it appeared that the south end of this interior wall was keyed into the main barn structure, while the north end was not.



Plate 21 (left): Interior of Room 3 from the south



Plate 22 (right): North-west corner of Room 4

4.3.16 **Room 4/4a:** the south-west corner of Room 4 had been sub divided by the addition of a concrete block wall, this sub-division (4a) had apparently put Room 4 out of use. Room 4a was entirely coated in a concrete skin; there was a triangular shaped ledge in the north-west corner of the room and three block plinths in the north-east corner that looked like supports for shelves. There was a single north/south steel 'I'-beam that which was clad in plasterboard like the rest of the ceiling. The 'I'-beam rested on the north block wall, where it was attached to a timber beam that spanned the rest of Room 4 before keying into the north elevation. All the ceiling timbers for Room 4 were modern machine sawn softwood, and the beam was assisted by a central steel column (Plate 22). The floor of this room was concreted and had a central dung channel running north/south with concrete trough bases along the west wall; no stalls were evident however.

4.3.17 The north elevation of Room 4 housed a pair of matching windows each with a jamb that splayed in towards the centre of the room to maximise the light. The metal casements held four lights comprising a tall side hung sash next to a fixed frame light both of which were set under a top hung ventilator that had two smaller square lights. While these windows probably date from the early or mid 20th century, and the timber lintels were square cut modern softwood, it is possible that they replaced earlier windows. It is

interesting that the banking behind the windows was shielded from these casements by concrete blocks showing that this part of the north side of the barn was not banked until the mid or late 20th century, probably when it was deemed necessary to construct Room 6 immediately to the north on the next level up.

4.3.18 The east elevation was whitewashed and largely plain, though there was a small alcove in the wall that appeared to have been purpose built rather than the result of a blocked aperture.

4.3.19 The south elevation merely comprised the doorway since the addition of Room 4a; this door was original and the interior lintel comprised three hand finished oak timbers. The main part of this elevation had become incorporated within Room 4a and was blanketed in concrete render.

4.3.20 The west elevation had also been partly incorporated in to Room 4a and was plain and rendered. Immediately to the north of the block wall forming the rear of Room 4a there was a blocked doorway that would have given access to Room 5. The doorway had been almost entirely closed with concrete blocks, leaving a small 'window' at the top. This doorway was a recent insert with red brick jambs and a concrete lintel. It would appear that this doorway would have post-dated the construction of Room 5 due to the materials used, and was perhaps contemporary with the inserted windows in Room 5 (see *section 4.2.5*).

4.3.21 **Room 5:** this shippon was the only addition to the main east/west barn range; the feeding passage ran along the east side of the room, with the dung channel on the west side behind the stalls. The north, west and south elevations had a concrete skin up to a height of approximately 1.50m, above which height they were whitewashed. The floor was constructed from grooved concrete and the stall partitions were visible as scars within this concrete. The freestanding post and rail fence that held the stall partitions was still standing at the north end of the room and was constructed from modern softwood timbers; it is probable that this replaced an earlier stall arrangement when the floor was concreted. The roof timbers comprise two mono-trusses with a single angled brace (Plate 23); these are keyed into the west wall of Room 5 and the exterior side of the original barn at the east end. The presence of Baltic timber marks on the purlins suggests a 19th century date for this addition (Plate 24); the principle rafters also bore some timber marks. The rafters and roof cladding had evidently been replaced quite recently, and they were separated by felt. The east elevation of this room has previously been described as the exterior west elevation of the main barn (see *section 4.2.4*). The features on the north, east and south elevations have also been adequately described in *section 4.2.5*, which pertains to the exterior of this building.



Plate 23 (left): Room 5 from the north

Plate 24 (right): Baltic timber marks on purlins of Room 5

4.3.22 **Room 6:** the main features of this outshut have been adequately described externally (see section 4.2.3); internally the space was plain and undivided with a concrete floor and cement rendered walls. There was a single north/south modern softwood beam that was keyed into the two end wall, this supported five purlins that in turn supported the corrugated asbestos roof sheets.

4.4 Internal detail - upper floor

4.4.1 The upper floor was a single undivided space, the flooring was missing at the east end and a low partition/fencing had been added to screen this area off for safety reasons. A winnowing door had been inserted in the south elevation below a timber lintel (Plate 25). The floorboards were a mixture of widths, and it is thought that the more frequent narrow boards represented repair work. At the west end of the room there was a raised area that was 0.45m higher than the main floor level (Plate 26); this allowed the underlying room (4/4a) to be of a sufficient height despite being further up the slope than the rooms to the east. The roof timbers comprised six tie-beam trusses with two purlins per pitch supporting corrugated asbestos sheets. These sawn softwood timbers were probably contemporary with the raising of the barn walls and the addition of the outshut (Room 5), which would suggest that they are 19th century in date and imported from the Baltic regions. Some hand finishing/trimming by axe was evident on the faces of some of these timbers that were slightly scalloped in places. The principle rafters of the trusses were soffitted and these joints were braced by additional timbers on the outer faces (see Figure 3). It seems likely that the braces were related to the addition of the asbestos sheets which required two ridge purlins which would have replaced the single original purlin.

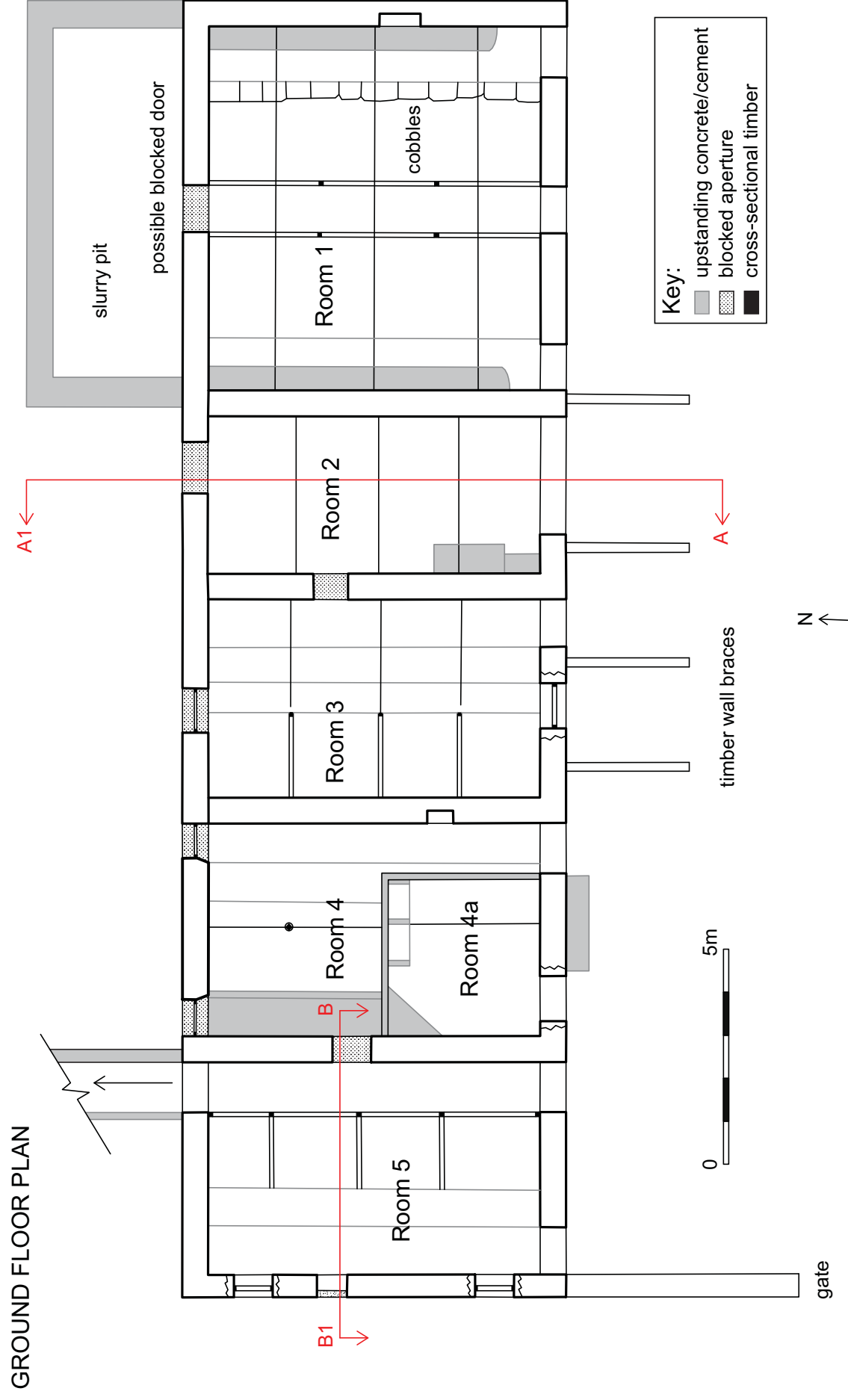
4.4.2 Originally the only access to this floor would have been through a pedestrian door in the west elevation, and the hay would have had to have been loaded through the three pitching doors located over the ground floor rooms housing animals. The creation of a bank at the north side of the barn and the raising of the wall heights permitted carts to gain access to this floor and rendered the pitching doors obsolete. At this time the bank to the west of the barn was removed to facilitate the construction of the shippin (Room 5); this alteration to the ground level put the pedestrian doorway in the west elevation out of use.



Plate 25 (left): Inserted winnowing door in south elevation of Room 7



Plate 26 (right): West end of loft/Room 7



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

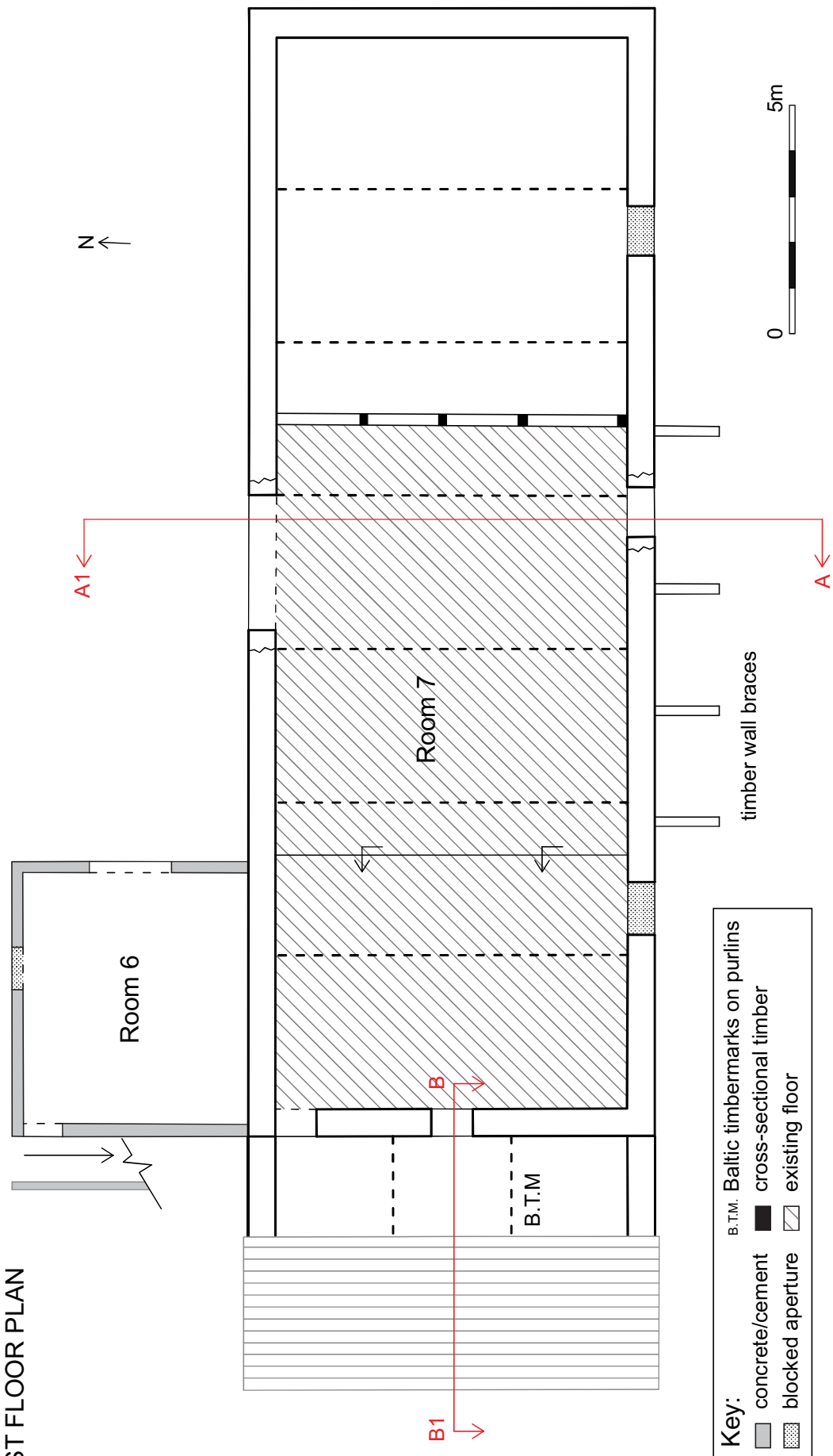


Figure 5: First floor plan

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The historical background and map regression have, unfortunately, been of very little assistance to our understanding of the development of the building. This is partly due to the lack of accessible detailed records such as sales particulars for the farm; these sometimes discuss outbuildings, their functions and sizes. The shape of the barn itself makes the map regression element difficult, as the landscaping and change in height are impossible to detect, and a slight change in length by the addition of Room 5 is also difficult to identify on the earliest maps, which are lacking in detail. The building recording itself has, however, produced some useful information which enables some basic phases to be re-constructed, although the presence of the original roof timbers would undoubtedly have helped a more accurate date of construction to be postulated. The census details from 1851 onwards have provided some useful information by illustrating the size of the land farmed by the occupiers and the numbers of assistants that helped at the farm. This information at least shows that some arable farming must have been practised at the farm, despite the lack of an obvious threshing area in the barn's original layout.

5.2 Phasing

5.2.1 **Phase 1 – late 18th/early 19th century:** this phase represents the construction of the barn at Slackwood Farm; in its original state it comprised the east/west range without the shippon at the west end. This structure housed a first-floor hayloft over shippons, a cart shed, and probably also stables and/or cowhouses. The original pitching doors in the east and west ends of the south elevation, and the one in the west elevation, allowed hay to be loaded into the loft over the animals' quarters, from where it could be fed down through hatches in the floor directly to mangers below. The west end of the barn was originally banked as indicated by the exterior ground level to the west, and the height of the pedestrian doorway in that elevation; this doorway originally provided the only access to the upper floor. It seems likely that on the lower floor Room 1 was a purpose built double shippon with a central feeding passage with loft over; Room 2, a cart shed; Room 3, possibly a second shippon; Room 4, a loose box or stabling, on account of it originally having a single door and double windows. In essence the original structure was a type of variant bank barn; it was atypical though, due to the lack of upper threshing floor which would have necessitated a wagon door to deliver the bulky unprocessed crops. A re-examination of Hennet's map of 1830 shows another structure to the south-east of the farmyard area, and it is possible that this was a second combination barn or even a purpose built threshing barn that was already in existence at the time this barn was constructed. This building had evidently been demolished by the time of the 1848 Ordnance Survey map, which was surveyed in 1845, and replaced by woodland or an orchard. Field barns are fairly common in Lancashire and are typical of farms where the fields extend some distance from the farmhouse; a good example from Cumbria is at Sowerby Hall Farm near Barrow-in-Furness (Greenlane Archaeology 2007).

5.2.2 **Phase 2 – 1830-1845:** this is the main phase of alteration and development to the barn which included the raising of the roof height, the addition of a shippon to the west end, and the banking of the north side of the barn to enable access to an upper-level threshing floor. These changes could relate to the disappearance of the third building, shown to the south-east on Hennet's map of 1830. It would appear that an orchard was constructed in its place, and that this barn was expanded to combine the functions of both the original barns. Such widespread changes are often the results of a change in the ownership of a farm, the tithe schedule (LRO DRB/1/195 1846) shows that in 1846 the owner was a Howard Thomas Nelson, and the occupier was Thomas Parkinson; it seems probable that these men were responsible for this period of development, and it may have come soon after the Walling family's long period of ownership ended.

5.2.3 The shippon at the west end of the barn was cut into the bank that originally allowed direct access to the upper floor (Room 7) at this end of the barn. The loss of this access to the upper floor must have been contemporary with the creation of the new banked wagon access at the north side of the barn. In turn the new wagon door must have been contemporary with the raising of the roof height, as

the top of its arch is higher than the original wall height. It seems probable that the bank created on the north side of the barn was probably little more than a ramp at this time, probably just putting the ground floor doorway in Room 2 and the window of Room 3 out of use, and that this may have been the case until it was necessary to construct the outshut to the west (Room 6). As mentioned the purpose of the ramp and wagon doorway was to enable the upper floor of the barn to be used as a threshing floor; it would have been at this time that the opposing (winnowing) door was inserted in the upper part of the south elevation. The function of this doorway would have been to create the through draft necessary for separating the chaff from the corn, with the threshing floor positioned between this door and the wagon doorway. The addition of the wagon doorway would have made the pitching doors in the south elevation unnecessary, and it is probable they were blocked at this time. The pitching door in the west elevation was probably retained to be used in reverse, i.e. for the pitching of hay out of the barn, and down to the newly added shippon. When the walls of the barn were raised the roof timbers were replaced; the current timbers and truss styles are typical of those imported from the Baltic States in the 19th century, and the purlins in the new shippon bore marks consistent with this. The new higher barn allowed the storage of additional grain crops rather than just hay; this increase is indicated by the second owl hole added to the top of the east elevation, the lower original presumably rendered obsolete.

5.2.4 Phase 3 – 1845–1900: at some point a doorway was inserted into Room 3, this may have been to allow access for both man and beast and would suggest that this was used as another cow-house.

5.2.5 Phase 4 – early 20th century: evidence of the widespread changes in agricultural policies and practice at this time were evident in Room 5, where two windows with concrete lintels had been inserted to provide extra light for the cows in the shippon. The style of the original timber casements in these inserted windows was very similar to that added to the part blocked doorway in Room 3, suggesting that this doorway was blocked in this phase. New hygiene laws were passed for the keeping of animals in this period, and it is probable that the concrete floors in the ground floor rooms were a direct response to these (University of Gloucestershire *et al* 2006, 28). The metal casement windows in Room 4 would have been added around this time also, but probably only to replace existing ones. It is possible that the windows in this room were actually inserted at this time, in keeping with animal welfare policies that were being expounded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (*ibid*), though this is hard to determine while the exterior elevation is hidden by the banking to the north.

5.2.6 Phase 5 – mid 20th century: many of these later alterations are readily evident due to the usage of concrete and bricks which sets them apart from the earlier phases that largely utilised stone. Perhaps the most major alteration from this phase would be the banking of the north-west side of the barn to facilitate the construction of Room 6. Correspondence with a previous occupier of the farm suggests that this room was built shortly after 1952 (Barbara Ainsworth pers comm.), however, it apparently replaced an earlier timber building suggesting that the underlying bank had been added some time earlier, possibly in Phase 3. The bank was probably added to the rear of Room 4 no more than a decade before Room 6 was constructed, as a concrete block wall had been added to the north side of Room 4 and was visible through its windows. The windows in Room 4 were replacements and had metal casements; the fact that these had been installed before the exterior banking was added, further suggests that the banking was quite a late development. The corrugated concrete roof of Room 6 matched that of the main barn suggesting that the barn was last re-roofed in the 1950's.

5.2.7 It is probable that the addition of Room 4a was contemporary with these changes to the north side of the barn, as Room 4 would have become less useful without the light it received from the north side. In addition, a steel 'I'-beam had been incorporated into the ceiling of Room 4a, which was possibly part of the same length of beam that had been used as a door lintel in the construction of Room 6. The construction of Room 4a probably coincided with the re-roofing of this room and Room 4. Some small quantity of light would have been supplied to Room 4 by the addition of the doorway between Room 4 and Room 5; the concrete lintel and brickwork in the jambs suggests that this insertion may have been contemporary with these other changes. It would seem likely that Room 4a had a dairy function as it was sealed with cement and extremely clean, and a concrete base outside its inserted doorway may have been part of a structure to hold churns at a height for easy loading onto a wagon.

5.2.8 At some point a slurry tank was constructed against the east end of the north side of the barn, which might have been constructed in either Phase 3 or Phase 4 and presumably relates to the blocking of the northern feeding passage door of Room 1 which was achieved with concrete blocks.

5.2.9 **Phase 6 - late 20th century:** it is probable that the re-roofing of the shippon, Room 5, which was completed in modern composite concrete tiles was the last major phase of work on this barn complex. The new wagon doors on the southern elevation of Room 2 were probably added somewhat later still.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 The map regression shows the barn dates from at least 1830, and documentary evidence suggests that the current farmhouse dates back as far as the early 18th century, although it replaced an earlier structure.

5.3.2 The earliest phase of construction suggests that the barn was a combination barn used for the storage of hay which was fed down to the livestock housed below, and it probably also housed horses and wagons. This barn was a type of variant bank barn with the upper floor access gained at the gable end. It seems probable that this was transformed into a more typical bank barn between 1830 and 1845, when the north side was artificially banked to facilitate the addition of a cart to allow the upper floor to be used as a threshing floor. This transformation involved a number of alterations including the addition of a shippon to the west end, and it seems that the barn was enlarged to incorporate the functions of another farm building evident on Hennet's map of 1830 that probably made way for an orchard.

5.3.3 The barn at Slackwood Farm is atypical in a number of ways, not least that it shows a change from a dairy bias to a mixture of arable and dairy farming, with the threshing floor being a later addition. A number of smaller outbuildings were evident on the 1846 tithe map suggesting that the farm had a wide range of functions.

GROUND FLOOR

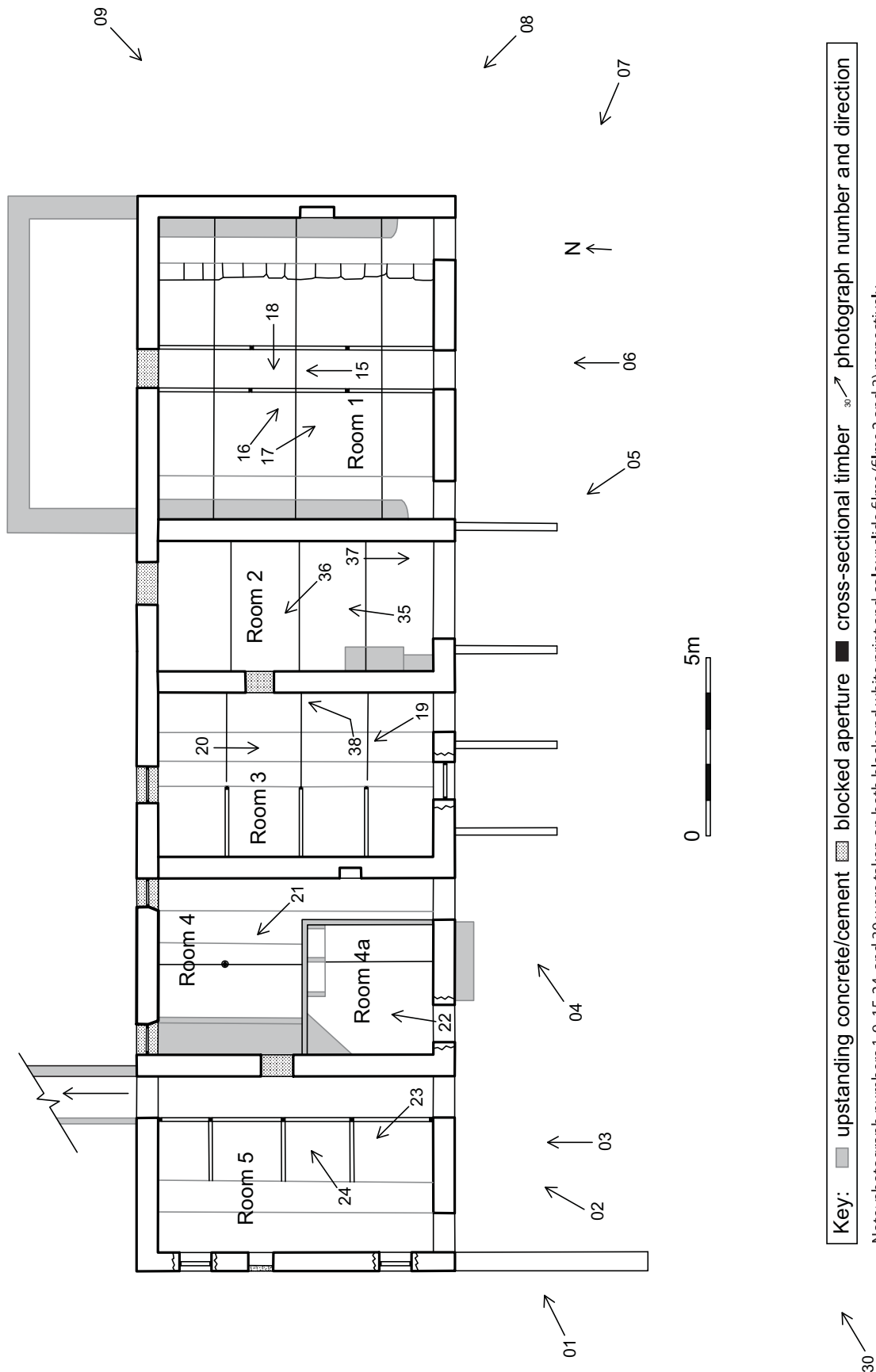


Figure 5: Location plan for photographs taken on the ground floor

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

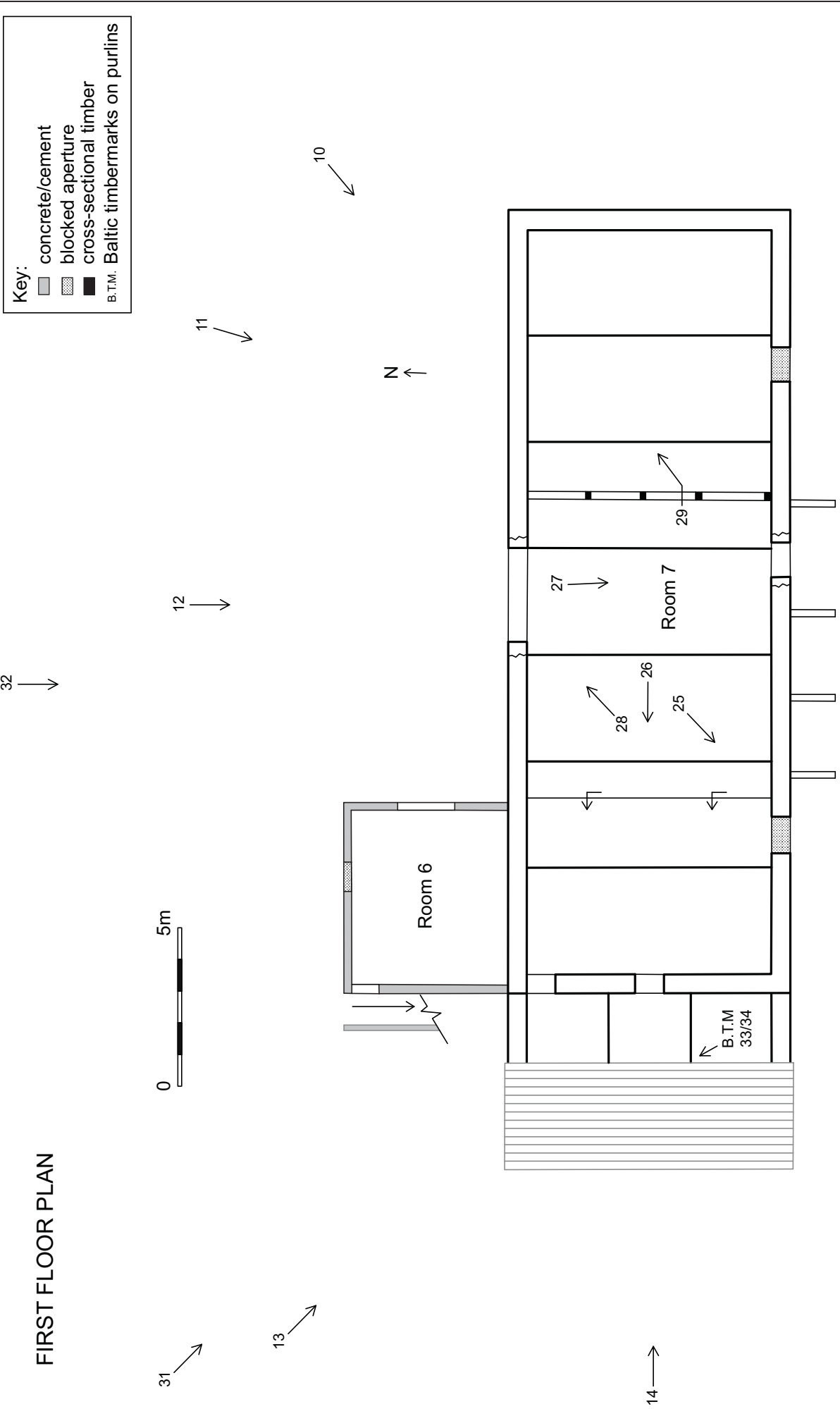


Figure 6: Location plan for photographs taken on the first floor

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