

Archaeological  
Building  
Recording  
Services

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey.  
Cherry Hill Farm,  
Silverdale, Newcastle under Lyme  
Staffordshire.**

**(NGR SJ 83181 46574)**

**On Behalf of Rossisle Development Co Ltd**



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**October 2014**

**Planning Permission No  
14/00020/FUL**

**ABRS Project No 2014-CHSS**

Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS)

40 Winfield Street  
Rugby  
Warwickshire  
CV21 3SJ

Tel 07423813638

email: [gerwyn.richards@archbuildservices.co.uk](mailto:gerwyn.richards@archbuildservices.co.uk)

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Gerwyn Richards

**Summary**

*This document is an archaeological standing building survey of an outbuilding at Cherry Hill Farm, Silverdale, Staffordshire (SJ 83181 46574), commissioned from Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) by Rossisle Development Co Ltd in advance of the proposed dismantling of the outbuilding and the construction of new residential units.*

*The outbuilding is likely to be mid to late 18th century in date, but possibly including earlier elements. It is likely, that until recently the building had been use as a dairy. There are stalls within the central bays as well as a feed passage. The remaining rooms were ancillary and there was a loft over the stalls. There is extensive evidence that the structural timber has been re-used a number of times. The precarious condition of the building, however prevented a very detailed examination of the roof structure.*

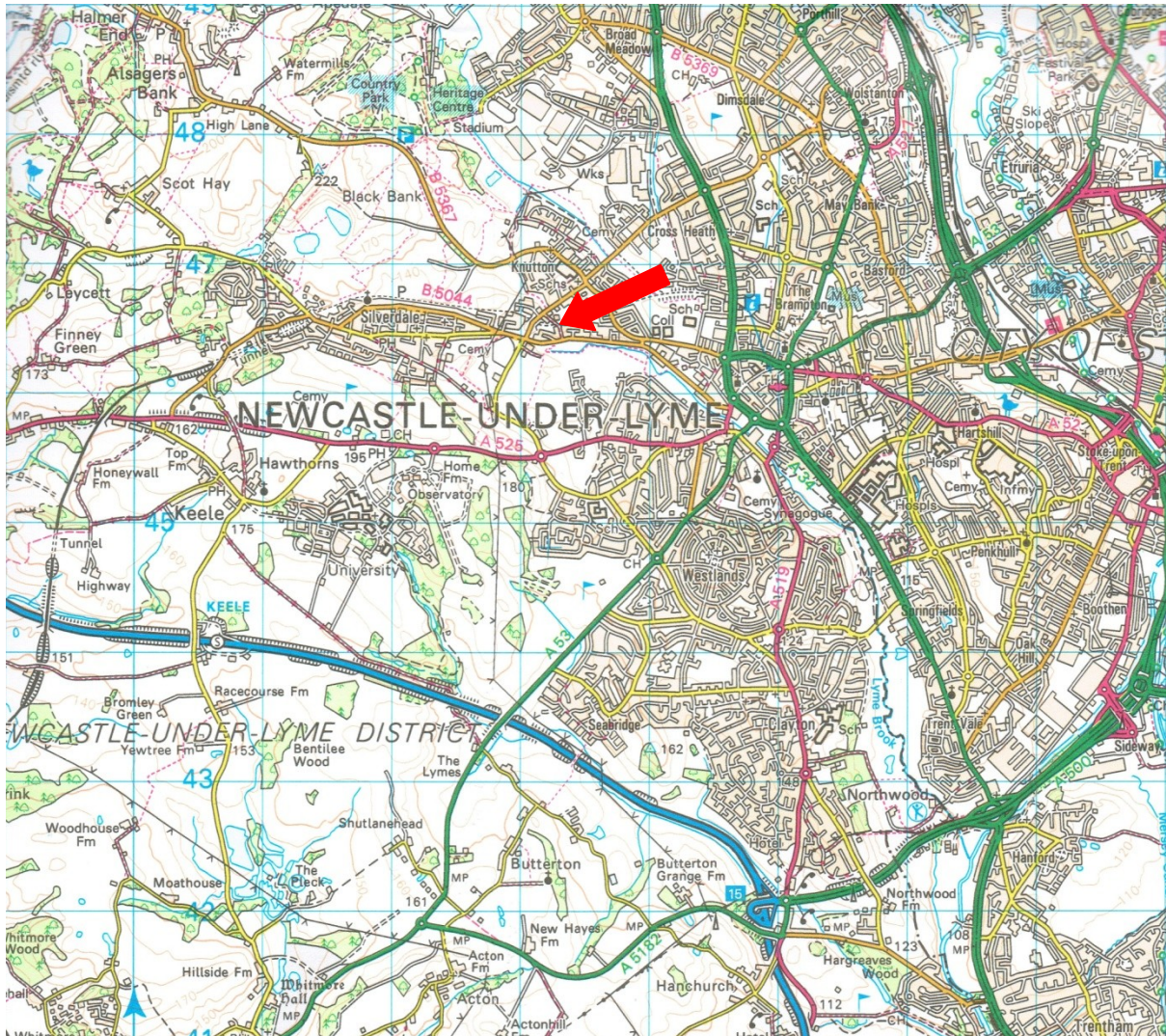
*It is possible that the building only recently acquired the name Cherry Hill Farm, earlier cartographic sources indicate Cherry Hill was originally to the east. It is possible that the current Knutton House was the original Cherry Hill Farm.*

*The archive will be deposited with The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number 2014.LH.52.*

**1. Introduction**

Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) were commissioned by Rossisle Development Co Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of an outbuilding at Cherry Hill Farm, Silverdale, Staffordshire (SJ 83181 46574 (*Figures 1 & 19*)). Planning permission for the dismantling of the outbuilding and the erection of three new residential units has been granted by Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council (Planning Application No 14/00020/FUL). The building is a traditional farm building, believed to date from the early 19th century. The Landscape Archaeologist, Staffordshire County Council, as advisor to Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council has recommended that an archaeological standing building survey to English Heritage Level 2 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006) be carried out prior to the commencement of the proposed works. The outbuilding is not statutory listed, nor included within a Conservation Area.

A Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Building Recording has not been issued, the Landscape Archaeologist, Staffordshire County Council has been consulted and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted and approved. The project was completed in accordance with and following the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct*, and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2008).



**Figure 1**  
Site Location

Reproduced from 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office.  
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Cherry Hill Farm is located within the village of Knutton, part of the historic parish of Wostanton. From around the mid 16th century the parish belonged to the Sneyd Family of the Keele Estate and following a turbulent family history the Estate passed to Ralph Sneyd in 1848, Ralph restored the estate to a much healthier footing, building and repairing farm buildings. Following the death of Ralph without issue in 1870 the estate passed to his brother, the “famously idle” the Rev. Walter Sneyd, who had retired from the ministry in his mid twenties. The estate, including lands at Knutton were broken up and sold in 1951 to settle death duties and allegedly gambling debts.

The Sneyd Family papers held by Keele University Special Collections and Archives contain a large resource of information relating to the Keele Estate, the archives also contain fragmentary references relating to Knutton and purportedly Cherry Hill Farm itself. The earliest reference to the farm is in an estate map drawn in 1792, the map records the Knutton Estate recently purchased by the Sneyds, Cherry Hill Farm was not, at the time part of the Knutton Estate, the map however records that the land on which Cherry Hill stood belonged to the “Late Mr Boughey”. Further examination of the archives, most notably those

deposited by Knight & Sons (the Sneyd Family solicitors) indicate that an estate in Knutton was bought from a Thomas Fletcher Fenton Boughey in 1841. With the conveyance there is a sketched map showing the buildings of the current Cherry Hill Farm (*Figure 2*). The accompanying map key records that the un-named buildings labelled as 2 were occupied by Charles Whalley. It is described as consisting of a “*house, buildings, gardens and fold yards*”, in all 3 roods, 24 perchs (a rood is approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an acre). Whites Directory and Gazetteer of Staffordshire, 1834 lists a Charles Walley [sic] suggesting he had tenanted the farm for some time prior to its sale.



**Figure 2**

Map of Lands in Knutton Bought by Ralph Sneyd in 1841  
(Showing Recorded Building in Red)

The map included with the 1841 conveyance appears to be a tracing of the Knutton Tithe Map drawn in 1839 (SRO Ref D593/H/3/404 (*Figure 3*)). The map clearly records the alignment of Cherry Hill Lane, as well as the cross roads with Church Lane, the map, however does not contain any detail of buildings of Cherry Hill Farm, it is likely, therefore that the farm was not liable for tithe at the time.

The conveyance records that the land bought by Ralph Sneyd in 1841 belonged to Thomas Fletcher Fenton Boughey, whose father, Sir John Fenton Boughey (1784-1823) bought the land in 1785 from a Ralph Aston. Sir John, a wealthy coal owner and MP had been ousted from his Newcastle-under-Lyme seat in 1818 by the 2nd Marquess of Stafford who wished to regain control of the borough. Eager for revenge Boughey abandoned the Marquess's collusive coal price fixing and in 1820 accepted an invitation from the independent Staffordshire Freeholders' Association to challenge the Marquess's son Lord Gower for his county seat as a Whig.

There is no further information regarding Ralph Aston, although it can be surmised that he was a descendent of Aston Family who held sway over large areas of medieval Staffordshire, including being the County's High Sherriff.



**Figure 3**  
1839 Knutton Tithe Map



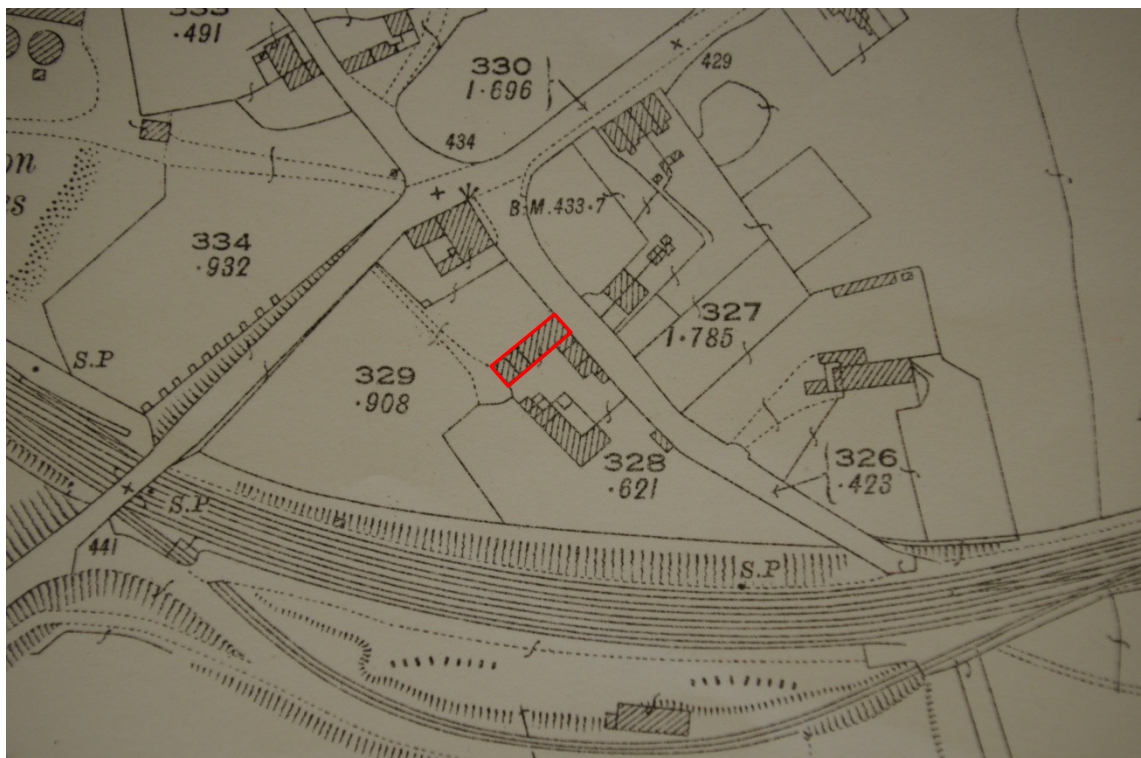
**Figure 4**  
Map of The Knutton Estate in the Parish of Wostanton 1848.



In 1848 Ralph Sneyd commissioned a map of the Knutton Estate (*Figure 4*). The map drawn by J. Myatt clearly records the buildings of the current Cherry Hill Farm. The buildings are almost certainly those subject to this historic building recording.

Following the conventions of the time the recorded building is coloured grey, confirming it as an outbuilding, residential buildings, such as the farmhouse to the south are coloured red. The buildings are identified as No. 196; the attached schedule identifies the buildings as “*house, buildings, garden, fold yard etc*”, and as in 1841 occupied by Charles Whalley. To the north east is a range of buildings now known as Knutton House, the layout of the buildings indicate it too was a working farm in 1848 occupied by James Machin, and apparently much larger than the farm subject to this historic building recording, the field immediately north east of that is labelled as Cherry Hill, it is possible that the house now known as Knutton House was, at one time Cherry Hill Farm. Neither farm is identified by name.

Whites History and Gazetteer of Staffordshire, 1851 lists both Charles Walley [sic] and James Machin, confirming the estate map. Kelly’s Directory of Staffordshire, 1892 provides the first clear documentary reference to Cherry Hill Farm, a Samuel Rhead is listed as a Farmer at Cherry Hill Farm, James Rhead, farmer is also listed simply as Knutton, it is possible that James occupied what is now known as Knutton House. By 1900 Cherry Hill Farm was occupied by E. Durber, the 1:2500 second edition Ordnance Survey (SRO Ref XVII.NE (*Figure 5*)) records Cherry Hill Farm at the time, the farm, unlike other farms on the map is not identified by name. The recorded building is clearly identifiable and there is greater detail visible. There are two bays shown on the westernmost end of the range and access from Church Lane appears to be via a trackway to the west of the buildings, suggesting that they may not have been accessed off the current Cherry Hill Lane.



**Figure 5**  
Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1900)  
Sheet XVII.NE 1:2500

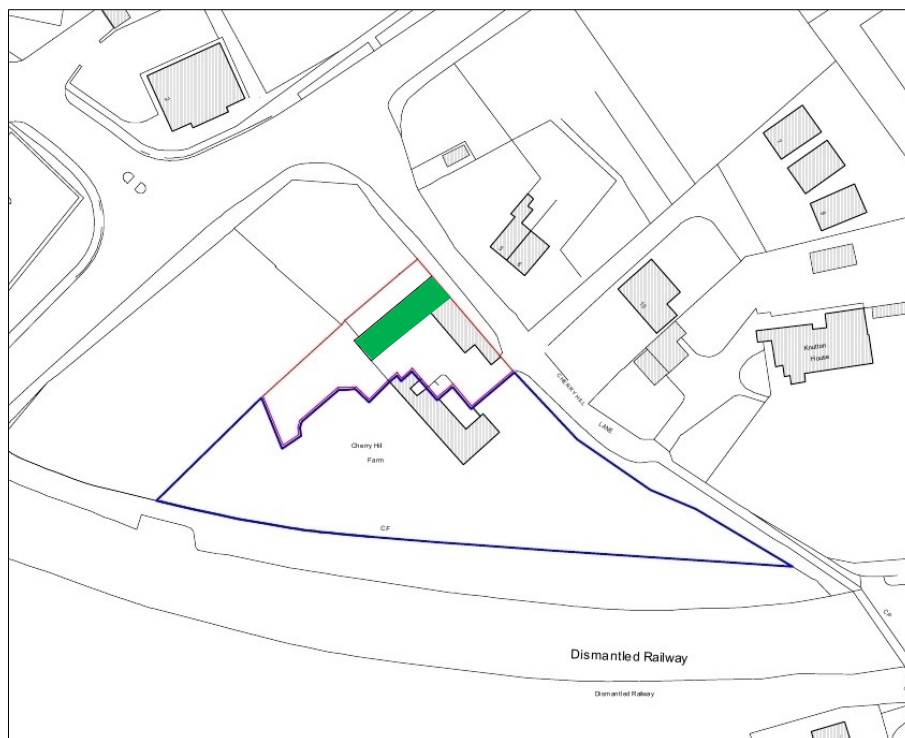
Kelly's Directory, 1928 records Thomas E. Walley at Knutton House, the first clear reference to Knutton House, the second edition Ordnance Survey (*Fig. 5*) shows that Knutton House has undergone significant alteration and there are no longer any identifiable farm buildings east of Cherry Hill Lane. It is possible that if Knutton House was originally Cherry Hill Farm prior to being gentrified, then that change occurred around this time.

Kelly's Directory of 1936 records that Cherry Hill Farm was occupied by Dickenson and Glover, as was the case again in 1941. Knutton House was occupied by Thomas Walley. In November 1951 the Keele Estate was sold at auction and broken up. It is likely that the Glovers, as sitting tenants bought the farm, Cherry Hill Farm then passed to the Jack and Ada Winfield, who occupied the farm until its recent sale.

## 2. Aims and Methodology

The specific objectives of the standing building survey were as follows:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of the building prior to its permitted demolition.
- To ensure the long term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.
- The site based element of the Historic Building Recording programme involved the production of measured survey drawings and the completion of photographic and written records.
- Desk-based research included the analysis of readily available documentary and cartographic sources including Staffordshire Records Office (SRO) & Keele University Archives (KUA).



**Figure 6**  
Plan of the proposed development area & Recorded Building in Green.  
(Provided by client. Not to Scale).

*Orientation:* The building subject to this historic building recording is linear in plan orientated north east –south west (*Figures 6 & 19*), the principal elevation is that facing the south east. Where the terms ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘front’ and ‘back’ etc are used in the report, this is in relation to this principal elevation as viewed from the south east. For the purposes of this historic building recording a letter prefix is added for significant partitions where required.

All historic maps are reproduced with north to the top of the page, following Ordnance Survey standards unless indicated otherwise with appropriate north arrow and key.

As far as is known, no previous historic building recording has been undertaken of the building.

The site visit was carried out by Gerwyn Richards on October 22nd 2014.

### **3. Description of the Building**

The building consists of a linear range aligned north east – south west, facing a yard and the former farmhouse to the south (*Figure 19*). The five bay building is brick-built under a plain tile roof (stripped at time of survey). The original bricks are handmade local bricks measuring 9 x 2 x 4 inch laid largely in a stretcher bond, there are extensive areas of modern cement mortar pointing and occasional areas of earlier lime mortar pointing. Both gables have been re-built, the north easternmost gable in living memory using Fletton bricks and the south westernmost at an earlier date; the bricks measuring 9 x 3 x 4 inch suggest late 19th or early 20th century for that gable. There are a number of openings on both elevations, as well as pitching holes on the first floor and there are a series of diamond ventilation holes on the first floor. Both window and door openings have brick arched heads; the windows have blue cant brick sills.

Both the wall plates consist of a number of lengths of timber with both scarfed joints (*Figure 15*) and straight joints, the number of open mortise and peg holes suggest the timbers are re-used. In places the wall plate and the long walls are out of alignment indicating significant historical structural movement. There a number of straight joints visible in the original brickwork, including two full height joints on the rear elevation (*Figures 9 & 10*), the brickwork each side of these joints appears to be contemporary, so the origin of the joints is unclear. The south westernmost joint may correspond with the separate bays recorded by earlier cartographic sources (*Fig. 4*); however, the joint cannot be seen in the principal elevation. There is also evidence that the north easternmost window on the ground floor has been inserted into a blocked door way, so despite its uniform appearance, the building has a potentially more complex history.

Internally the building consists of five bays; the three north easternmost bays (C, D & E) are cattle stalls and a loose box on the gable. Interestingly, there is a feeding passage along the rear of the stalls (*Figure 11*). In the 19th century feeding passages were incorporated into cow hovels allowing farmers to lay feed directly at the cows head speeding up the feeding and reducing waste because the farmer no longer needed to push pass the beasts from behind with the danger of dropped feed being fouled in the dung and are regarded as innovative. In this case the feed passage has been largely re-built in modern breeze blocks, but the remains of the brick-built troughs and tether bars (*Figure 13*) confirm the stalls and the feed passage are in their original location. The floors of the central stalls are a modern concrete slab, the drain channel and dung passage is apparently original brick. The cross walls at each end of

the stalls are brick-built with central arched openings, there is extensive evidence of alteration to both these cross walls, including reducing the size of the opening on at least two separate occasions (*Figure 12*).

There is a loft above the central and north eastern stalls. The ceiling is carried on joists with two large bridging beams, the joists and the bridging beams show extensive evidence of re-use (*Figure 14*). Lofts over cattle stalls were common; this allowed hay and fodder to be stored close to the beasts, hay lofts, however fell out of favour in the later part of the 19th century when agricultural theory argued for “airy” cow houses on health and hygiene grounds.

The two south westernmost bays, A and B are separated from the cow stalls by a full height cross wall, the wall is clearly a later insertion as indicated by the straight joints (*Figure 21*). The exact purpose of B is unclear, there are doors on both elevations creating a cross passage and the south westernmost cross wall is also a later insertion and there is a timber floor. The straight joint visible on the rear wall (above) suggests the bay may have originally been a cart shed, or even potentially a threshing floor and the large openings have since been blocked, however, the lack of a corresponding straight joint on the principal elevation does not allow confirmation of this.

A is divided from B by a half height inserted brick-built wall, the bay is also divided unequally front to back, there is a loft over the front part, but not the rearmost part. The front part of A is whitewashed with an underdrawn ceiling; this along with the hand-washing facilities suggests it was originally in use as a dairy. There are apparently two blocked openings in the wall between the two rooms, more clearly visible from the rear room (*Figure 19*), the openings are blocked with modern machine made bricks suggesting this was a relatively recent alteration.

The unstable nature of the floor prevented a detailed examination of the loft, however, from a safe vantage point it was possible to establish that the loft contains partial cross walls, all, apparently later insertions, two of which support the roof trusses (Truss 02 & 03). There are pitching holes on both the front and rear elevation giving access to the centre of the loft.

The roof is carried on four trusses (numbered for this record 01 – 04 south west – north east). Trusses 01 to 03 are simple A frame trusses with angled struts (*Figures 16 & 21*). Again, as with all the structural timber within the building there is extensive evidence of re-use. A study of Post Medieval roof trusses in Staffordshire (Peters, Vernacular Architecture 1988) suggests the use of such trusses originated in the 16th century, but had all but disappeared by the middle of the 19th century, suggesting a tentative, if broad date for the building. However, the Truss 04 (*Figure 17*) is of a different design, it is a king post truss with twin raking struts; Peters, again suggests a date for the use of multiple struts to before 1820, however, this example with both struts on the king post does not exactly match those in Peters’ study group, so once again the exact date is un-sure. Truss 04 does appear to show less evidence of re-used timbers, and may therefore be the original truss, while 01 to 03 are later replacements. The condition of the roof and ceiling prevented a more detailed examination of the truss.

The trusses carry paired trenched purlins and common rafters, all apparently in hardwood (there were only occasional pieces of modern deal). Both the purlins and the common rafters contained evidence of re-use. There are straight wind braces on each truss rising to meet the

upper purlin (*Figure 18*), the joints between the wind braces, trusses and purlins appear to vary, but again the condition of the roof prevented a more detailed examination.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The outbuilding at Cherry Hill Farm is a common midlands farm building from the mid 18th century, built as a cow house and dairy. There are, however a number of unusual features which suggest the building has a more complicated history and has potentially been re-modelled or even re-built during its history. The feed passage indicates the farmer was following up to date agricultural practices in the 19th century, however the presence of a loft, which fell out of favour in cow houses in the 19th century contradicts best practices, suggesting the farmer was not rigidly following them. The building reflects the increase in pastoral farming brought about by the industrialisation of nearby Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent in the early 19th century. However, as industrialisation grew so did the pressure for land and as a result the grazing land associated with the farm was lost and the farm declined and eventually ceased as a working farm.

The extensive re-used timbers and evidence of re-building or re-modelling suggests the building has a complicated history and may be earlier than it appears, the earliest cartographic evidence is an 1841 estate map, it is almost certain that the building pre-dates this, possibly by a generation.

The lack of documentary references specifically to Cherry Hill Farm along with an 1848 map naming a field to the east as Cherry Hill suggests that farm may have only recently acquired the name, it is possible that the current Knutton House was the original Cherry Hill Farm, this was gentrified and turned into a house in the late 19th century, and only following this did the recorded buildings become Cherry Hill Farm.

#### **5. Archive & Publication**

The site archive consists of

- 1 A3 permagraph sheet containing plan, profile & notes
- 2 DVDs containing 78 digital images
- 3 A4 contact sheets
- 76 Black & White negatives and contact prints 2 A4 photo record sheets
- 3 A4 photo index sheets
- 1 Unbound copy of this report

The accession number 2014.LH.52 has been issued by Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent. The archive will be deposited in due course.

A version of the summary (above) will be submitted to the editor of the local journal for inclusion in the next edition.

#### **6. Bibliography & Sources**

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Keele University Archives Special Collections & Archives Oct 2014

Kellys Directory of Staffordshire 1851-1941 Staffordshire Records Office & Keele University Special Collections & Archives

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Peters, J.E.C., 1988. 'Post-medieval Roof Trusses in some Staffordshire Farm Buildings' in *Vernacular Architecture* Vol. 19, 24-31.

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Staffordshire Records Office October 2014

Whites History and Gazetteer of Staffordshire Keele University Special Collections & Archives

## 7. Colour Plates



**Figure 7**  
Principal Elevation (looking North West).



**Figure 8**  
Rear Elevation (Oblique View looking South).



**Figure 9** Straight Joint Visible in Brickwork at South Western End of Rear Elevation.



**Figure 10**  
Straight Joint & Partially Blocked Door at North Eastern End of Rear Elevation.





Figure 11 Feeding Passage.



Figure 12  
Cross Wall Between D & E Showing Multiple Building Phases.



Figure 13 Outline Remains of Trough  
& Tether Bar B.



Figure 14  
Re-used Bridging Beam E.



**Figure 15**  
Scarfed Joint & Empty Peg Holes on Principal Elevation Wall Plate.



**Figure 16**  
Truss 01.

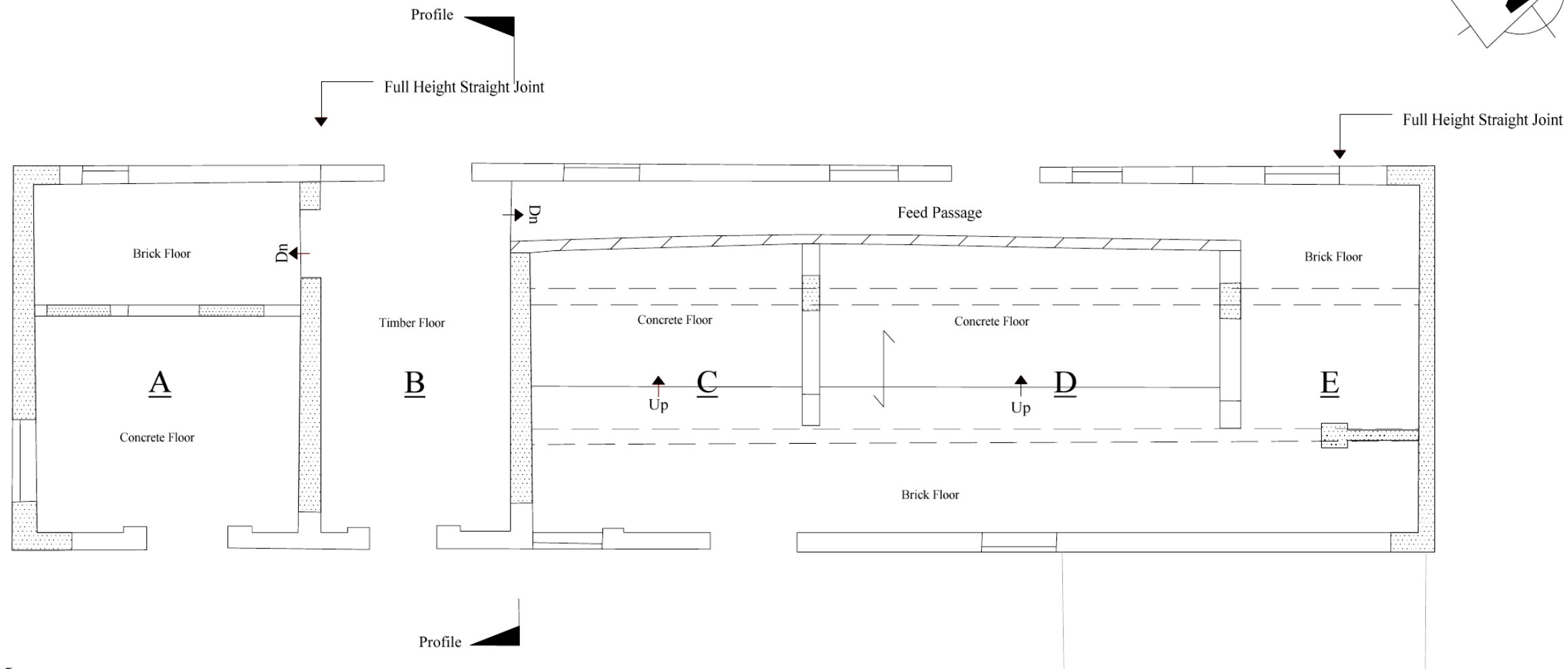
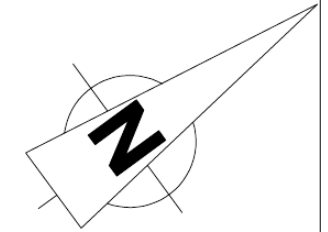


**Figure 17**  
Truss 04.

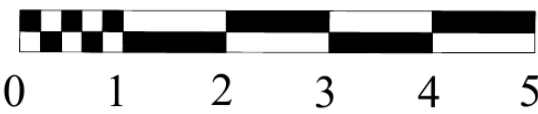


**Figure 18**  
Wind Brace.

Figure 19 Floor Plan.





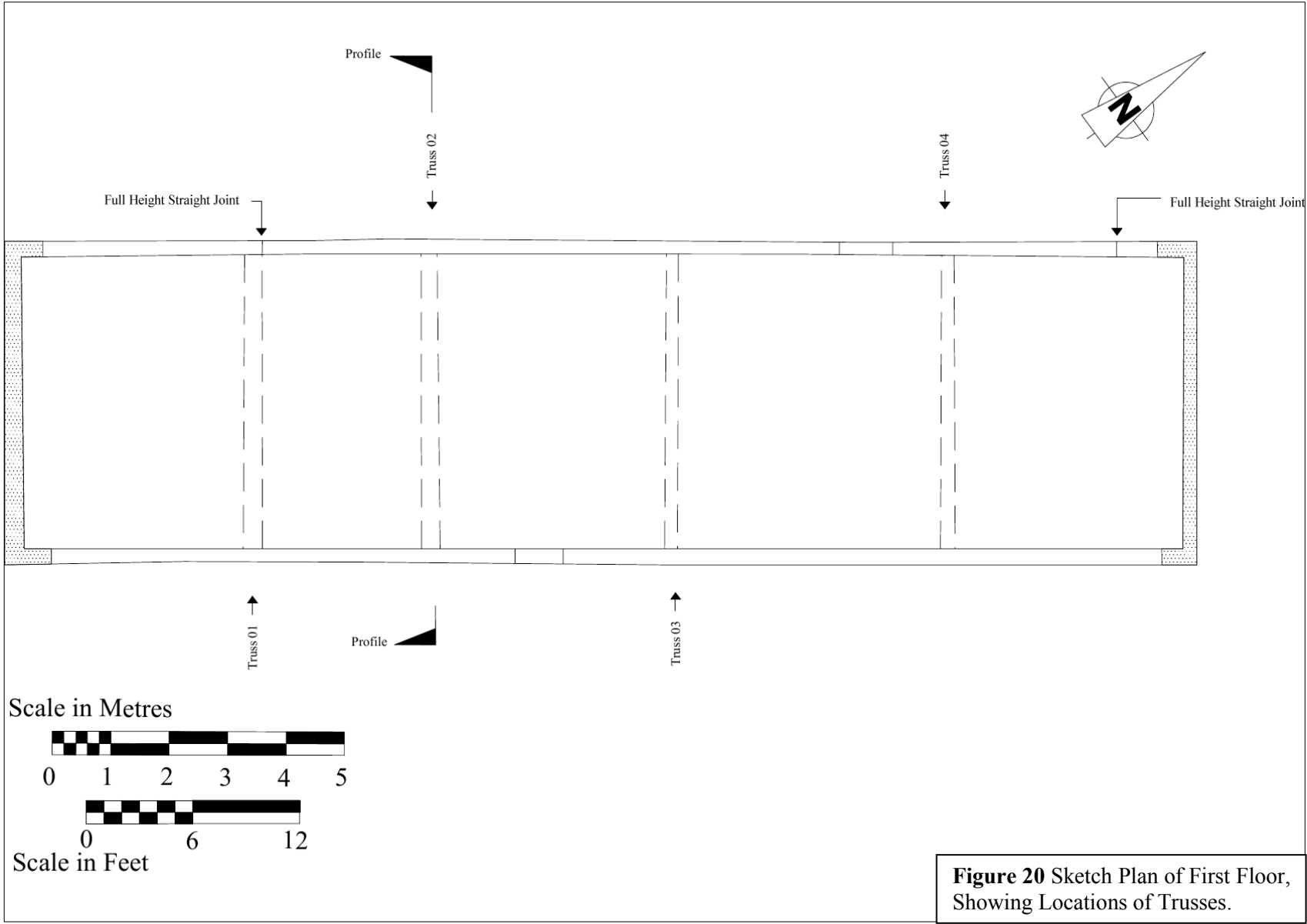
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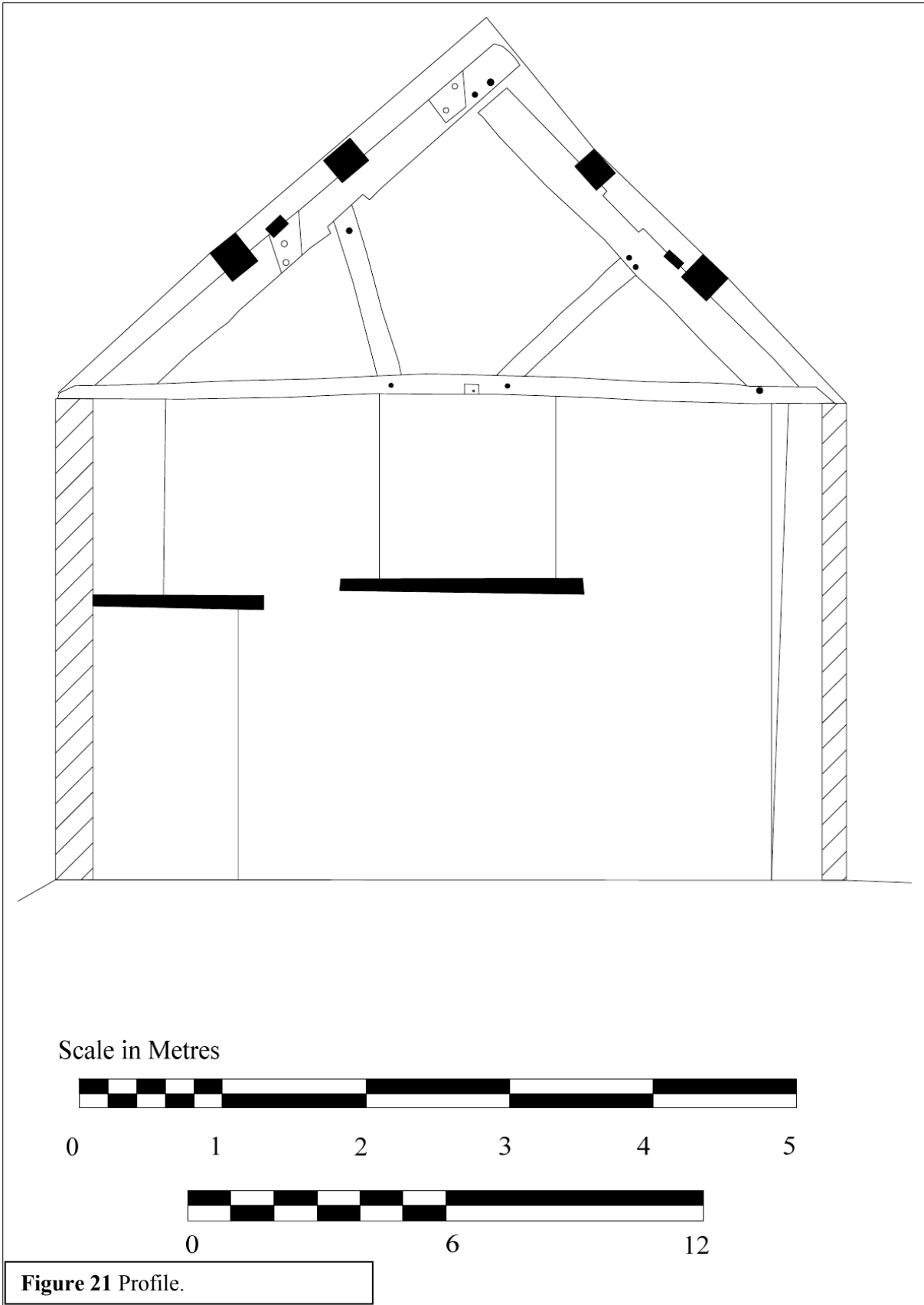
Scale in Feet

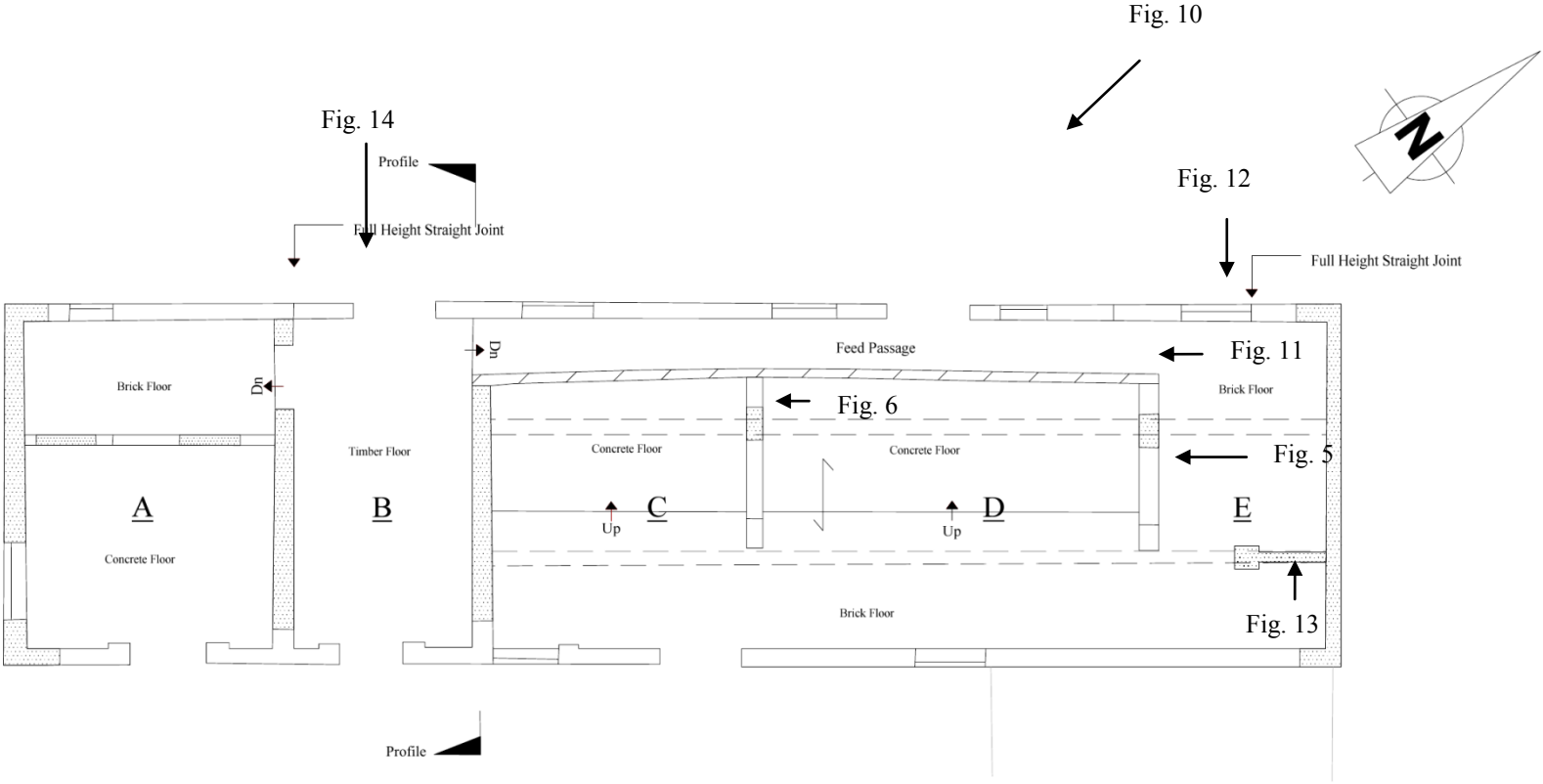


-  Inserted Brickwork
-  Blockwork



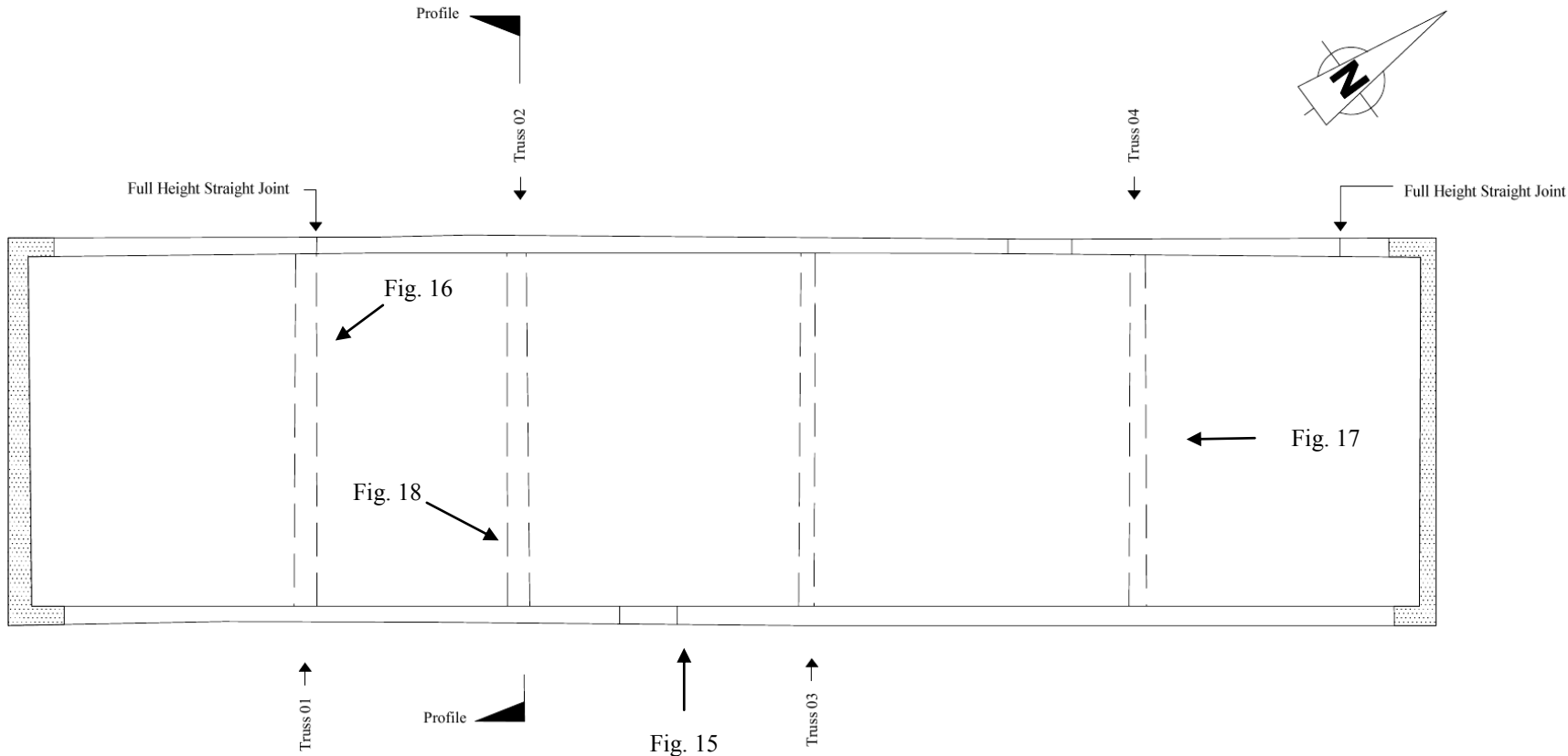
**Figure 20** Sketch Plan of First Floor, Showing Locations of Trusses.





**Figure 22** Locations of Photos Included in Report (Ground Floor).





**Figure 23** Locations of Photos Included in Report (First Floor).

Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS)

40 Winfield Street  
Rugby  
Warwickshire  
CV21 3SJ

Tel 07423813638

email [gerwyn.richards@archbuildservices.co.uk](mailto:gerwyn.richards@archbuildservices.co.uk)