

Archaeological
Building
Recording
Services

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey.
Lower Farmyard,
Thenford,
Northamptonshire.**

(NGR SP 51949 41688)

On Behalf of Thenhurst Agricultural Ltd



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ABRS Project No 2015-BBTN

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An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Threshing Barn, Lower Farmyard, Thenford, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 51949 41688).

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Gerwyn Richards

Summary

This document is an archaeological standing building survey of the threshing barn at Lower Farmyard, Thenford, Northamptonshire (SP 51949 41688), commissioned from Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) by Thenhurst Agricultural Ltd in advance of the proposed conversion of the barn to residential use.

The barn is mid 19th century in date, built as threshing barn with a later extension to the west, and part of Home Farm. The barn is a fine example of a regional farm building dating from the early to mid 19th century and historical use is well preserved with large threshing doors in the easternmost bay and un-equal cart doors in the westernmost bay, the westernmost bay also houses a line shaft indicating mechanical processing was undertaken in this bay.

The archive will be retained by ABRS under the temporary site code 2015-BBTN until deposition with Northamptonshire County Council can be arranged. Upon disposition the archive will be incorporated with previous recording work carried out at Lower Farmyard, ABRS project 2014-LFTN.

1. Introduction

Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) were commissioned by Thenhurst Agricultural Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of the threshing barn at Lower Farmyard, Thenford, Northamptonshire (SP 51949 41688 (*Figures 1 & 4*)). Planning permission is being sought the conversion of the building to residential use. The building is a traditionally built farm building, believed to date from the mid 19th century. 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) was carried out prior to the determination of the planning application. The barn is not statutory listed, but is included within the Thenford Conservation Area.

A Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Building Recording has not been issued by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council. 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).

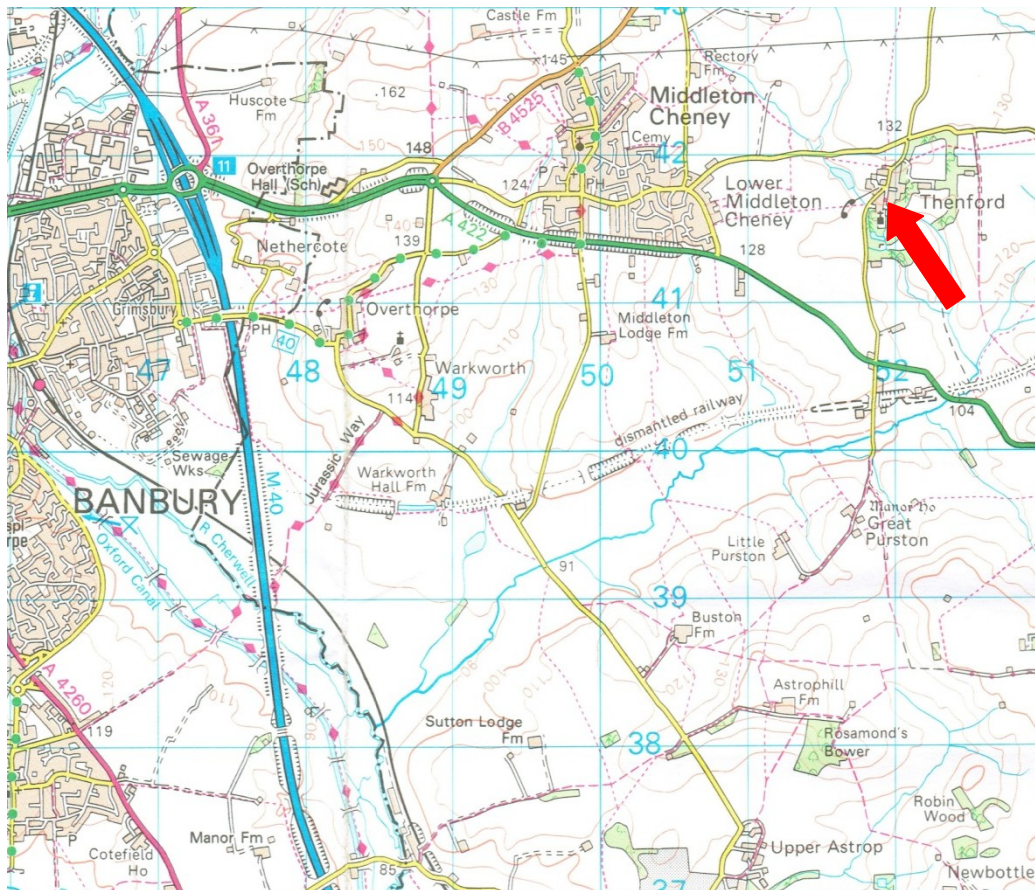


Figure 1
Site Location

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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The outbuildings of Lower Farmyard were originally built as part of Home Farm and date from the mid 19th century, with later, 20th century alterations.

The modern parish of Thenford, from the placename 'Thegn's Ford' is likely to have Saxon origins, 'Thegn' or 'Thane' being an Anglo Saxon aristocratic and is recorded in The Domesday Book has two entries for Thenford, one being that for the lands of Robert D'Oyly, the other those of Mainou the Breton. The parish church of St Mary is believed to have 12th century origins, built under the lordship of the D'Oyly Family. By the early 15th century Thenford had passed to the Newnham family, with the death of Thomas Newnham died at the end of the 15th century his estate passed to his sister and then through her marriage to the Wodhull Family. In 1542 the fourth Fulk Wodhull, as a minor became Lord of Thenford, Fulk was the first of the Wodhull family to make Thenford the family seat, a substantial manor house is reported to have been built under his direction in the paddock to the north of the church opposite 'Manor' Farmhouse. In 1565 Fulk completed the estate with the purchasing the remaining lands that comprised in Thenford.

In 1608 Banbury, four miles to the east of Thenford, was granted licence to hold a wool market by James I and the town and the surrounding area became renowned for its textile industries, bringing wealth to Thenford. This wealth led to new buildings appearing throughout the village. Home Farm was built at this time; it is a large two storey house, ironstone built house of four bays with an attic and cellar. There are finely detailed

mullioned windows with hood moulds, stone coped gables and substantial chimneys. There are a number of agricultural buildings to the north and east of the house. Lower Farmyard was built in the early 19th century to the south of Home Farm.



Figure 2
Thenford Tithe Map (1850).

One of the earliest available documentary references to Lower Farmyard is the Thenford Tithe Map drawn in 1850 (NRO Ref T103 (*Figure 2*)). The building subject to this building recording is clearly visible. The accompanying apportionment identifies Lower Farmyard as No. 55 – “*Farm Buildings, Yards & Gardens*”. The owner is listed as J.M Severne Esq, who was the owner of Thenford Hall at the time; the site was occupied by John Hawkes. Melville & Co’s Directory of Northamptonshire published in 1861 lists John Hawkes, farmer at Thenford. John Hwakes was again listed in Kelly’s Directory of 1869. The hall was still listed as belonging to the Severne Family.

Kelly’s Directory of 1885 lists a William Hawkes as farmer and grazier, although no farm is named, it is likely that William is a descendent of John and he is a tenant of Home Farm. William is again listed in the 1894 directory.

The Tithe Map (*Figure 2*) records a linear building occupying the footprint of the current building, being coloured grey, they are clearly non-residential buildings (residential buildings, for example Sundial Cottage to the west are coloured red). The map appears to record the building as consisting of two bays.

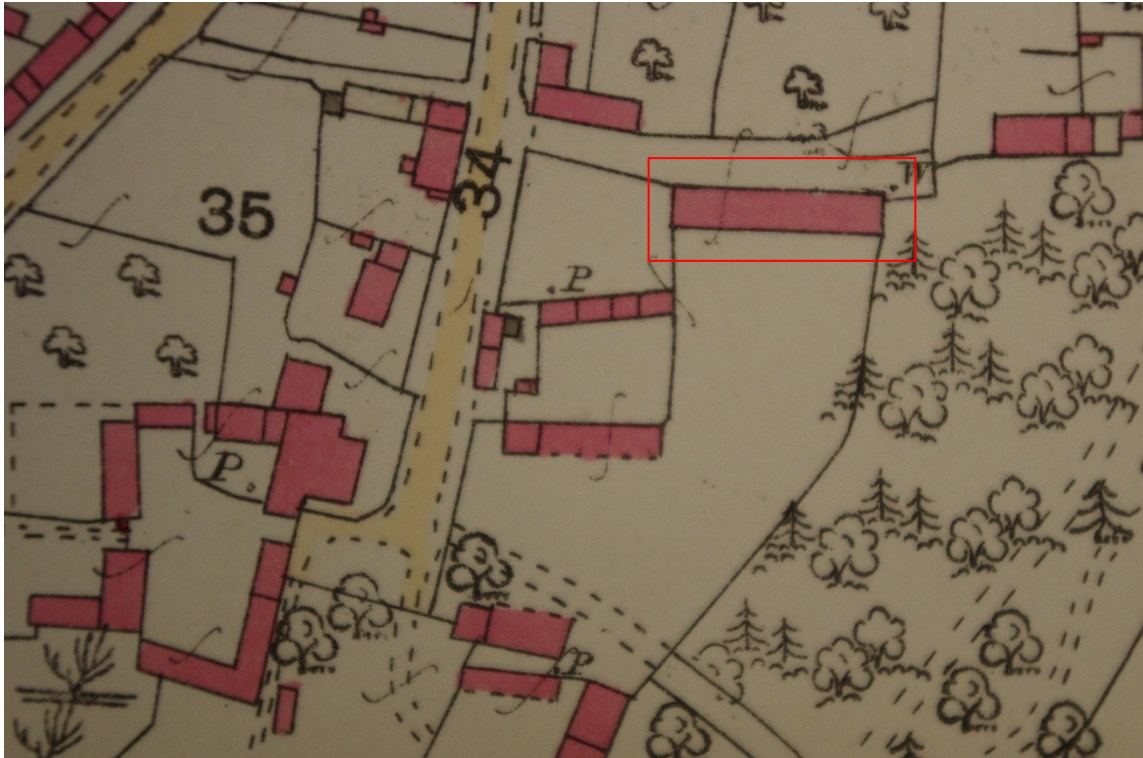


Figure 3
First Edition Ordnance Survey (1885)
(Sheet LVIII.7)

The first edition Ordnance Survey was published in 1885 (NRO Ref LVIII.7 (*Figure 3*)), the building is now recorded in less detail and the two separate bays are no longer apparent. The surrounding farmyard has undergone some alteration and the threshing barn is no longer located in its own yard.

Kelly's Directory of Northamptonshire, 1903 records that William Grazebrook Esq is now resident at Thenford Hall. Joseph Jaques is listed as Farm Bailiff to William Grazebrook and Joseph Malsbury Killby of Grange Farm is listed as Assistant Overseer to William Grazebrook. It is likely that either Jaques or Killby were in control of Lower Farmyard at the time. In 1910 all three were again listed by Kelly's Directory. In 1914 William Fenemore is listed by Kelly's Directory as Farm Bailiff to William Grazebrook.

By 1931 Home Farm is listed in Kelly's Directory, Walter Robert Cherry is listed as farmer and the farm is over 150 acres. Cherry remained at Home Farm during World War Two. During the 1960s Lower Farmyard was sold and became part of Manor Farm, this sale was recently reversed and Lower Farmyard is now part of the holdings of Thenford Hall.

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 conversion.
- 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 Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) & Northamptonshire Records Office (NRO).

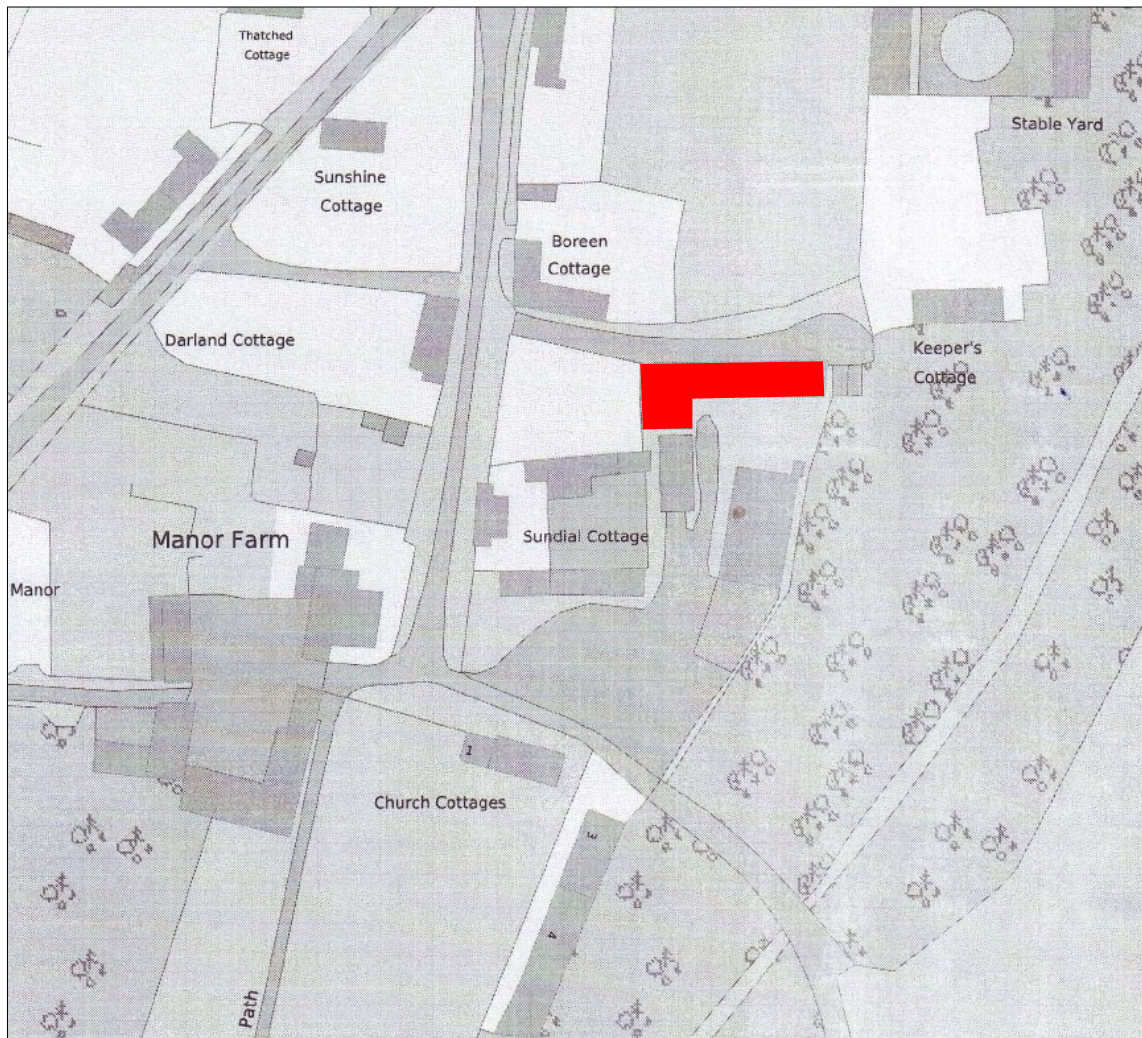


Figure 4
Plan of the proposed development area & Recorded Buildings in Red.
(Provided by client. Not to Scale).

Orientation: The building subject to this historic building recording is linear in plan. The long axis is orientated east - west (*Figures 4 & 17*); the principal elevation of the building faces to the south. 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. For the purposes of this historic building recording a number suffix has 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 April 2nd 2015.

3. Description of the Building

The threshing barn is aligned east - west and forms the north easternmost part of Lower Farmyard (*Figures 4 & 16*). The building, according to cartographic sources, dates to the early 19th century. The building is two bays, stone built under a corrugated tinned steel sheet roof, there is also a modern corrugated asbestos cement sheet lean-to abutting the southern elevation, at the west end (*Figures 5, 6, 7, & 8*). There are full height threshing doors on the easternmost bay, B and a full height cart door on the southern elevation of the westernmost bay, A. The cart door on the rear (northern) wall of A is not full height. This layout indicates that laden carts entered from the south and emptied carts left to the north. There is only limited evidence of a straight joint between the two bays, this is located above the rear door of A (*Figure 11*), there is however a clear difference visible in the stonework between the two bays. There is clear banding visible in the principal elevation of B (*Figure 9*), but none is visible on A (*Figure 10*). There are also well finished quoins on the reveal of the southernmost door of A confirming that this was originally the external corner of B. It is likely, therefore that B is the earlier of the two bays.

Internally, there is no access between the two bays; there is a modern loft, carried on rolled steel joists (RSJ) at the westernmost end of A with a ladder access. Below the loft, mounted to the northernmost wall is a line shaft and five pulley wheels (*Figure 12*). The original purpose of which is unclear as there is no obvious location of a power source, unless a small, portable engine was used inside the building. With the exception of a candle niche to the east of the southernmost door, B contains no significant architectural or historical features. There is evidence that the north easternmost wall has been re-built.

The pitched roof is carried on six closed trusses with raking struts, two within A and 4 within B. Superficially, the trusses are identical, however closer examination indicates a number of differences; most apparent is the use of deal principal rafters and raking struts in the two trusses within A, this along with the use of metal bolts (*Figure 13*) again confirms A to be later in date. However, the tie beams of both trusses are hand-finished hardwood and may, therefore be re-used. The four trusses within B are all hand-finished and pegged (*Figure 14*), however, there are slight differences between all four trusses, the two easternmost trusses (number Tr01 & Tr02) have incised Roman numeral assembly marks on the west faces of the tie beams (*Figure 16*). There are no markings on the remainder of the trusses, although this may be as result of weathering obscuring the marks.

Trusses Tr02, Tr03 and Tr04 have open trenches for purlins, no original purlins survive as a result of the modern re-roofing. The trenches on Tr04 are nearer the apex (*Figure 15*) and not in line with those on Tr02 and Tr03, it is likely, therefore that this truss has been altered. There is no evidence of trenches on Tr01, this maybe as a result of this end of the building being higher and in order to maintain a level roofline the purlins were not trenched.

The principal rafters of trusses Tr01, Tr02 and Tr03 all have open mortices on the underside (*Figure 16*), the uniformity of these mortices indicate the principals are original and it is likely that the current struts are not original. It is likely that the pitch of the roof has been

altered, possible when the current tinned sheets were added. Potential evidence of this can be seen in the change in stonework apparent on the internal face of the southernmost wall at its western end. Interestingly, there is no clear evidence of open mortices on truss Tr04, but there is possible evidence that the southernmost raking strut has been altered and the mortice reduced in size to accommodate the new strut (*Figure 15*).

4. Conclusion

The threshing barn at Lower Farmyard is a fine example of a regional farm building dating from the early to mid 19th century. The name, Lower Farmyard suggests the buildings, including the threshing barn were built as a later extension of Home Farm, to the north. The barn has been extended to the west with an additional bay and most likely re-roofed, during which the pitch of the roof was altered, probably when the current tinned sheets replaced original thatch, most likely after World War II.

Historical use is well preserved with large threshing doors in the easternmost bay and unequal cart doors in the westernmost bay which also houses a line shaft indicating mechanical processing was undertaken in this bay.

5. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

- 1 A3 permagraph sheet containing plans & notes
- 1 A3 paper sheet containing plans & external elevations
- DVD containing 72 digital images
- 3 A4 contact sheets
- 3 A4 photo record sheets
- 1 Unbound copy of this report

The archive will be held by ABRS under the temporary site code 2015-BBTN until deposition with Northamptonshire County Council can be arranged. Upon disposition the archive will be incorporated with previous recording work carried out at Lower Farmyard, ABRS project 2014-LFTN.

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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7. Colour Plates



Figure 5
Principal Elevation (looking North East).



Figure 6
Principal Elevation (looking North West).



Figure 7
Rear, North Facing Elevation (looking South West).



Figure 8
Lean To on Principal Elevation (looking West).



Figure 9
Banding Visible on Principal Elevation
of B.

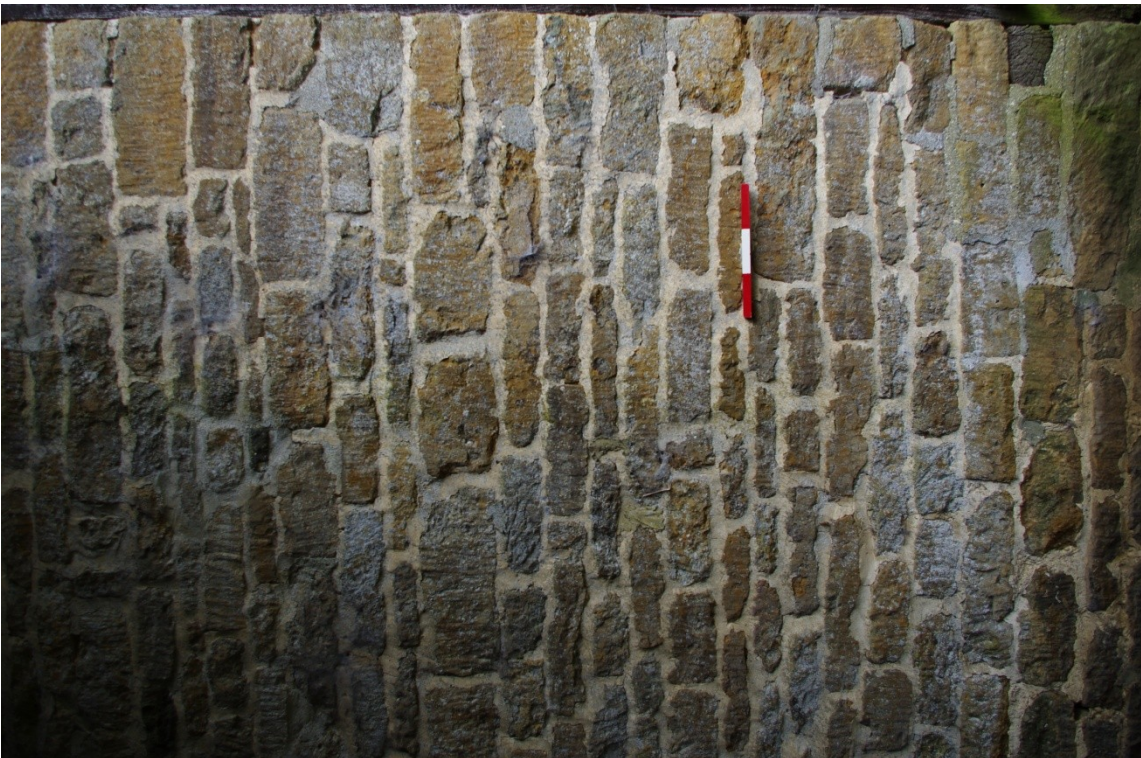


Figure 10
Principal Elevation of A Without
Banding.



Figure 11
Straight Joint Visible Above Rear Door
of A.



Figure 12
Line Shaft on Rear Wall of A (looking North West).



Figure 13
Truss Tr05 (looking West).



Figure 14
Truss Tr01 (looking East).



Figure 15
Truss Tr04 Showing Potentially Altered Mortice Holding Left Strut and Higher Open Trenches for Purlin.



Figure 16
Truss Tr01 Showing Inscribed Assembly Marks and Open Mortices.

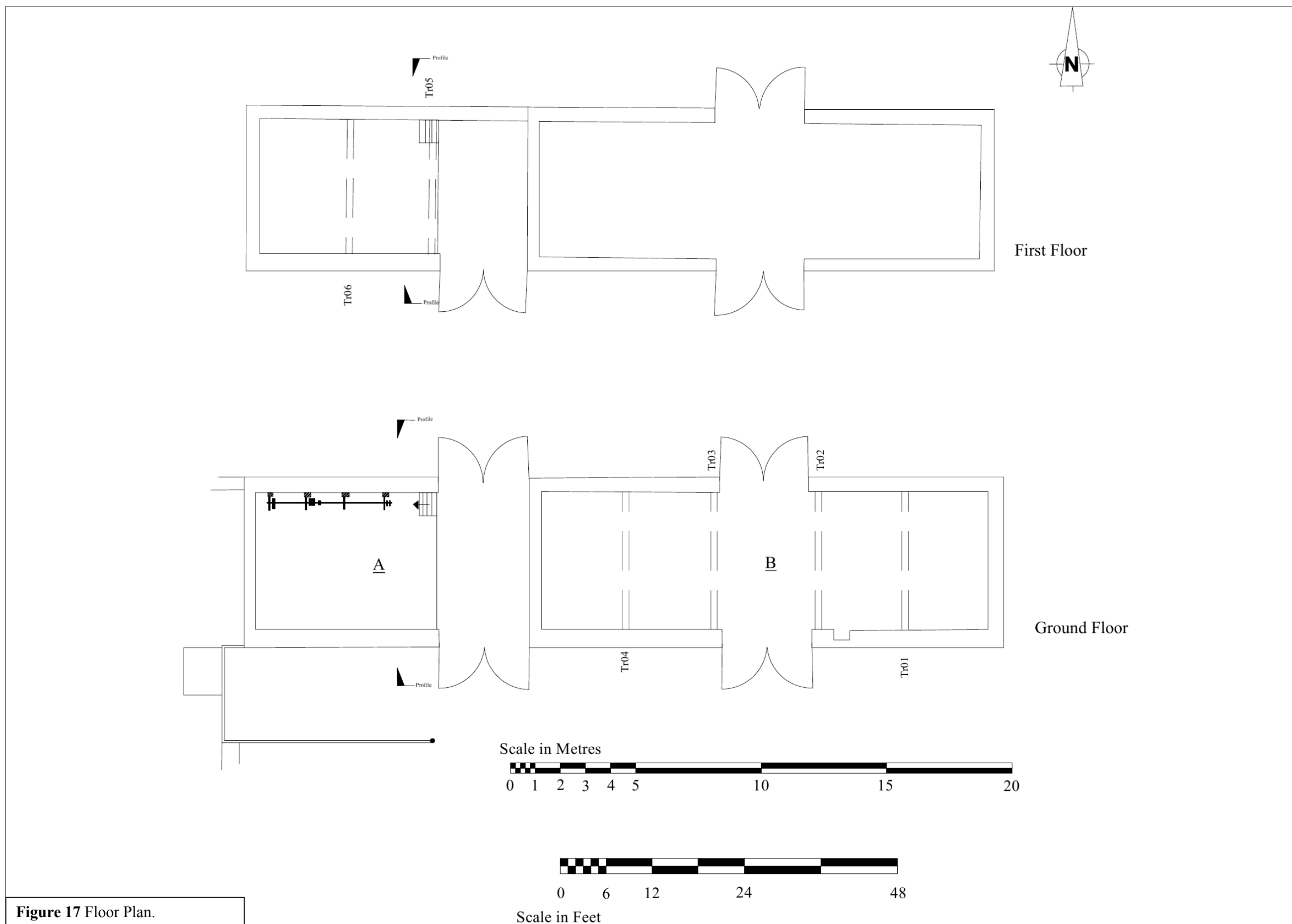


Figure 17 Floor Plan.

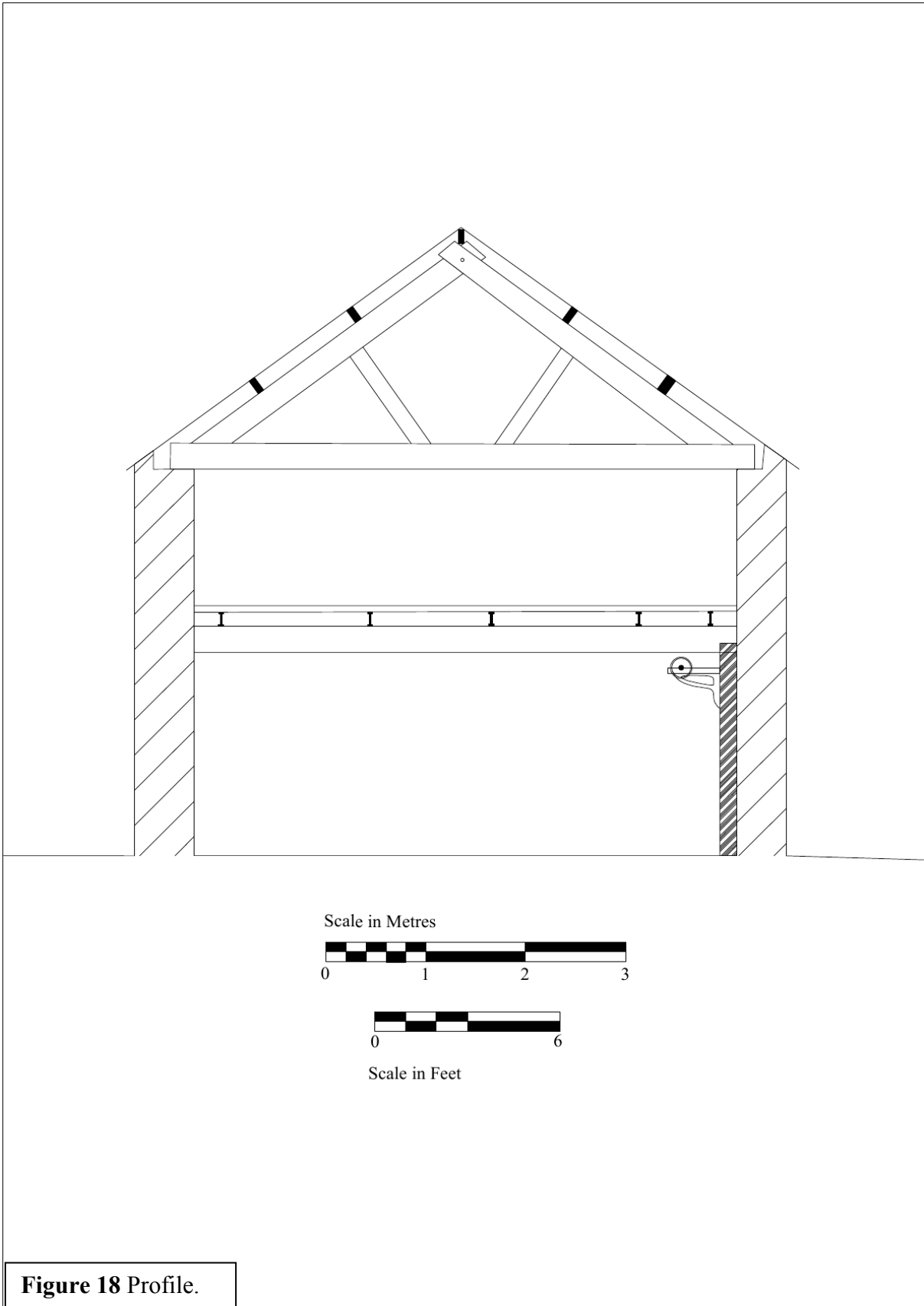
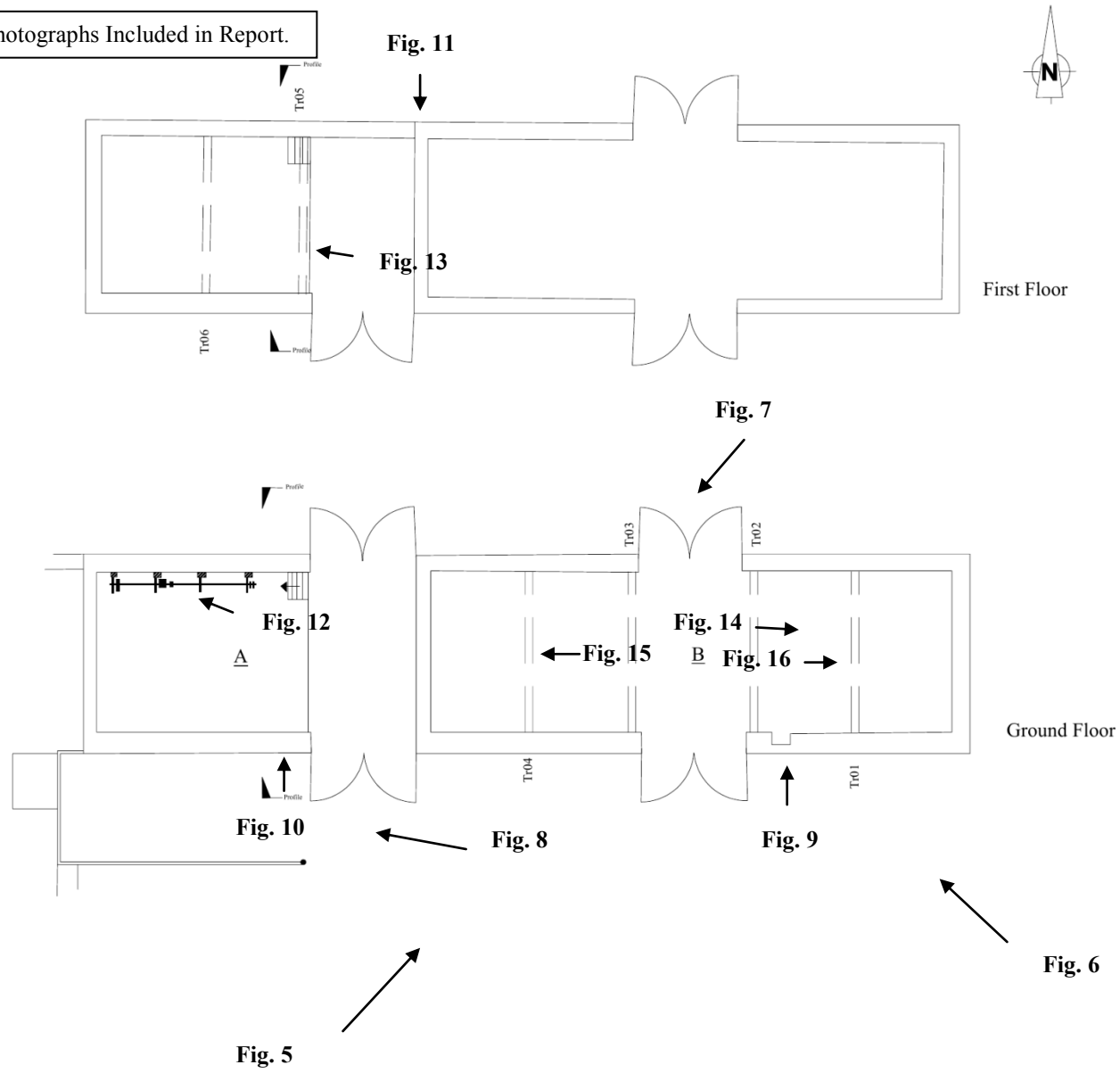


Figure 19 Locations of Photographs Included in Report.



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