

Archaeological
Building
Recording
Services

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey.
The Wheat Barn
Duck End Farm
Duck End
Wilstead
Bedfordshire**

(NGR TL 06053 44088)

On Behalf of Icknield Archaeology Ltd



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May 2017

ABRS Project No 2017-DEWB

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BEDFM2017.47**

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An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Wheat Barn, Duck End Farm, Duck End, Wilstead, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 06053 44088).

Summary

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Aims and Methodology	6
3.	Description of the Buildings	8
4.	Conclusion	10
5.	Archive and Publication	11
6.	Bibliography & Sources	11
7.	Colour Plates	13

Figures

Figure 1	2	Figure 2	3
Site Location		Wilhampstead Parish Map (1809).	
Figure 3	4	Figure 4	5
First Edition Ordnance Survey (1883).		Sales Catalogue, the Haynes Estate (1914)	
Figure 5	6	Figure 6	7
1960 Edition Ordnance Survey (1:10560)		Plan of the Proposed Development Area in Red, Recorded Buildings in Green.	
Figure 7	13	Figure 8	13
Principal Elevation (Looking North West).		Original Pitching Door inc' Cat Hole & Hinges on North West Facing Elevation.	
Figure 9	14	Figure 10	14
Saltire Decorated Latch on North West Facing Threshing Door.		Concave Braces on Shelter Shed, South East Facing Elevation.	
Figure 11	15	Figure 12	15
Concave Brace Between Bay Post & Tie Beam.		Wall Studding, Internal Wall (Looking East).	
Figure 13	16	Figure 14	16
Scare Joint on Sill Beam, Internal View.		Assembly Marks on Sill Beam, External View.	
Figure 15	17	Figure 16	17
Truss, General View (Looking South West).		Interrupted Collar Beam & Clasped Purlin.	
Figure 17	18	Figure 18	18
Assembly Marks on		Clasped Purlin &	

Truss.		Possible Pitching Door in Hipped Porch.	
Figure 19	19	Figure 20	19
Building <u>B</u> , General View (Looking West – South West).		Building <u>B</u> Concrete & Steel Stalls.	
Figure 21	20	Figure 22	21
Building <u>B</u> Roof Trusses.		Building <u>A</u> Ground Floor Plan.	
Figure 23	22	Figure 24	23
Building <u>A</u> Profile.		Building <u>B</u> Floor Plan.	
Figure 25	24	Figure 26	25
Locations of Photographs Included in Report.		Proposed Extension.	

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Summary

This document is an archaeological standing building survey of the Wheat Barn and another building, formerly part of Duck End Farm, Duck End, Wilstead, Bedfordshire (TL 06053 44088), commissioned from Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) by Icknield Archaeology Ltd in advance of the proposed conversion of the building to residential use.

The barn is a well-built example of a timber framed barn. The barn was originally built as a threshing barn for Duck End Farm. There is little to confirm the exact age of the barn, however, cartographic and limited physical evidence supports the listed building description of c.1800. The barn was originally part of a much larger farm complex, one of at least two large barns on the site, the other barn and the other buildings were lost in the late 20th century.

The barn shows interesting evidence of the diversification of farming with the addition of open fronted shelter sheds on south east facing elevation for animal housing. Further evidence of this can be seen in the construction of an all new milking parlour to the north west in the 1950s.

The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum under the Accession Number BEDFM2017.47.

1. Introduction

Archaeological Building Recording Services (ABRS) were commissioned by Icknield Archaeology Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of the Wheat Barn, Duck End Farm, Duck End, Wilstead, Bedfordshire (TL 06053 44088 (*Figures 1 & 4*)). Listed Building Consent has been granted for the conversion of the building to residential use (16/03455/LBC), and an amendment sought for a sympathetically designed extension (*Figure 26*) and for the demolition of the adjacent 20th century milking parlour. The building is a traditionally built agricultural barn, believed to date from the 18th or 19th century. The Archaeological Officer, Bedford Borough Council has recommended that an archaeological standing building survey to Historic England Level 2/3 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016) be carried out prior to any proposed works being carried out. The building is statutorily listed at Grade II and recorded by the Bedford Borough Council HER (Ref No 3631).

A Brief for a programme of archaeological building recording was issued by the Archaeological Officer, Bedford Borough Council. The building recording survey addressed the requirements of the brief and followed the Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Inspection & Recording (2017-DEWB_WSI) and followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct*, and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014).

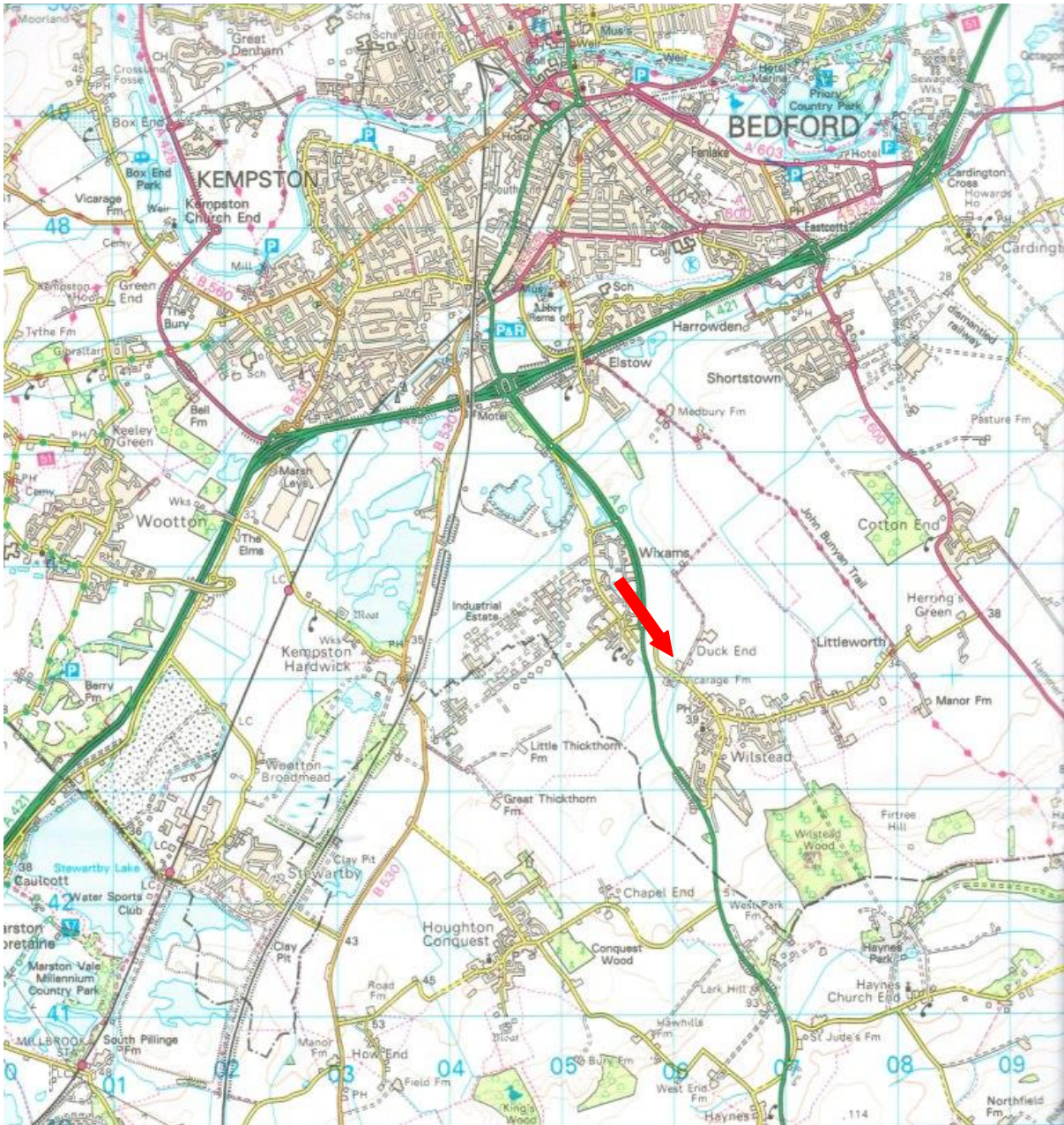


Figure 1
Site Location

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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Duck End is a shrunken medieval settlement (HER No 17053) within the historic parish of Wilstead or Wilshamstead which has Saxon origins, there were two manors mentioned at Domesday. The slightly the larger of the two, Wilshamstead Manor was held by the Abbess of Elstow of the Countess Judith and assessed at 3 hides, worth £7 6s. The Manor remained with the Abbess until the Dissolution. Following the Dissolution it was sold by Robert Newdigate, who conveyed it possibly in trust to his brother John who later sold it to John Warner and Thomas Norwood, it remained in the Norwood Family until the early 17th century. By the late 18th century the Manor belonged to Robert third Earl Granville, who died without issue in 1776, his nephew Henry Frederick Thynne (afterwards Carteret) inherited the estates. In 1849 John third Lord Carteret died childless and the barony became extinct but the manor remained in the family.

The second manor, known as Westcotes or Cotys was assessed at 3 hides all but 1 virgate, and was held by Nigel de Albin and remained with the Albin Family until the 15th century. In 1483 the Manor was granted by Richard III to John Grey, in 1609 it passed to Henry Lord Mordaunt. In 1741, it had become the property of James Baker, in around 1800 Thomas Baker sold the Manor to Samuel Whitbread.



Figure 2
Wilhampstead Parish Map (1809).

The earliest map of the Parish including the proposed development area is *A map of the parish of Wilhampstead* by Thomas Lilburne from 1809 (BA&RS Ref MA36 (Figure 2)). Duck End Farm is identified as number 158 and belongs to the Rev. Thomas Hind & Wife. The area is coloured green, however there is no key to indicate the reason. Written on the map is the description that the area was known as... “*Mill Field (Part of) 1st Allotment of Open Field*”. The general arrangement of the fields, perpendicular to the road would suggest that they are enclosure fields. The barn subject to this recording is clearly visible and identifiable and appears to be almost identical in plan to as it currently stands.

The map also records the estate of Samuel Whitbread as laying largely in the south east of the Parish which gives an indication of the likely location of Westcotes Manor.

In 1881 an inventory of Duck End Farm was carried out by or on behalf of the executors of L. Peacock (BA&RS Ref BMB4/1/7/26). Following his death, Mr Peacock bequeathed Duck End Farm to James Newman. The inventory, although not mentioning any specific buildings records that the farm was mixed, but with large arable crops including 71.00 Wheat, 57.00 Barley, 8. Oats, 18. Peas, 8. Beans and 4. Beans – Peas. There is no indication of the unit of measurement used, but it may potentially be roods, giving an indication of the size of areas under cultivation on the farm. Slater’s Post Office Directory of 1850 lists a Mr Ebenezer Peacock, Mr Henry Peacock and Mr Richard Newman, it is likely, therefore that both

families were well established in the Parish. The Post Office Directory of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Huntington published in 1854 lists a Samuel Peacock as a Farmer, no address is given, Peacock is once again listed in 1862, again without an address, but he is likely to be an ancestor of L. Peacock.



Figure 3
First Edition Ordnance Survey (1883).
(Sheet XVI.16)

The first edition Ordnance Survey was published in 1883 (BA&RS Ref XVI.16 (*Figure 3*)). The recorded building is again clearly visible, part of a large and somewhat congested farm complex, with at least 6 domestic dwellings along with 9 agricultural buildings, suggesting that at the time the farm was a major concern.

The recorded building has apparently been extended to the south east with the addition of two lean to buildings each side of the threshing door. The south westernmost appears to be open-fronted and within its own fold yard, suggesting it was, at the time used for animal husbandry, probably an open-fronted shelter shed. There is a second open-fronted shed to the north, both of which suggest the farm was then a mixed farm. Farming records held by BA&RS from between 1892 and 1923 confirm this with extensive livestock records including, sheep and cattle. The farm was still producing wheat and barley.

Kelly's Directory of 1885 lists James Newman as a farmer in Wilstead, confirming his inheritance of Duck End Farm in 1881. The Directory continued to list James Newman until 1936, when the listing is changed to Newman Brothers, probably following the death of James and the farm passing to his sons.

In July 1914 the Haynes Estate owned by the Thynne Family was placed for sale, the auction included Duck End Farm, the auction introduction indicated that the farm was tenanted by Mr James Newman for an annual rent of £308.

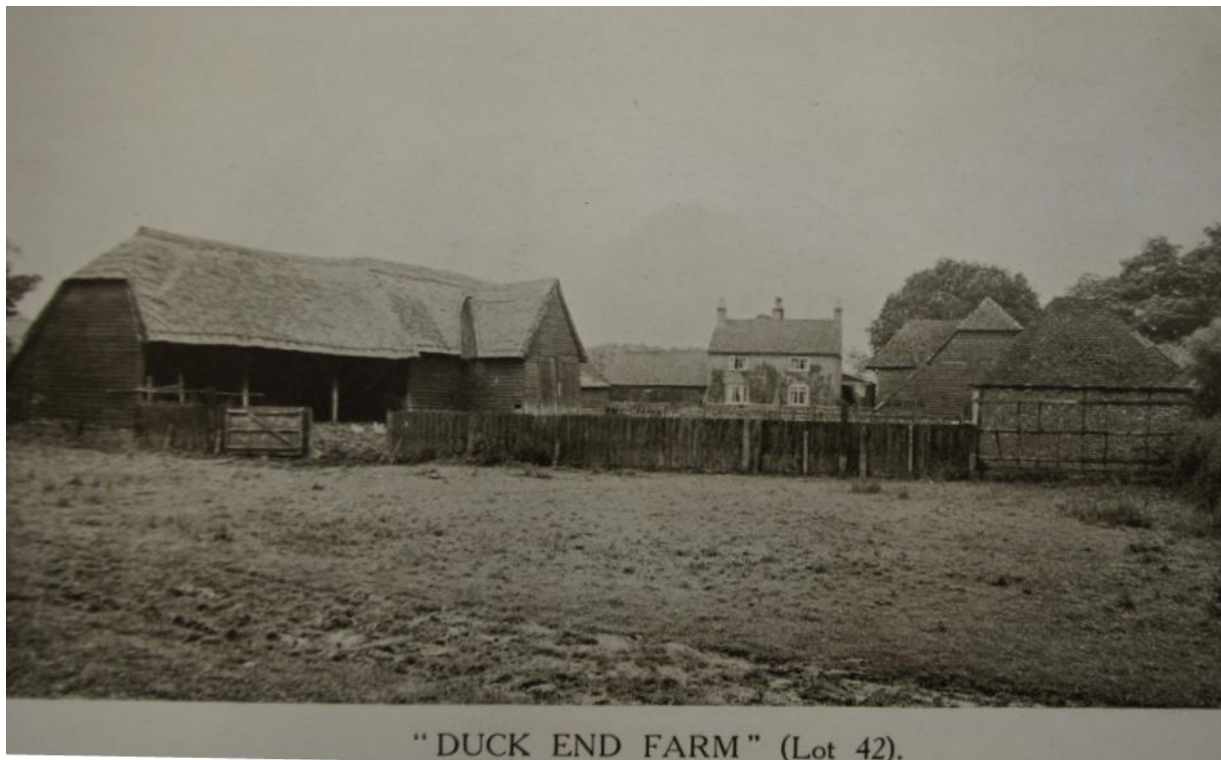


Figure 4
Sales Catalogue, the Haynes Estate (1914).

Unfortunately, the map attached to the sales catalogue is missing, there is however a photograph of Duck End Farm (BA&RS Ref Z720/1/16 (*Figure 4*)). The recorded building is, unfortunately concealed behind the building to the left of the photograph. The photograph is useful in reflecting the mixed construction methods used on the farm, including, brick, timber frame and weatherboard. There is also a mixture of roofing material with both thatch and tile.

The catalogue includes a detailed description of the farmyard. Buildings included “*brick and tile barn, fowl house, seven bay timber and tiled implement shed, chaff house, timber and thatched barn, brick and tiled cart-horse stabling for eleven, nag stabling for three, coach house, timber and tiled barn, Granary, Mill House, range of five pigsties, three bay open hovel, thatched chaff and mixing house, timber and slated cow house for eight, granary, large timber and tiled barn, rick yard and two enclosed yards*”. Confirming the extensive buildings recorded by the Ordnance Survey.

Although not recorded in the sales catalogue, other sources indicate that the farm was bought by the sitting tenant, James Newman. Handwritten notes attached indicate substantial lots failed to sell and the author of these notes considered others to be markedly overpriced.

Sources indicate that the farm remained the property of the Newman Family for the remainder of the 20th century. Post war mapping indicates that the farmyard and recorded building remained largely un-altered during this time. The 1960 edition Ordnance Survey

(BA&RS Ref TL23 SE (*Figure 5*)) is the first to record the building to the north west of the building. Viewing online versions which cannot be re-produced for copyright reasons indicate that this building was not constructed until the 1950s.



Figure 5
1960 Edition Ordnance Survey (1:10560).
(TL24 SE)

Later mapping indicates that the majority of the traditional agricultural buildings remained standing until the 1970s. In 1974 the barn was listed at Grade II (NHLE 1114203), the listing description describes it as:

Circa 1800. Timber framed construction on red brick plinth, with weatherboard exterior and some 20th century brick infill. Clay tile roof. 5 bay plan, with projecting hipped porch to centre of east elevation. Porch is flanked by later single storeyed lean to shelter sheds with pantiled roofs.

2. Aims and Methodology

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

- To provide a comprehensive written, drawn and photographic record of the building prior to the permitted conversion, as it represents upstanding archaeological/historical remains of local, regional or national importance.
- The project report will provide a comprehensive review of the local and regional historical context of the structures recorded by the project, making reference to the appropriate regional research agendas.

- The project will produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to ‘preserve by record’ the buildings in their current form prior to conversion and/or demolition.

Desk-based research included the analysis of readily available documentary and cartographic sources including Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) & Bedfordshire Records & Archives Services (BR&AS).



Figure 6
Plan of the Proposed Development Area in Red, Recorded Buildings in Green.
(Provided by client. Not to Scale).

The Historic Building Recording verified existing measured survey drawings (supplied by the client) and completed a photographic (35mm monochrome negative) and written record of the building to the equivalent of Historic England Level 2/3. An ordered archive has been compiled and will be deposited with Bedford Museum under the accession number BEDFM2017.47. An Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) record has been completed.

Orientation: There are two buildings subject to this historic building recording. The buildings are linear in plan; the long axis is orientated north east –south west (*Figures 6, 22, & 24*), the principal elevation of Building A faces to the south east and Building B to the north east. Where the terms ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘front’ and ‘back’ etc are used in the report, this is in relation to these principal elevations as viewed from the south east and north east. For the

purposes of this historic building recording a letter identification has been allocated to each building and a number suffix 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 May 22nd 2017.

3. Description of the Buildings

3.2 *Building A*

The barn is a linear building of five bays (*Figure 22*), weatherboard atop a brick plinth. The original red bricks in lime mortar measure 9 inch x 2 ½ inch x 4 inch and appear handmade, suggesting a pre mid 19th century manufacture and laid in an English Cross Bond. Both gables have been extensively repaired with mid 20th century Fletton bricks. The roof is clad with plain tiles, the later lean to structures are under clay pantiles.

There are central threshing doors on each long elevation, those on the principal elevation are in a projecting hipped porch (*Figure 7*). The hipped porch provided additional protection to the threshing floor from driving rain or snow and some argue allowed late delivered carts to be left under cover over night before being unloaded. The north west facing, rear elevation has two pitching doors at first floor level, the south westernmost having a cat hole (*Figure 8*), suggesting it may be, if not original, early. The large threshing doors, although early looking may not be original, they do however finish some 18inches (c.450mm) above the ground, a common feature on barns which ensured the doors cleared the manure in the yard and kept free roaming pigs off the threshing floor. The latch is decorated with a Saltire (*Figure 9*). Such symbols originated as Apotropaic, or ritual marks, commonly known as witches marks in the 17th century, their intention was to ward off evil and as such they were located near doors, windows and chimneys and were common in the 17th century, but persisted as decorative features on door latches for many generations. However, it is likely that some degree of symbolic meaning was retained into the early to mid 19th century when this latch was likely to have been made, especially on agricultural buildings where superstition persisted in the protection of livestock and the storage of crops. A Suffolk Blacksmith interviewed in the 20th century described the symbol as the cross of St. Andrew between the jambs of the door or window barring the way to any evil spirits (Hall). The latch on the south easternmost pitching door, which retains a cat hole, which may, therefore be original is similarly decorated.

The pitching doors have a mix of strap hinges, those on the south easternmost door are a matching pair, which again suggests it may be original and appear to be mid 18th century in style (*Figure 8*). The top hinge of the north easternmost door is of a similar design, the lower hinge, however is of an apparently earlier design and probably re-used.

There are a number of inserted windows on the rear elevation, all are steel framed, Crittall style windows, mid to late 20th century in date. There are similar Crittall style windows on each gable, that on the north east facing gable may have originated as a pitching door.

Abutting the principal elevation are two, timber-built open fronted shelter sheds (*Figure 7*). Cartographic evidence indicates these are later additions. Never the less, both are interesting additions to the building reflecting the change from arable farming to mixed farming including livestock rearing. Both are constructed in deal, but some effort has been made in the finishing with attractive concave braces (*Figure 10*) and chamfered and stopped posts, an un-necessary flourish on a shelter shed. The concave braces are limited to the south westernmost shed, those on the north easternmost shed are straight, hinting that these may have been replaced.

Internally, beyond the historic fabric there is nothing of historic or architectural significance to indicate the original plan form or function of the building. The historic fabric is of some considerable interest. The barn consists of a post and truss construction of five bays, the roof trusses are carried on jowled wall posts, straight braced with the girding beam or rail. There are attractively concave braces bracing the tie beam and bay post (*Figure 11*). The walls are close-set studs (*Figure 12*) and there are a number of scarf joints visible on the sill (*Figure 13*), with the lower faces retaining the vertical abutments. There are also incised assembly marks remaining on the northernmost sill beam (*Figure 14*). True close studding became fashionable in the early 15th century, becoming the most desirable and expensive building style from the 16th century onwards. Close studding fell out of favour in the late 16th century as a result of both the change in styles and tastes and a shortage of suitable building oak. It is unlikely that this building dates to that period. Writing in 1775, Nathaniel Kent in "*Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property*" suggested that close studding should be used for buildings which were to be rendered, boarded or tile-hung, suggesting a much more plausible date for this building. There are extensive examples of incised Roman numeral assembly marks on all of the structural timbers.

The roof is carried on four trusses, the trusses consist of raked queen struts holding an interrupted collar beam, there is also an upper collar (*Figure 15*). The trusses are all pegged and there are iron straps between the tie beams and wall plate, it is unclear whether these are original, or a later repair. The purlins are clasped between the collar and rafter (*Figure 16*). With earlier clasped purlins, the principal rafter tended to diminish, there is no evidence of this here, which again suggests a later construction date. As with the wall frames, there are extensive incised Roman numeral assembly marks on the trusses (*Figure 17*). There is a ridge plank at the apex of the common rafters, the use of a ridge plank as opposed to a ridge beam again suggests a later, rather than earlier construction date.

The roof of the porch is similarly constructed to the main roof, the same clasped purlins (*Figure 18*) confirm the porch is almost certainly original. There is also possible evidence of blocked roof light, or even a pitching hole on the hipped roof.

3.2 *Building B*

Building B is located some 10 metres north west of building A. The building is brick-built under a corrugated asbestos cement roof (*Figure 19*). The bricks are mid 20th century Fletton Bricks. There is a single timber sliding door on the north east facing gable, off set to the right as well as a single central door on the south west facing gable. There are 10 light steel framed windows on each long elevation as well as another window opening (minus frame) on the north east facing gable.

Internally, the building is divided into two unequal bays (*Figure 24*). The largest being the south westernmost bay. This bay has concrete and steel stalls along each long elevation (*Figure 20*) and a central, sunken milking floor. The north easternmost bay is divided into two rooms, there is no evidence of original form or function, but in all likelihood the two are ancillary rooms associated with the milking parlour to the south west.

The roof is carried on three angled steel fan trusses which appear to be slightly too wide for the building (*Figure 21*).

The building is clearly a mid 20th century milking parlour, the use of a parallel layout rather than a herringbone layout suggests a 1950s or 1960s construction date. The extensive use of concrete for mangers and steel for stalls is almost certainly of the same period. This along with cartographic evidence which does not record the building until 1960 suggests the building was constructed in the late 1950s.

4. Conclusion

The barn is a well-built example of a late 18th or early 19th century barn. The barn was constructed as a threshing barn when Duck End Farm was a largely arable farm producing a large wheat crop. Cartographic and documentary sources indicate the barn was one of two such barns at the farm. The barn has remained largely un-altered throughout its history and merits its listed status.

The barn also contains interesting evidence relating to the diversification of the farm in the late 19th century and the introduction of animal rearing. Lean to shelter sheds were added to the south east facing elevation. It is possible that the barn was then used as a fodder barn at this time to store animal fodder rather than arable crops. This would perhaps explain its survival whilst other buildings were lost at the farm during the 20th century.

The barn contains some interesting structural features, but nothing to provide categorical dating evidence. Cartographic evidence as well as some physical evidence does suggest the barn is more likely to be a later rather than earlier example of a timber framed barn.

The second building is a purely mid to late 20th purpose built milking parlour of no architectural interest, but of limited historical interest as representing the beginnings of industrialisation of farm buildings.

5. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

- 1 A3 permagraph sheet containing plans & notes
- 1 A1 paper plans & profiles.
- 90 B&W negatives & contact sheets
- 2 DVDs containing 90 digital images
- 3 A4 contact sheets
- 3 A4 photo record sheets
- 1 A4 handwritten notes

The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum under the Accession Number BEDFM2017.47

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

5.1 OASIS Record Summary

INFORMATION REQUIRED	UPLOADED AS
OASIS No	archaeol30-286636
Project Name	An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Wheat Barn, Duck End Farm, Duck End, Wilstead, Bedfordshire.
Site Co-ordinates	TL 06053 44088
Project Type	Standing Building Recording
Project Manager	Gerwyn Richards
Previous/Future Work?	Yes/Unknown
Current Land Use	In Use As Building
Development Type	Residential
Prompt	Listed Building Consent
Archive Recipient	Bedford Museum

6. Bibliography & Sources

Bedfordshire HER May 2017

Bedfordshire Records & Archives Services (BR&AS) May 2017

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http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Application.aspx?resourceID=1014

7. Colour Plates



Figure 7
Principal Elevation (Looking North West).



Figure 8
Original Pitching Door inc' Cat Hole &
Hinges on North West Facing
Elevation.



Figure 9
Saltire Decorated Latch on North West Facing Threshing Door.



Figure 10
Concave Braces on Shelter Shed, South
East Facing Elevation.



Figure 11
Concave Brace Between Bay Post &
Tie Beam.



Figure 12
Wall Studding, Internal Wall (Looking East).



Figure 13
Scare Joint on Sill Beam, Internal View.



Figure 14
Assembly Marks on Sill Beam, External View.



Figure 15
Truss, General View (Looking South West).



Figure 16
Interrupted Collar Beam & Clasped Purlin.



Figure 17
Assembly Marks on Truss.



Figure 18
Clasped Purlin & Possible Pitching Door in Hipped Porch.



Figure 19
Building B, General View (Looking West – South West).



Figure 20
Building B Concrete & Steel Stalls.



Figure 21
Building B Roof Trusses.

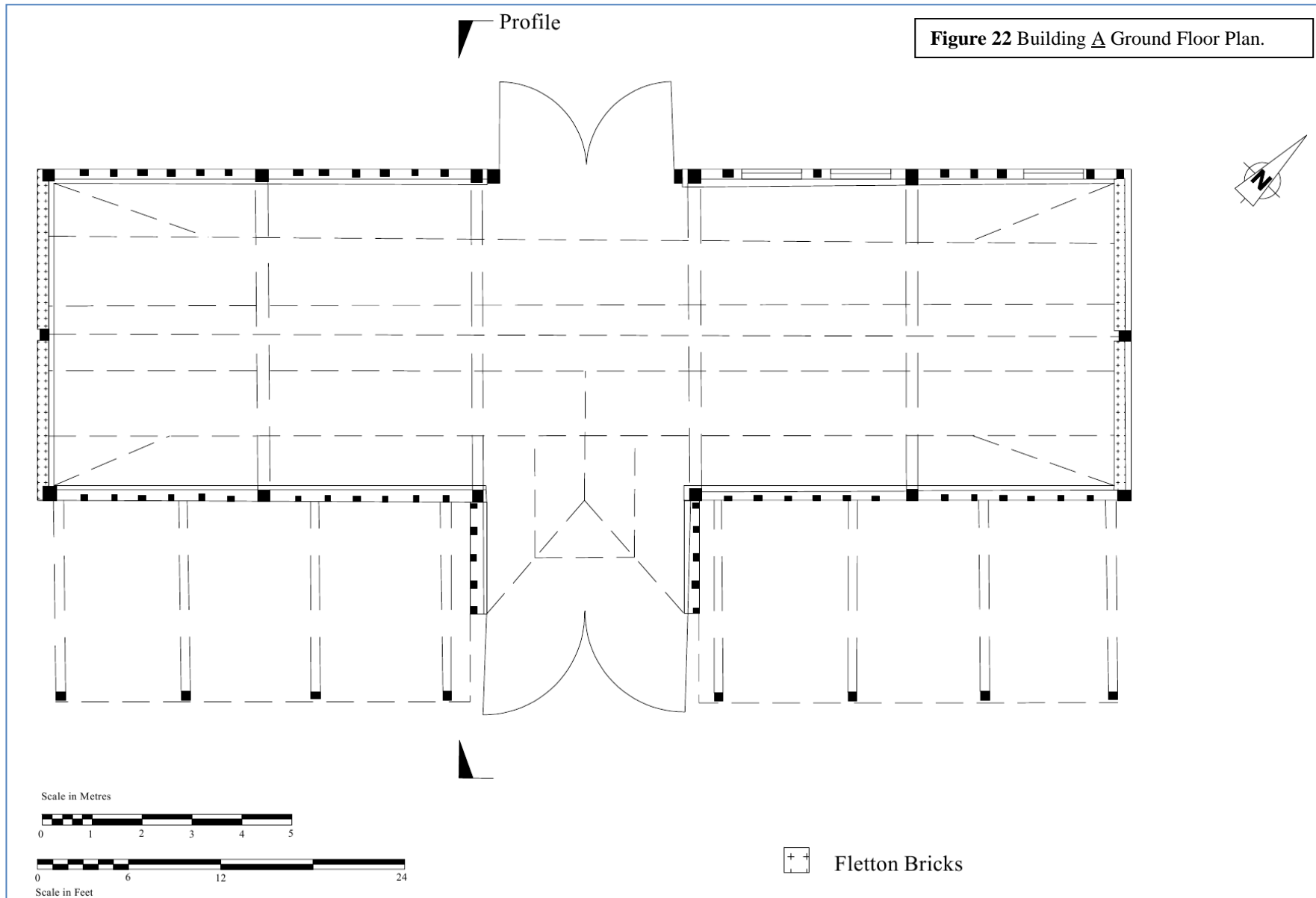


Figure 23 Building A Profile.

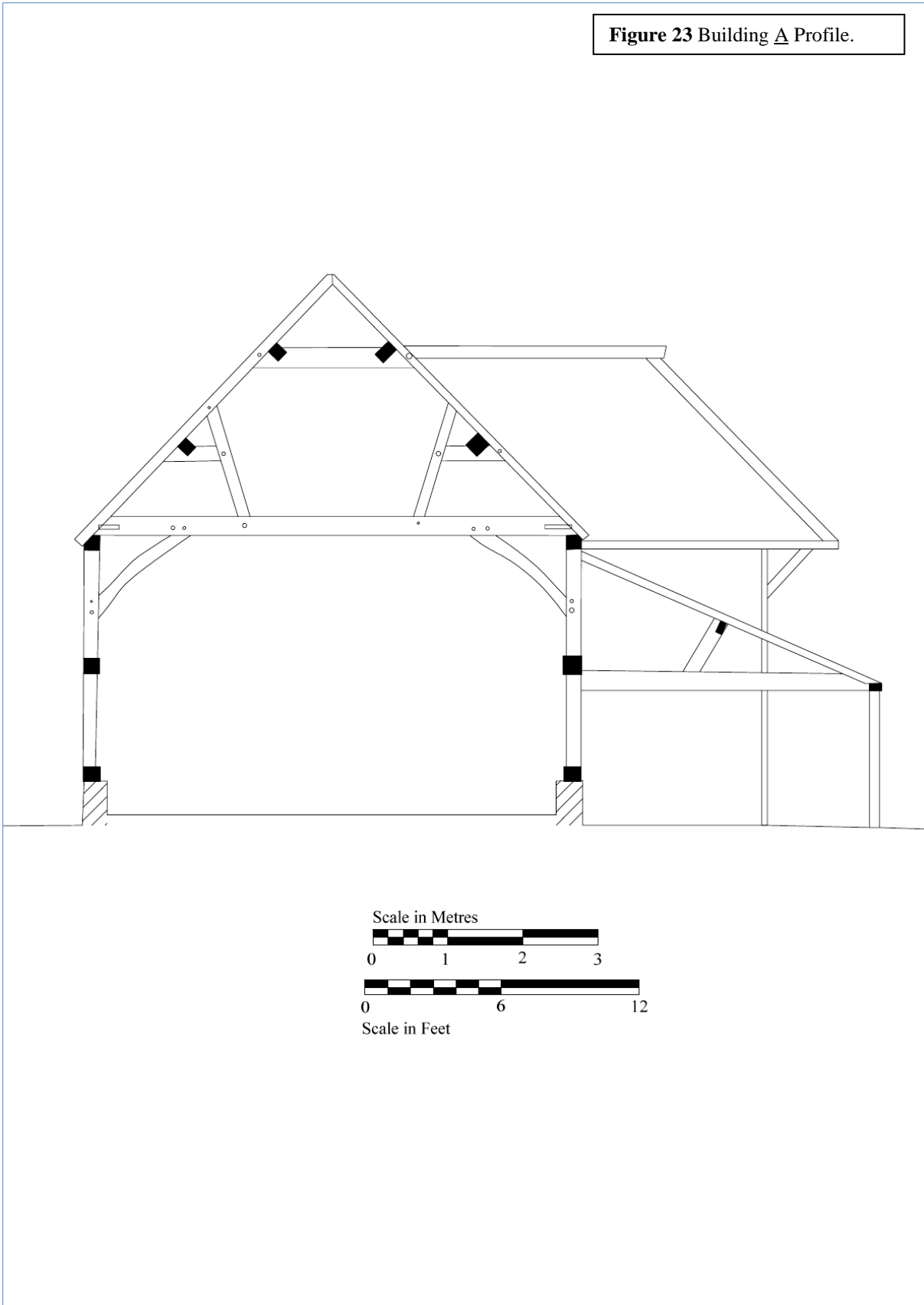
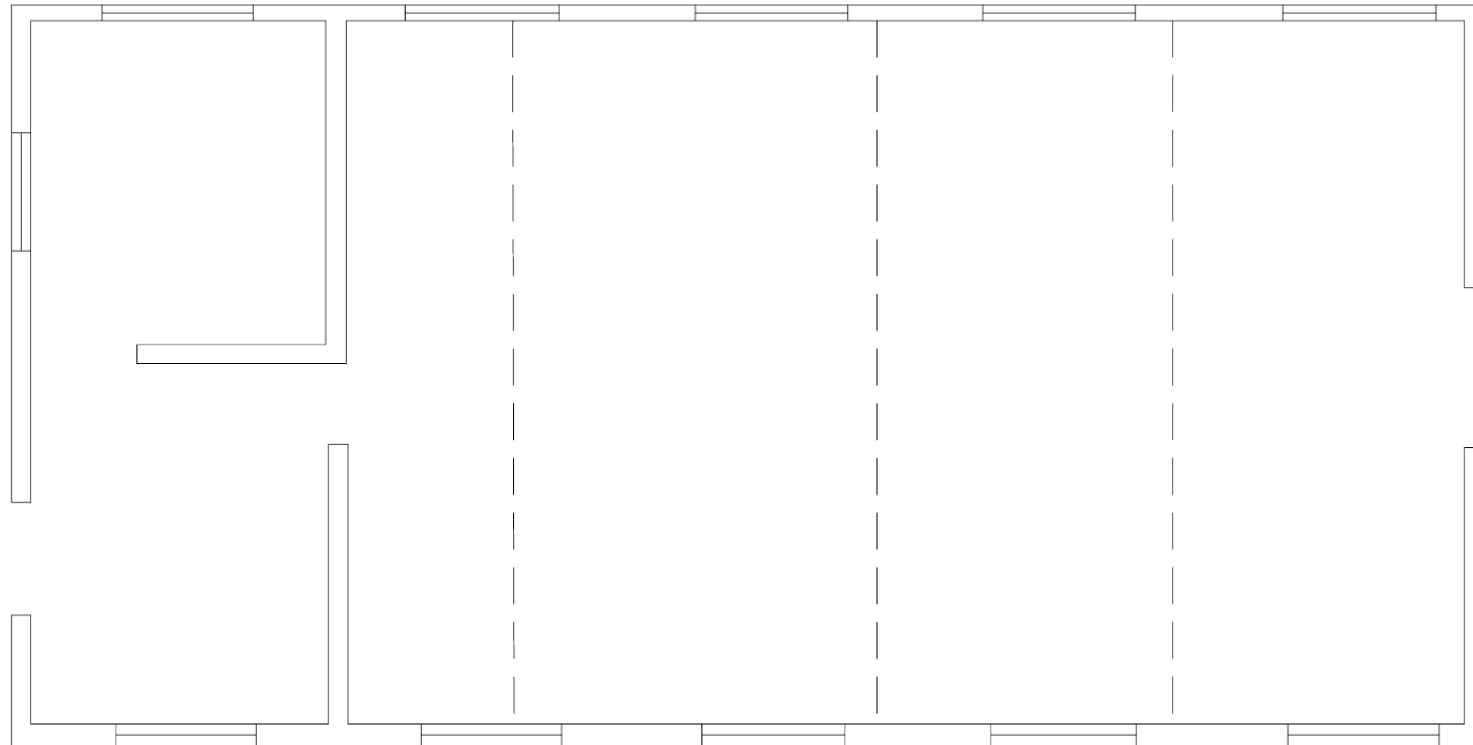
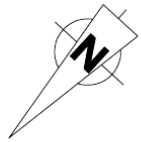


Figure 24 Building B Floor Plan.

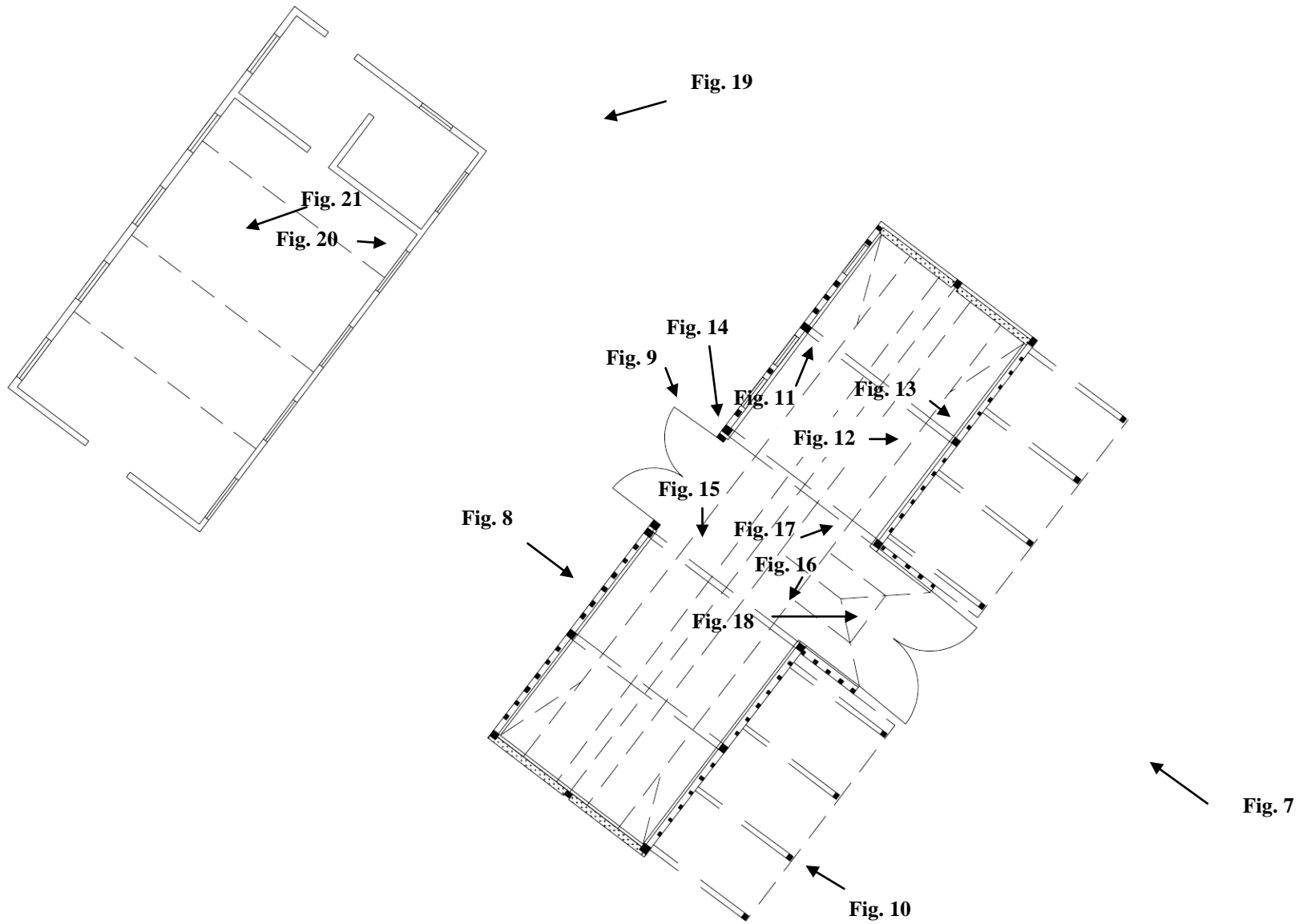


Scale in Metres



Scale in Feet

Figure 25 Locations of Photographs Included in Report.



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