



**Historic Building Recording at  
Holywell Spring Farm  
Ashby de la Zouch  
Leicestershire  
August 2015**

Report No. 15/203

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Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		OASIS molanort1-230897
Project title	Historic Building Recording at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, August 2015	
Short description	MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake a Level 1 photographic survey of buildings at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire. Recording encompassed the farmhouse, barns and a granary which were still working buildings at the time of this survey. The farmhouse likely dates to the early 19th century whilst the adjoining barn may be of a later date and was expanded in the late 19th to early 20th centuries to include a western range and granary.	
Project type	Historic England Level 1, Historic Building Recording	
Previous work	Geophysical Survey, Trial Trench, Archaeological Excavation	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	Early 19th-century farmhouse and barns with later additions	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch	
NGR	SK 34975 17300	
Area	c340sqm	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	MOLA Northampton	
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting	
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton	
Director/Supervisor	Amir Bassir	
Project Manager	Amir Bassir	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	August 2015	
End date	November 2015	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Title	Historic Building Recording Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, August 2015	
Serial title	MOLA report,15/203	
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# Historic Building Recording at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch Leicestershire August 2015

## ABSTRACT

*MOLA Northampton was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake a Level 1 photographic survey of buildings at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire. Recording encompassed the farmhouse, barns and a granary which were still working buildings at the time of this survey. The farmhouse likely dates to the early 19th century whilst the adjoining barn may be of a later date and was expanded in the late 19th to early 20th centuries to include a western range and granary.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake a programme of historic building recording at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire (NGR SK 34975 17300, Fig 1).

This report follows a Written Scheme of Investigation (CgMs 2015) which recommended that a programme of archaeological recording be conducted, encompassing the Farmhouse, Barn and Granary buildings.

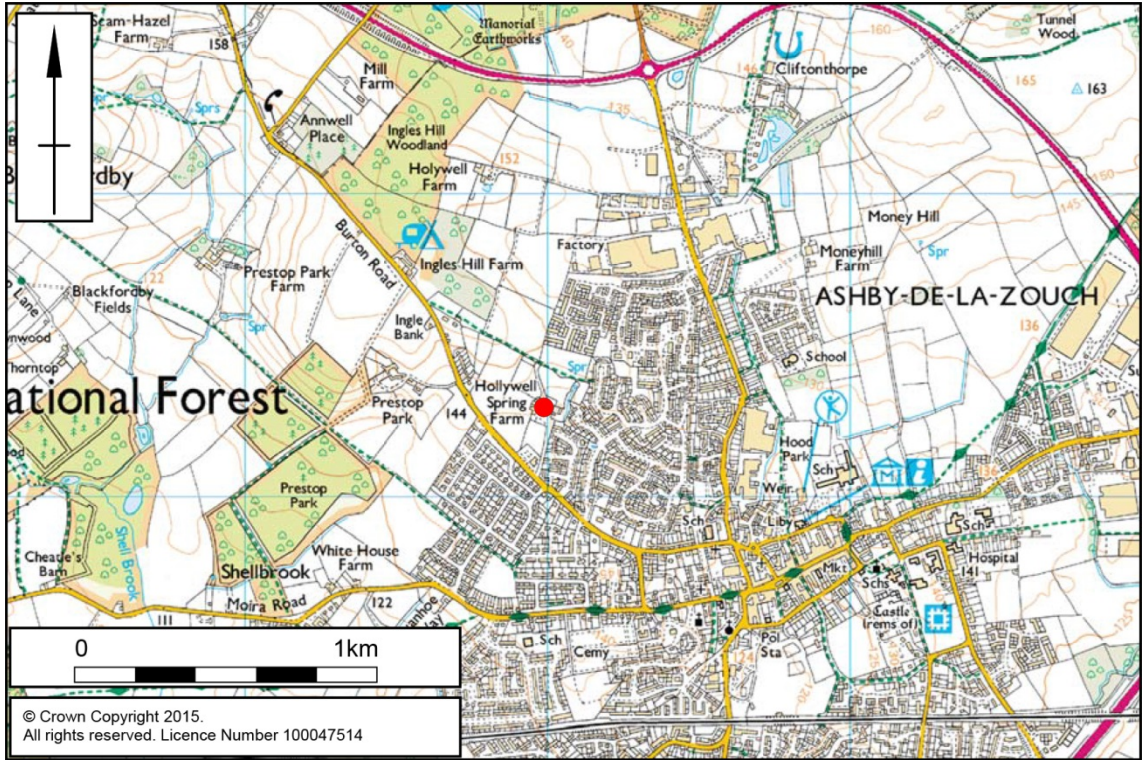
Holywell Spring Farm is located at the north-western edge of Ashby de la Zouch with access from Burton Road to the south. The farm is bound to the north and west by enclosed fields, and to the east by mid-late-20th century residential development (Fig 2).

The site lies at approximately 145m above Ordnance Datum on ground which rises towards the north and west. The underlying geology of the area has been mapped as comprising mudstone and sandstone of the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation with limited or superficial deposits (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>).

The area falls within the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield National Character Area 71, part of the East Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (NCA 2014). The character of the area is summarised as having heavy, poorly draining soils, with mixed arable and pasture farming with a wide variation in field pattern. Settlements consist of a mix of small hamlets, enlarged market towns and former mining settlements.



HOLYWELL SPRING FARM, ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH



Site location Fig 1



Aerial view of the site (image © GoogleEarth) Fig 2



## 2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The buildings were recorded in accordance with the standards, conventions and specifications defined in Historic England, *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice* (HE 2015). The building recording conformed to Level 1.

- The objective of Level 1 building recording is to provide a basic visual record of an extant structure, often before demolition or conversion, in order to gather basic information about a building or group of buildings. The work provides a basic record in accordance with the HE document of 2015 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*. Level 1 will provide basic information about the buildings' location, age and type. Recording will generally be of exteriors with superficial inspection of interior spaces for significant features.
- A basic photographic record will ensure the preservation by record of the buildings prior to demolition

A photographic survey to English Heritage Level 1 was completed in August 2015, showing the buildings in their present state. Photography was carried out using a Nikon D7000 DSLR equipped with Sigma 35-17mm and Nikon 18-70mm lenses. Black and white 35mm film photography was carried out using a Nikon F80 SLR equipped with a Sigma 10-20mm lens. Site location plans and a plan indicating the position and orientation of photographs are included in the report.

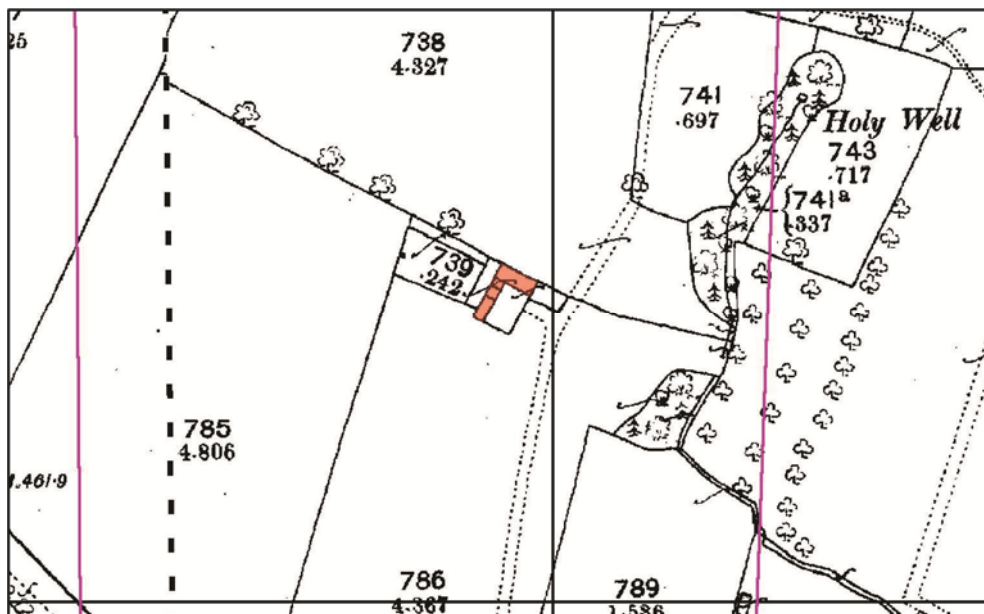
### 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1883 (Fig 3) shows the core of the farmhouse without extensions, and part of the linear range of barns abutting it at its south-western corner. The covered passage is depicted with a line and the barn is shown as being partitioned. The buildings are shown to be within an enclosed space surrounded by open fields, with access via the driveway which runs to the east. Beyond the Holy Well spring and its linear wooded gully to the east of the farm, a cultivated orchard is depicted. This area was unmanaged and overgrown at the time of this survey.

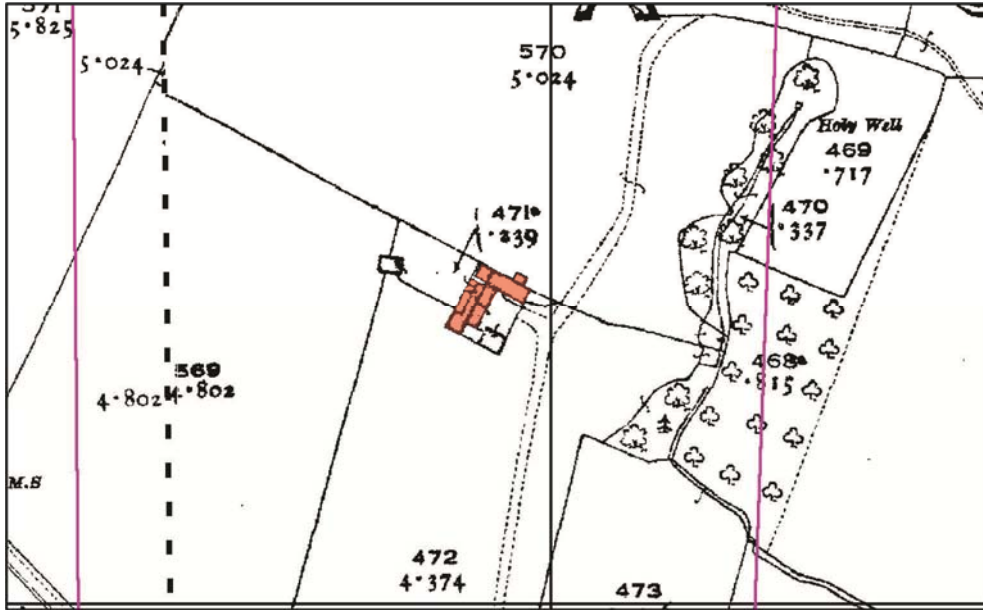
By 1923 (Fig 4), the farmhouse has been extended to the west, and a smaller extension has been constructed to the north. The second linear range of barns and the granary have also been constructed by this time, abutting the western side of the earlier range. To the north of the farm, a field enclosure shown on the map of 1883 has been removed.

The farm was greatly expanded during the mid-20th-century with the construction of cow sheds and stables, mainly to the west of the existing buildings, though a large cow shed was also built in the space between the farmhouse and barns. Holywell Bungalow and associated outbuildings were also built to the east of the driveway. The extensions to the rear of the farmhouse were constructed within this period.

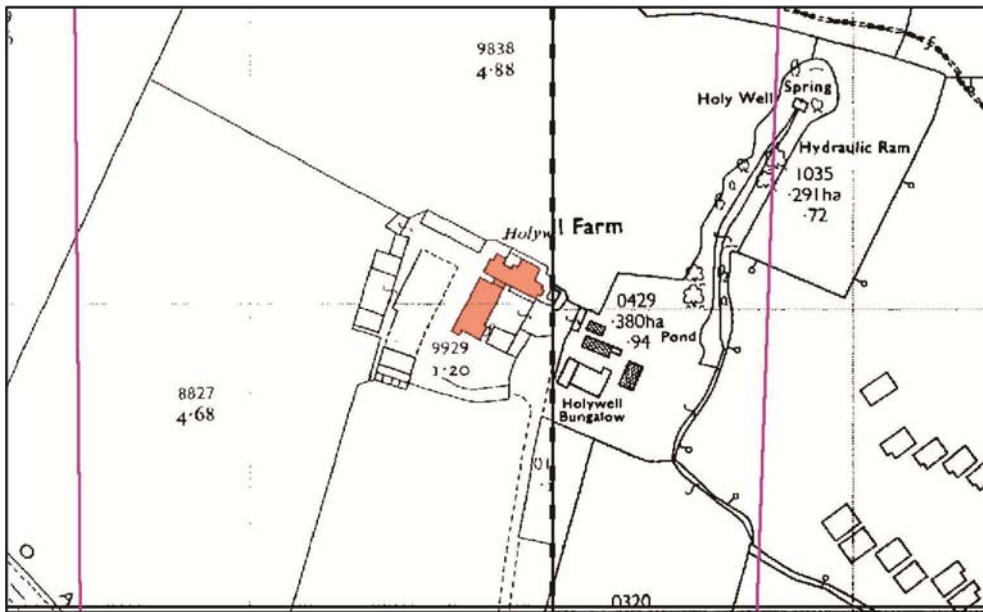
Stylistically the farmhouse and eastern range of barns are likely to date to the early-mid 19th century. The brick dentils, canted coping brick window sills, chimneys and brickwork are indicative of this period. The interior of the farmhouse had been modernised and no original fixtures or fittings were evident.



First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1883 Fig 3



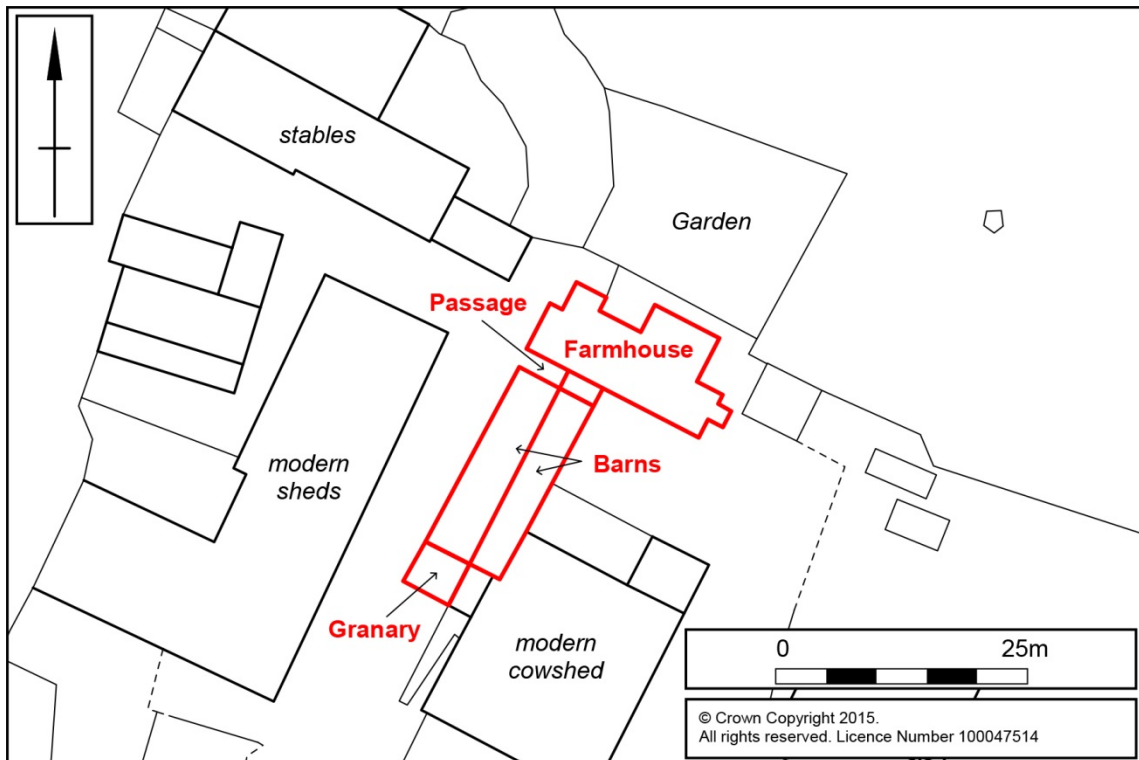
Ordnance Survey map of 1923 Fig 4



Ordnance Survey map of 1961 Fig 5

#### 4 DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE STANDING BUILDINGS

The recorded buildings comprise a two-storey farmhouse, a linear range of barns and a two-storey granary. These formed the historic core of the farm and were surrounded by a range of modern cowsheds, barns and stables. At the time of survey the farmhouse was fully occupied and the barns and granary were being utilised as part of the normal function of the farm. Due to this, the interior of the farmhouse was given a cursory inspection and general photographs were taken.



The recorded buildings Fig 6

##### 4.1 The Farmhouse (Figs 7-18)

The farmhouse is a two-storey structure on a rectangular plan measuring c19m x 5m, aligned north-west to south-east and presenting its main elevation to the south. To the rear (north) of the building are a number of smaller extensions including a two storey bedroom / kitchen block and porch, which face an enclosed garden. The main building has a gabled roof of slate tiles with three brick chimneys located at the east and west ends and off centre to the ridge. The main extensions have flat roofs.

The farmhouse and its extensions are constructed of red brick, primarily in stretcher bond, which is covered by a cement render on the south and east elevations of the main building.

The east gable elevation is fairly plain with a narrow window opening into the kitchen. A later small brick outbuilding has been constructed against the north corner of the wall. The main south facing elevation is interrupted by a short covered passage between the farmhouse and the adjacent barn. The main part of the elevation is of

three bays with ground and first floor windows flanking a gabled brick porch. The windows are modern replacements within the original openings and have decorative wooden surrounds. The windows at ground floor level have green painted coping brick sills. Within the covered passage are opposing door openings. To the north is a single width door with bullnose brick sill which opens into a small utility room. The wall within the passage is white washed brick and has not been rendered. The opposing doorway has a sliding door on rails and opens into another small utilities room with washing facilities. The western portion of the farmhouse, beyond the western chimney, is an extension to the earlier building and dates to between the 1880s and 1920s. The farmhouse has a scheme of brick dentils at the eaves which is not continued onto the extension. The ground floor of the extension is a single room with access from the north through a simple single width door. This door was locked and the room was not accessed during the survey. The west elevation has two identical rectangular windows with purple coping brick sills. The windows have wooden frames and comprise side hung three light casements flanking a fixed central element with top hung ventilation pane. The ground floor window has a concrete lintel whilst a timber lintel is utilised at first floor. A small cross of protruding purple bricks is located above the first floor window. The north elevation of the extension is plain and a ground floor outbuilding or shed abuts the wall here.

At ground floor the farmhouse contained a kitchen and living rooms. The staircase to the first floor is located directly opposite to the porch. The kitchen occupies the eastern side of the farmhouse and has modern utilities throughout. An Aga range has been installed in the fire opening on the eastern wall with its flue connected to the chimney breast. The remainder of the farmhouse at ground floor level which would originally have contained two rooms has been opened up into a single large sitting room. This room has been modernised and no historic features were visible. The first floor contains a number of bedrooms and bathroom all, of which have been fully modernised and no historic features were evident.

The large extension to the rear of the building was constructed between 1923 and 1961 and replaces a much smaller extension which was built between 1883 and 1923. At ground and first floor, facing north, are wide rectangular window openings, the lower of which is a modern double glazed replacement. At ground floor the extension comprises a pantry / laundry room. This room has a floor of square quarry tiles and a brick and tile work surface, similar to those utilised in dairy rooms, is located against the south wall of the room. The upper floor of the extension is occupied by a bedroom. A single storey brick porch with a catslide roof of corrugated sheets is located between the rear extension and the main farmhouse.

#### **4.2 The Barns (Figs 19-30)**

The barns comprise two abutting linear ranges on rectangular plans, aligned roughly north-south. The eastern barn joins the south elevation of the farmhouse and pre-dates 1883. It has a rectangular plan, measuring c22m x 4m and is divided into three rooms. The building stops just short of the farmhouse but the roof continues forwards and joins the south elevation of the farmhouse providing a covered passage between the two. The building has a gabled roof of slate tiles with a mix of angular and rounded ridge tiles.

The west elevation has largely been lost or is obscured by the eastern range of barns. To the east the building faces onto an open, paved garden area with a small shed and seating. A concrete water trough adjacent to the building now serves as a water feature. The east elevation is constructed of whitewashed brick in an irregular Sussex

Bond, containing a mix of stretchers and headers. Sliding doors on iron rails allow access to the main rooms. A recessed six-light window with bottom hung upper element is located at the south of the elevation. An adjacent single-width door opening has been blocked in modern brick. A former window located at the western end of the building has been blocked in brick. The western door opening has undergone repair work on one side. The repair is fairly modern and utilises modern brick and CMU (Concrete Masonry Units).

The northernmost room is a fairly small space serving as a utilities / washroom and is accessed from the passage. The door opening has bullnose brick jambs and a sliding door with iron rails. The underside of the roof has been covered with white painted planks and the internal walls have a mix of tile, render and white wash coverings. The middle room was utilised as a store at the time of the survey and the interior space was fairly cluttered. The room had a single access from the east and formerly had a window opening to the east, now blocked.

The south room was the largest of the three and the west wall had been partly removed to create a shared space with the later adjacent range. An RSJ (Rolled Steel Joist) spans the width of the opening between the two. The room has a concrete floor and the walls are plastered and painted. Two queen post trusses with diagonal bracing are exposed below the underside of the roof and are supported over the RSJ. At their eastern ends the trusses are supported over protruding brackets. A single-width, blue painted wooden door located in the south-western corner of the room allows access to the modern cowshed.

The western barn dates to between 1883 and 1923 and comprises a north-south aligned linear range measuring c20x x 4.5m. This range fully abuts the earlier range to its east and shares a common wall. The range is constructed of red brick, primarily in stretcher bond with occasional rows of stretchers and headers. The gabled roof is constructed of slate tiles with rounded ridge tiles and forms a valley with the adjacent roof. Pairs of roof lights have been added to either side of the roof. The internal roof structure comprises white painted timber king posts trusses with diagonal bracing and iron ties through the king post and lower member. The trusses support timber purlins, rafter and the battens which carry the roof tiles.

The building stops short of the farmhouse, in line with the covered passage, but its roof is not continued over the space between. The north elevation has an off-centre single-width ledged and braced door with simple wooden lintel, which opens into the northern room, and a small two-light window with arched brick lintel which is located beside the door. A simple iron gate is hinged to the north elevation and can be swung outward to close off the passageway when cattle are moved around the farm. The west-facing elevation is plain with no window or door openings. A number of equally spaced square vents with iron grilles are located below the eaves.

The northern room appears to be a fairly modern division of a formerly continuous room. The south wall is constructed of CMU and has a single-width sliding door with sliding louvers. The other walls of the room have been cement rendered to c1.5m above which they are whitewashed brick. The floor is laid with square pavers.

The remainder of the building is a single room, made larger by the removal of the west wall of the earlier barn. At the time of this survey, this space was used for the storage of large furniture which prevented a thorough inspection of the room. The floor of the room is on two levels with a timber plank platform at the northern half with a concrete surface adjacent. The ceiling of the room has been lowered so that only the lower portion of the trusses is exposed.



### 4.3 The Granary (Figs 31-37)

The Granary is contemporary with the western barn and is part of the same structure. It is a two-storey building on a square plan measuring c5 x 5m. It is constructed of red brick, primarily in stretcher bond with occasional rows of headers and stretchers, and has a gabled roof of slate tiles. A smaller structure with sloping roof formerly abutted with southern wall of the granary.

The west elevation is a continuation of the west wall of the barn and there is no join between the two. A single-width door opening with green-painted sliding timber door provides external access to the ground floor room. A small square vent with timber lintel is located adjacent to this door and has been blocked in brick. A loading door is located centrally at first floor level. A transom light above this door has been blocked with brick. The south gable elevation presents a former door opening, blocked with CMU, which formerly opened into a single-storey building, demolished prior to survey. Adjacent to this door is a square window opening with modern brick surround which is a later addition to the building.. An original window opening with arched brick and timber lintel is located centrally to the elevation and has been blocked in brick.

The ground floor space is a single square room with concrete floor and an exposed timber ceiling of joists supported by a central beam with cross-bracing. A ledged and braced door in the north-east corner of the room allows access to the south room of the barn. A wooden feed chute is located off-centre to the room and allows easy dispensing of feed from the upper floor which is accessed by a narrow stair in the south-west corner of the room. The upper floor is effectively a platform which occupies the western half of the room with the feed chute rising from the ground floor. A small crawl space has been created above the ceiling of the south room of the adjacent barn which can be accessed by ladders.

## 5 DISCUSSION

This survey is part of a wider scheme of archaeological work which includes geophysical survey, trial trench evaluation and excavation. It provides a basic visual record of the historic core of the farm buildings prior to their demolition as part of the wider development of the area. The farmhouse is of a good quality, well-built but fairly typical of its type. As is common with agricultural buildings, the farmhouse and barns display a continuous, ad-hoc development as necessity and technological innovation dictated.

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### Websites:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>

MOLA Northampton  
20th November 2015



The Farmhouse, east elevation, looking north-west Fig 7



The Farmhouse, main façade, looking north-east Fig 8



Detail of ground floor window Fig 9





The western extension, looking east Fig 10



The west elevation and extensions, looking south-east Fig 11



The rear extensions, looking south-west Fig 12



The rear extensions, looking south-west Fig 13



The Farmhouse, general view, looking south-west Fig 14



The Farmhouse kitchen Fig 15





The Farmhouse, the living room, looking south-east Fig 16



The Farmhouse, the living room, looking north-west Fig 17



The Farmhouse, pantry / laundry room, looking south-east Fig 18





The east barn, east elevation, looking north-west Fig 19



The east barn, east elevation, looking south-west Fig 20



The covered passage, looking south-east Fig 21



The west barn, looking south Fig 22



The west elevation of the western barn Fig 23



The east barn, northern room Fig 24





The east barn, central room Fig 25



The east barn, southern room, looking south-west Fig 26



The south room of the east and west barns, looking west Fig 27



The south room of the east and west barns, looking north-east Fig 28



Access between the east barn and granary Fig 29



The north room of the east barn Fig 30





The Granary, looking north-east Fig 31



The Granary, west elevation Fig 32



The Granary, south elevation Fig 33



The Granary, ground floor room with feed chute Fig 34



The Granary, ground floor room with access to first floor Fig 35



The Granary, first floor room, looking south-east Fig 37





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