

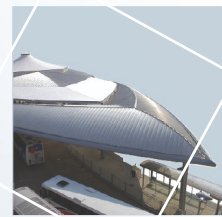
Report № 1984

**Sunnyside Farm, Colby, Norfolk:
An Historic Building Survey and Photographic Record**

NHER 52555

Prepared for

Mr and Mrs Duncan



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December 2008

BAU1984

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Location:	Sunnyside Farm, Colby
District:	North Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TG 2266 2993
HER No.:	52555
Client:	Mr and Mrs Duncan
Dates of Fieldwork:	11 November 2008

Summary

A level 2 archaeological survey was undertaken of the barn and its subsidiary buildings at Sunnyside Farm, Colby, Norfolk, ahead of building works to convert the structures to residential use. The resulting survey identified four separate structures, the largest of which was an early 19th-century threshing barn. Evidence within the fabric clearly demonstrated this to be the earliest structure of those examined. Of the remaining buildings, the small lean-to structure at the north-eastern corner was probably also early 19th century and used for storage, while those to the west appear to have been mid-late 19th-century cattle shelters.

1.0 Introduction

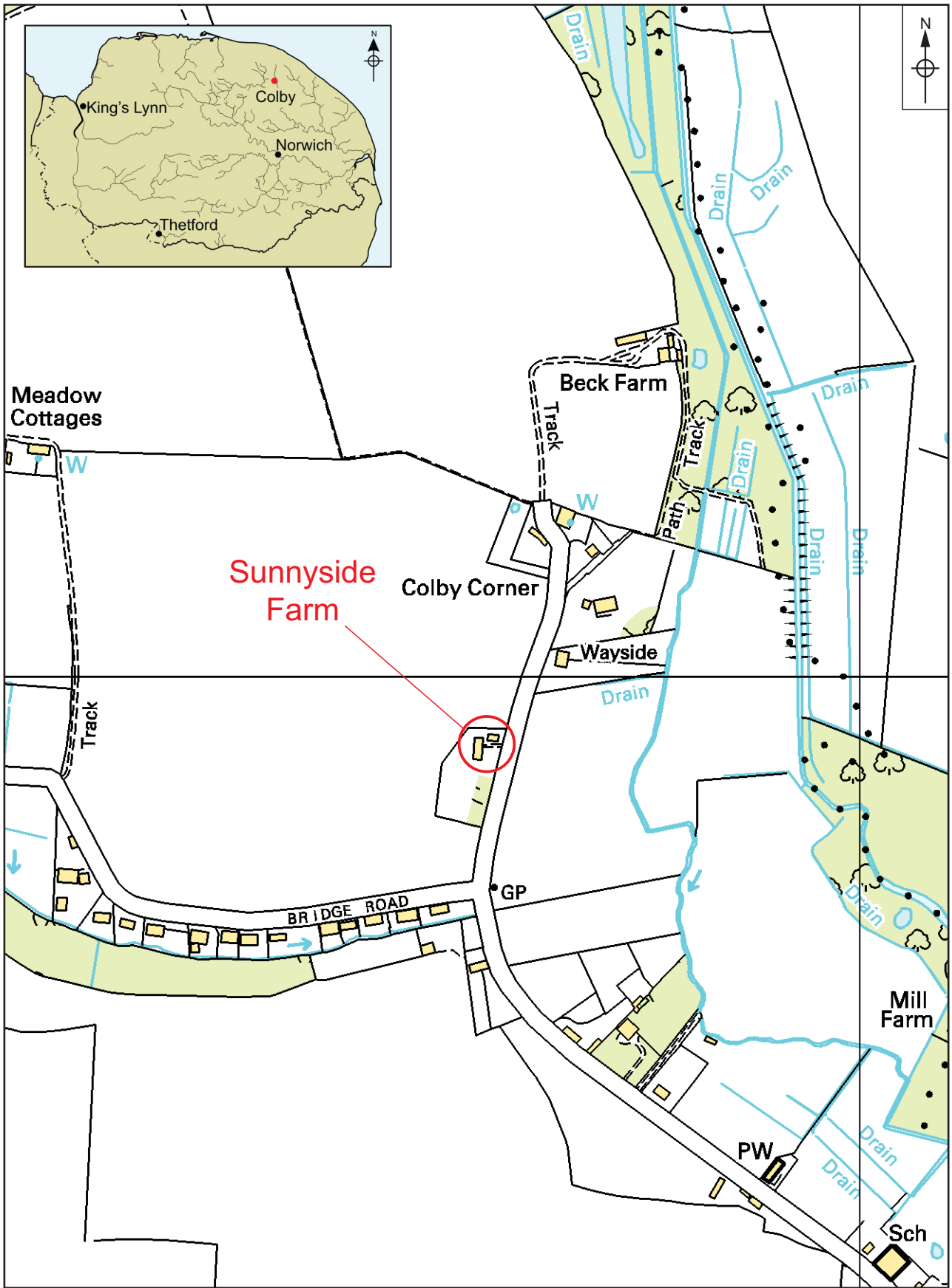
A building recording survey was conducted on the threshing barn and ancillary buildings at Sunnyside Farm, Colby, Norfolk (Fig. 1). The survey was designed to record details of the form, function, date, extent, phasing, character, status and significance of the building via a drawn, photographic and written record. All three are presented in this report.

The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Duncan in response to a planning condition from North Norfolk District Council and a brief jointly issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology and Norfolk County Council (Ref: Hamilton and Heywood 08/09/2008). The brief stipulated that a building survey of the current buildings be conducted prior to the commencement of renovation works converting the structures to residential use.

The site archive is currently held by NAU Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Historical Background

The large barn and the small lean-to structure on its eastern side are shown on the 1824 enclosure map (NRO: C/Sca2/109), the 1839 tithe map (NRO: DN/TA177) and the 1st edition Ordnance survey map. It is likely that the farmhouse predates both of these structures, while the east-west building to the east was constructed between 1839 and 1886. The other buildings on the side post-date 1886.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

3.0 Methodology

The objective of this survey was to create a record that included a black and white photographic record using 35mm film, a drawn record highlighting structurally significant features, fixtures and fittings, and a written record.

The work undertaken conforms to the guidelines for a Level 2 Survey, as set out by English Heritage in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice* (English Heritage 2006).

Generally, access was good. The buildings are currently used for storage and, as such, the view of some walls was restricted. In addition, vegetation covered much of the building's northern gable limiting interpretation.

4.0 Building Survey

The survey revealed the presences of four buildings, designated Buildings A, B, C and D for the purposes of this study (Fig. 2).

4.1 Building A

4.1.1 Exterior

Building A, aligned north–south, was a largely brick structure 10.9m long and 5.3m wide. It was built of soft reddish-orange bricks, each 240mm long, 115mm wide and 65mm thick. They were fixed with a soft white mortar using Flemish bond. Visible only on the exterior were courses of flint pebbles up to a maximum height of 0.80m using the same mortar type on which the brick structure stood.

On the northern portion of the western wall (now the interior of Building C) evidence for deep vertical scratching into the soft brickwork was noted between approximately 1m and 2m from the ground (Plate 1). To the south of Building A stands an earlier farmhouse with which it shares its southern wall (Plate 2; Fig. 2).

4.1.2 Doorways

Two original doorways remain, with a further two in the southern wall appearing to be modern or, at least, heavily rebuilt so as to have removed any trace of earlier openings. The remaining two doorways are located centrally in the eastern and western walls, the larger of the two openings forming a double door in the eastern wall. The eastern door is 3m wide and the western is 1.16m wide, with both openings reaching the height of the wall plate. The eastern doorway, which forms the primary entrance, retains its doors although they are unlikely to be original. The western doorway is weather-boarded above from the lintel to the wall plate (Plate 3). External examination of the door's frame revealed evidence for an externally opening door, since removed.

4.1.3 Windows

A single window or ventilation slot was recorded at the southern end of the western wall. The opening was 0.09m wide with and 0.63m high. Internally the window was recessed by the thickness of a single course of bricks and was positioned approximately 1.7m above the ground. It had a wooden lintel above, with the jambs and sill being of brick (Plate 4). No other evidence was found to indicate the presence of further original openings.

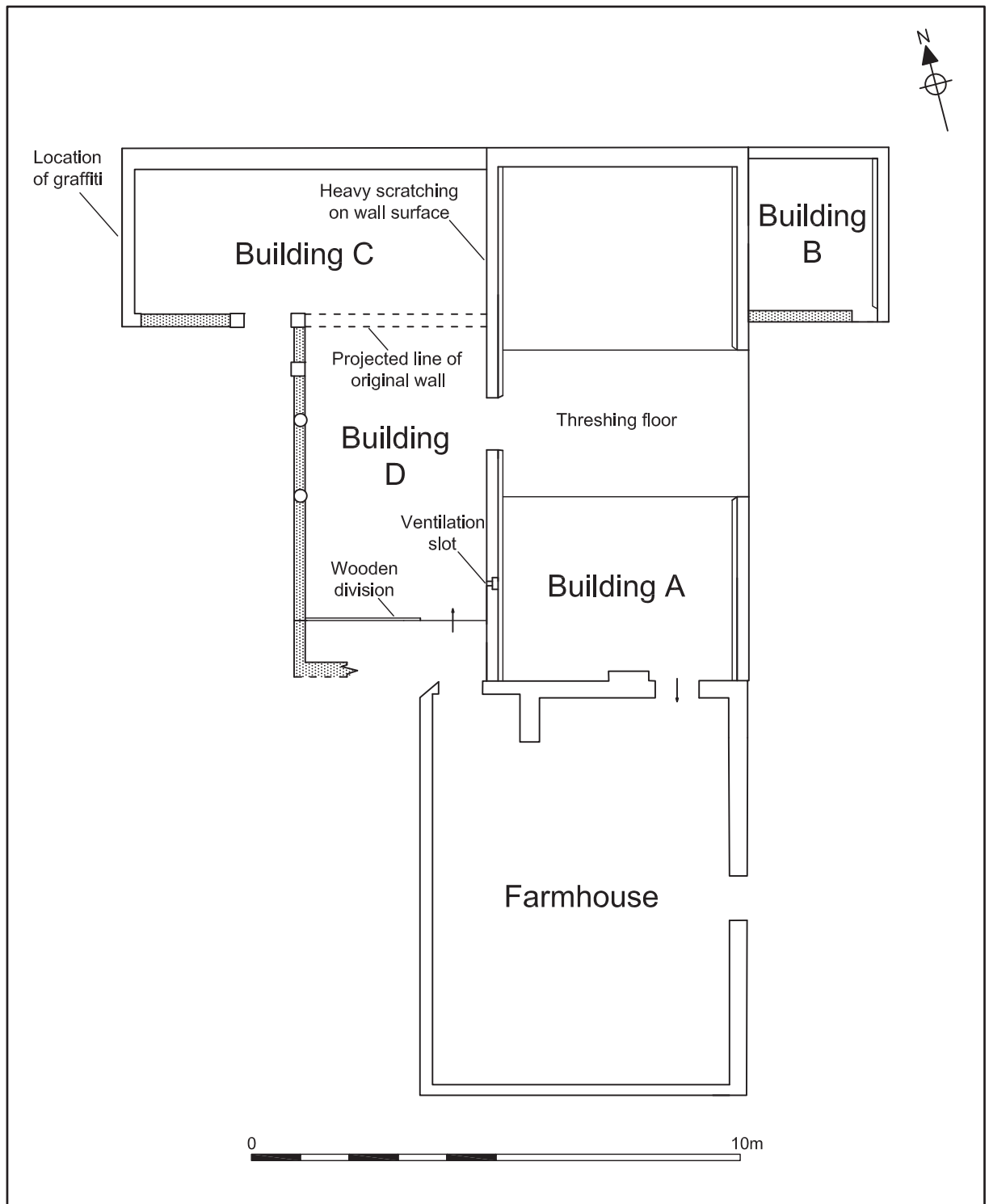


Figure 2. Plan of buildings. Scale 1:125



Plate 1. Vertical scratches on exterior west wall of Building A



Plate 2. Building A and Farmhouse, looking north-west



Plate 3. Western doorway of Building A, from interior



Plate 4. Ventilation slot on west wall of Building A, interior. Scale 1m



Plate 5. Interior of west wall showing plinth in Building A, looking south-west



Plate 6. Inscription on gable wall of Building C

4.1.4 Interior

Internally the building was divided into five bays, all of which were of roughly equal width with the exception of the central bay, which was slightly larger, and the northernmost bay, which was slightly narrower. In effect the internal floor space was of three units with a central brick-paved threshing floor dividing the storage spaces either side, as is usual design for barns of this type. All four walls had been whitewashed to their full height and a plinth approximately 80mm wide ran along the eastern and western walls from which much of the whitewash had been worn away (Plate 5).

4.1.5 Roof

There were four full-roof trusses of modern composite type with a tie beam at the northern gable partially forming a fifth. The majority of the roof had clearly been replaced during the modern period, but there were indications that some of the wall plates had been retained on the western wall. At the southern end the purlins rested upon the gable wall of the house. The roof was covered with pan tiles.

4.1.6 Fixtures and fittings

Either side of the western door two wooden beams had been incorporated into the fabric of the building at lintel height. These appear to be part of the original build and were no doubt designed to accommodate nails and hooks, off of which equipment could be hung (Plate 3). A further beam, likely for the same purpose was identified on the eastern wall towards the southern corner, and this may indicate that the modern doorway located nearby is in fact an original entrance.

4.2 Building B

4.2.1 Exterior

Building B, built of brick similar to that of Building A, had a length of 3.57m and a width of 2.87m. Effectively it formed a lean-to, with the eastern wall of Building A forming its westernmost limit. Building B's eastern wall was a mixture of random, but course-bonded brick with more conventional Flemish bond used for repairs. The southernmost wall was formed of a modern timber frame clad with corrugated iron. Entrance was gained through the doorway of the same material at the eastern end of this wall. There was no evidence for an earlier wall having existed.

Examination of the interior revealed a brick wall with mortar identical in character to that used in Building A reaching a height of 1m with concrete blocks filling the remaining space to the roof line. A plinth 0.5m high extended across the length of the eastern wall and was built largely of flint pebbles.

4.2.2 Interior

Building B consisted of only a single bay with half trusses continuing down the line of the roof from Building A's wall plate. As with the larger barn the roof structure was comparatively modern.

4.2.3 Roof

Formed of pan tiles, it was of the cat-slide style and appeared as a single roof, being incorporated into the larger Building A.



Plate 7. Buildings C and D, facing north-east



Plate 8. Area worn smooth and concave on gable wall of Building C, facing west



Plate 9. Building D, facing east

4.3 Building C

4.3.1 Exterior

Building C constituted an east–west structure appended to the northern half of the western wall of Building A. Essentially it contained two walls, both of brick and mortar of the types already described. Its northern wall measured 7.4m long and the western gable gave the building a width of 3.6m. Several inscriptions had been carved into this wall, but only one remained legible, giving a date of 1859 (Plate 6).

The southern wall must have originally been open fronted, with three large posts located across it at intervals, the easternmost of which currently functions as the door jamb. The space between the other two posts had been in filled with concrete blocks and windows inserted above this to the height of the wall plates (Plate 7).

4.3.2 Doorways

A single, rather decrepit doorway 0.96m wide afforded an entrance into the structure through the southern wall, just to the west of centre. If the structure was originally open fronted, as it appears to be, this is likely to be a later addition.

4.3.3 Interior

The interior was divided into three bays of approximately equal width, with the central bay being slightly wider. The posts that would presumably have continued along the eastern portion of the southern wall had been removed to create an open floor into Building D, although the wall plate continued across to what was the western wall of Building A. A hole had been cut into the brickwork at his point to receive the wall plate.

After the construction of Building C, the portion of this wall enclosed within in it was whitewashed in a similar fashion to Building A, covering over the deep vertical scratching mentioned above. The northern and western walls were also whitewashed. An area of the interior surface of the western gable wall was notably smoother than the surrounding brick work and slightly concave (Plate 8).

4.3.4 Roof

The roof was of three equally spaced trusses formed of two struts rising to principal rafters from a tie beam. The purlins were clasped between the rafters and the struts. The first of these sat just inside the western gable wall, with the other two flanking the central bay. They may have been jointed, as no other fixings were observed. No truss was present at the eastern end, although the continuation of the rafters up to this wall suggest Building C predates Building D.

The ridgeline of Building C originated from just above the wall plate of Building A and continues at right angles to the larger building. Pan tiles were used as a covering.

4.4 Building D

4.4.1 Exterior

Building D takes the form of a lean-to running parallel to the main barn. It measures 7.4m long and 4m wide. As with Building C, it appears that initially this structure was also open fronted, its western elevation consisting of a series of regularly spaced posts with a wall plate on top. Only two, or maybe three, of these

posts remain, the rest having been removed and replaced with a combination of concrete blocks and modern brickwork. The southern part of the building, in particular, has been extensively rebuilt in this way (Plate 9).

4.4.2 Doorways

A doorway subsequently placed at the northern end of the western wall has since been blocked, perhaps when the partition between Buildings C and D was removed to form a single space and rendering the entrance obsolete.

4.4.3 Interior

The interior is divided into two equal bays with a wooden dividing wall partitioning off a narrow segment at the southern end of the southern bay. Structurally the building consists of very little, depending on Building A for its eastern wall and the wall plate of Building C for its northern support.

4.4.4 Roof

The roof consists of a single centrally located half truss of similar style to Building C, with clasped purlins, although in this case the tie beams were secured with metal straps. At its southern end the roof is supported with modern brickwork removing the need for a truss, while to the north it rests on the roof of Building C. In common with the other structures, the covering was of pan tiles and it had been integrated into the larger roof of Building A.

5.0 Conclusions

The enclosure map appears to show Building A and possibly Building B, with the farmhouse to the immediate south. This gives them a date of at least 1824 and supports the structural phasing evident from the survey. Between this date and the publication of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map Building C was constructed and the date of 1859 carved into the soft brick work upon the western gable wall may very well be contemporary with its erection. Building D is not evident in any of the historical mapping, although its alignment inevitably makes it more difficult to identify. It is probably no older than the late 19th century.

Building A's primary function was the processing and storage of harvested crops and the building retains a number of original features associated with this task. The function of Building B is less clear, but it may have been used for storage of hay or farm equipment. Its construction is fairly rough, although its flint plinth is similar to that of Building A.

The open frontage of Building C suggests that it was utilised as a cattle shelter, and although there was no evidence of stall divisions the area rubbed smooth on the western wall is the approximate height at which cattle would have stood.

Although they now form a single L-shaped space, the phasing and constructional details of Buildings C and D suggest that the two buildings existed as separate spaces with an internal division at the point at which they meet. Building D appears to have begun life as an open-fronted structure and may have performed a similar function to that of Building C. However, both buildings underwent at least two further adaptations of use with the insertion of doorways and subsequent removal of the partition.

Acknowledgements

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Bibliography

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