

Report 2633



nau archaeology

A Historic Building Recording Survey at Grange Farm, Pulham Market, Norfolk

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ENF125621



Prepared for
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| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Location: | Grange Farm, Pulham Market, Norfolk |
| District: | South Norfolk |
| Grid Ref.: | TM 1972 8681 |
| HER No.: | 40398, ENF125621 |
| OASIS Ref.: | 94853 |
| Client: | Brown & Co LLP |
| Dates of Fieldwork: | 13 January 2011 |

Summary

In January 2011 NAU Archaeology were commissioned by Brown & Co LLP on behalf of the Mr I.B. Alexander to carry out a Level II historic building survey upon two agricultural buildings and their associated outbuildings at Grange Farm, Pulham Market ahead of works to convert the present structures. The resultant survey identified a threshing barn of mid 19th-century date with attached cattle shelter to the south of a similar date. At the southern end of the farmyard an impressive three storey timber frame structure dating to the 17th century had survived numerous alterations and changes of use but may have served initially as a crop storage barn. A smaller 18th- or 19th-century clay lump livestock shed with later equipment store to one side projected from the western gable of the timber framed barn.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In January 2011 an historic building survey was conducted by NAU Archaeology upon two agricultural structures and their associated out buildings at Grange Farm in the South Norfolk village of Pulham Market (Fig. 1). A planning application submitted to South Norfolk Council to convert the current buildings resulted in a recommendation by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (NHES) that a programme of historic building recording works be undertaken prior to any development (Ref. CNF 42796) (Ref. 2010/0439/F)

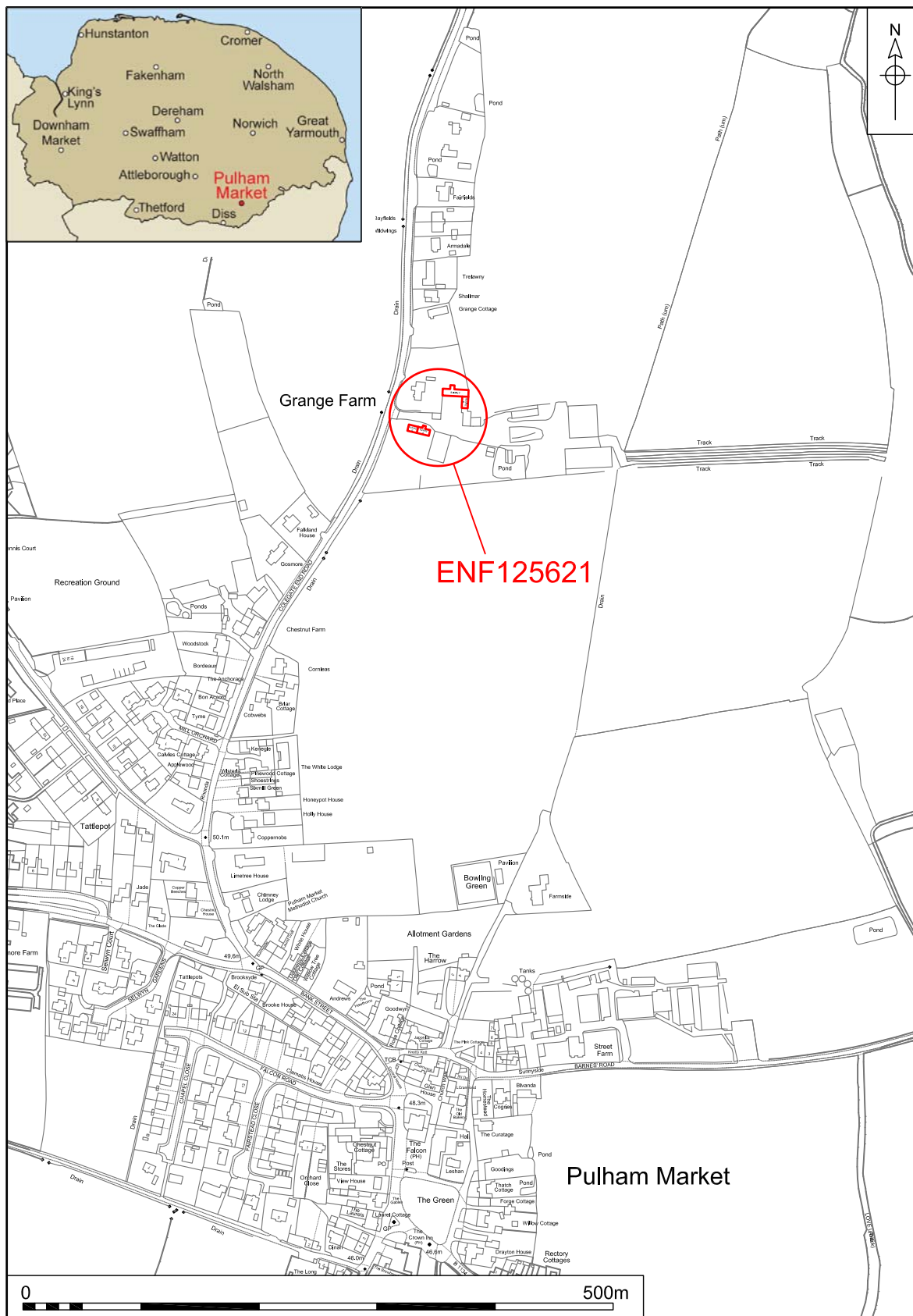
The survey, conforming to Level II as defined by English Heritage (2006), was commissioned by Brown & Co LLP on behalf of their client Mr I.B. Alexander.

The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2633/NP).

The survey was designed to record details relating to the form, function, date, extent, phasing, character, status and significance of the building through a drawn, photographic and written record. All three of which are presented in the following document.

The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Grange Farm is located just to the north of Pulham Market on the eastern side of Colegate End Road. Both the timber framed barn to the south and the farmhouse itself are Grade II listed buildings (LBS 225756 and 225755) dating to the 17th century.

Faden's map of 1797 (Barringer 1989) is not sufficiently detailed to pick out individual buildings but it does indicate a farm of a reasonable size in about the right location. It is however possible to identify both these structures on the tithe map of 1838 (DN/TA12) and two additional buildings forming an L-shape similar to those seen to the east of the farmhouse today.

By the 1880s the range of farm buildings had developed with structures now to the east and west of the timber framed barn at the southern edge of the yard (Ordnance Survey 1st edition). The buildings to the north had also developed with an elongated structure including a porch to the north that can now positively be identified as the present threshing barn. It appears however that at this time the structure must have been about a third longer than its present length. Additional buildings have developed projecting from the south-eastern end of this structure forming the L-shaped yard that remains today.

A further block of buildings to the south of the threshing barn but upon the same alignment are also visible by the 1880s, forming a small yard between the two ranges of buildings. It is clear from the 1905 Ordnance Survey mapping that the farmyard remains largely unaltered between these dates with perhaps the addition of a single structure to the west between the threshing barn and the range of parallel buildings.

The demolition of the west end of the barn does in fact not take place until some time between 1957 and the mid 1970s according to the cartographic evidence ¹ with the buildings to the east and west of the timber framed barn also being removed during this time. Interestingly, in 1976 there appears to be a small porch or perhaps lean-to structure projecting from the northern elevation of the timber framed barn.

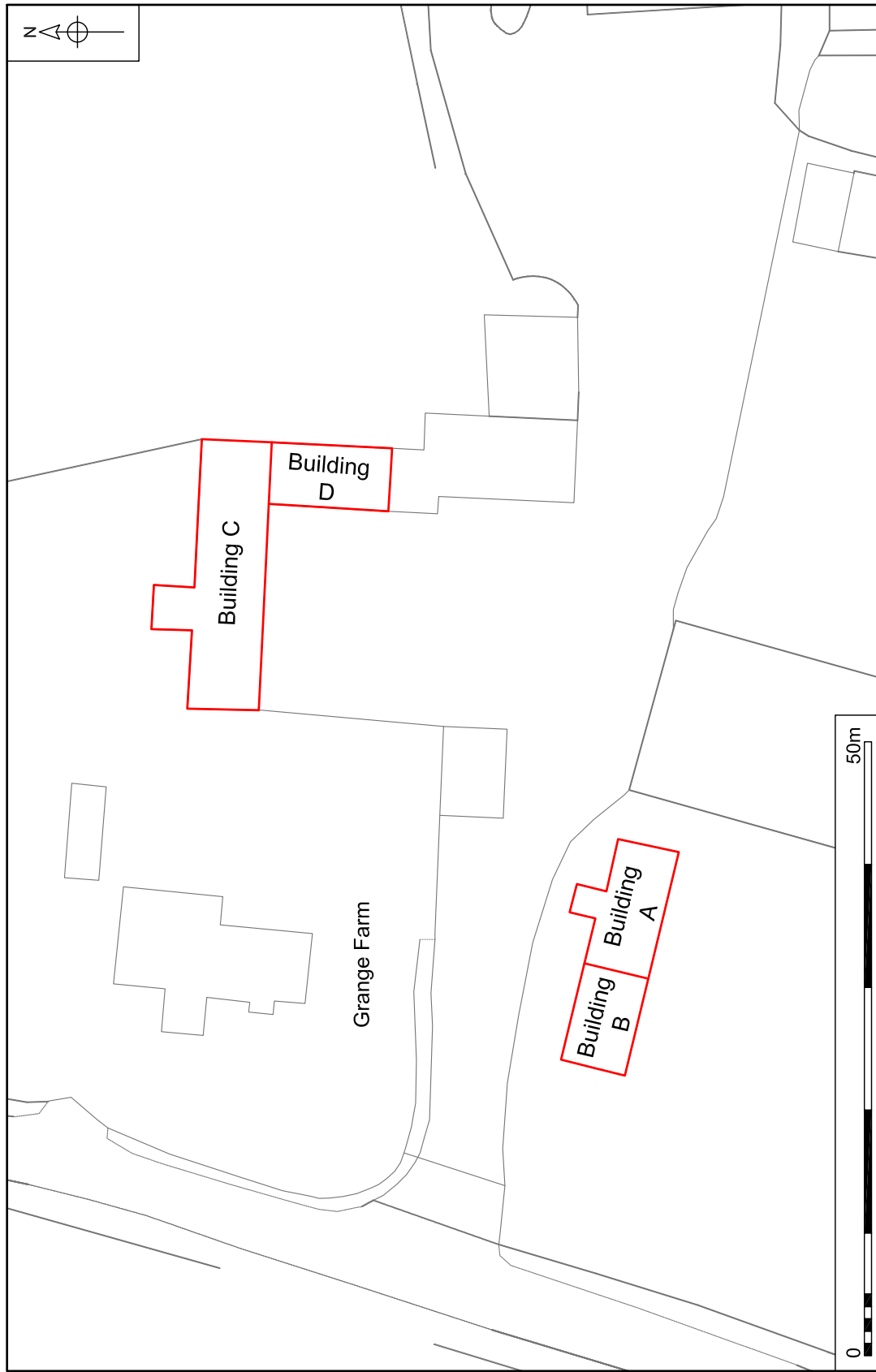
3.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this survey was to create a record that included the following three elements:

- A black and white photographic record using 35mm film
- A drawn record, highlighting structurally significant features, fixtures and fittings
- A written record

The work undertaken conforms to the guidelines set out within Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good practice (English Heritage 2006) Level 2 survey

¹ <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html>



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Figure 2. Plan showing location of Buildings A - D. Scale 1:500

For ease of reference the buildings are discussed within the text under the headings of A, B, C and D. Access to both internal and external areas of all the buildings was generally good, although the second floor and parts of the first floor of building A were deemed to be in an un-safe condition thereby restricting detailed examination.

4.0 BUILDING SURVEY

4.1 Building A

4.1.1 Overview

Building A (adjacent and east of Building B) lies on a broadly east-west alignment perpendicular to Colegate End Road some 25m to the west (Figs 2 and 3, Appendix 1). Rectangular in plan, it has a length of 10.6m, a width of 5.5m and a height to the apex of 7.5m. It is of timber box frame construction, clad in a mixture of horizontal boards, render and corrugated iron with gable walls to the east and west supporting a steeply pitched roof clad in corrugated iron.

4.1.2 Exterior

Northern elevation

The northern elevation faces the farm house and provides the only (currently) visible access with a large opening to the east, a single doorway immediately to the west and a large third opening at the western end. This latter opening is the only one with doors, which opens externally into the yard. The first floor displays a door to the centre of the eastern end with a four light window at the approximate centre of the elevation flanked directly to the west by a second partially boarded-up doorway. The first floor is rendered in a lime mortar and covered in tar proofing with patched repairs in cement while the ground floor is clad in corrugated iron, painted black to match above (Plate 1).

Eastern elevation

The eastern gable wall has a single blocked doorway at its northern end with a rectangular window at first floor height to the south. The upper gable is clad in tarred corrugated iron but the lower is of horizontal wooden planks with the roof scar of a demolished shallow gabled building dividing the two (Plate 1).

Southern elevation

The southern elevation is entirely obscured by a makeshift covering of plywood sheets that hide any openings that may survive (Plate 2).

Western elevation

The upper portions of the western elevation are also clad in plywood sheets with a single sheet of corrugated iron hiding a two light window towards the apex. The lower half the elevation is obscured by Building B which projects westwards from this wall however internal inspection identified horizontal planks in the same manner as those at the eastern end (Plate 2).



Plate 1. East gable and north elevation of Building A



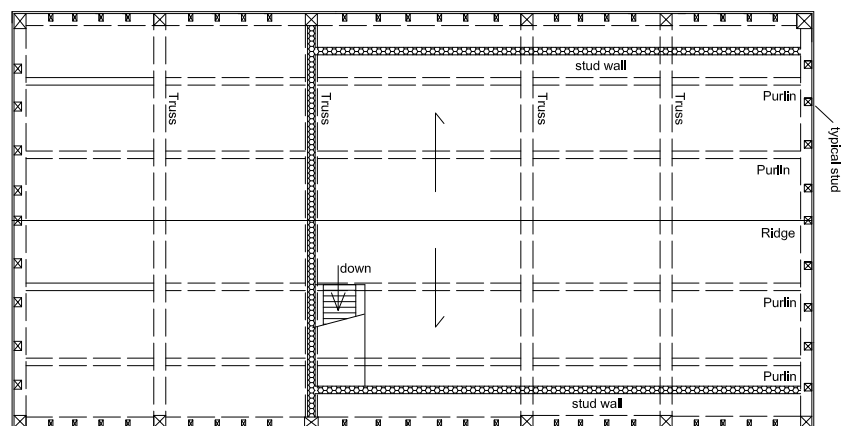
Plate 2. Buildings A and B facing north east



Plate 3. Building A jowled post head in north-western corner

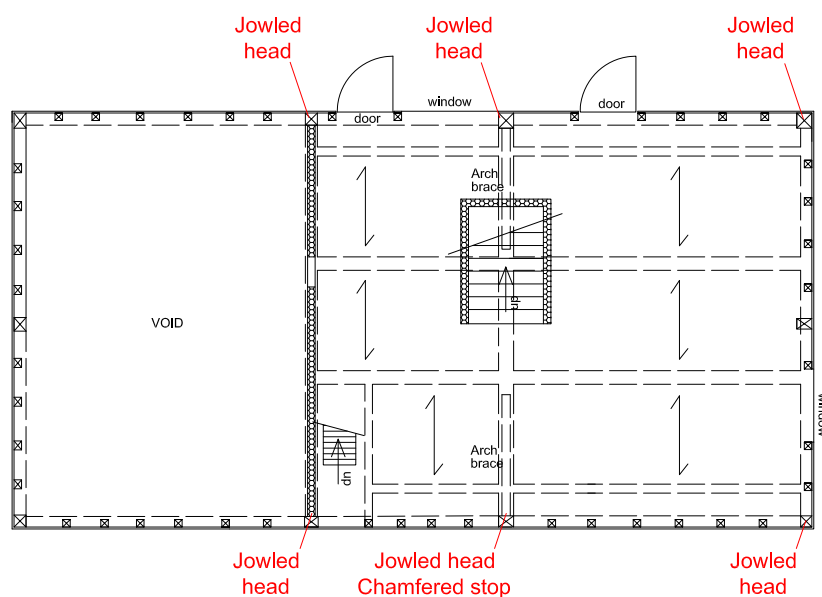


Plate 4. Building A ground floor vertical staves within damaged infill panel



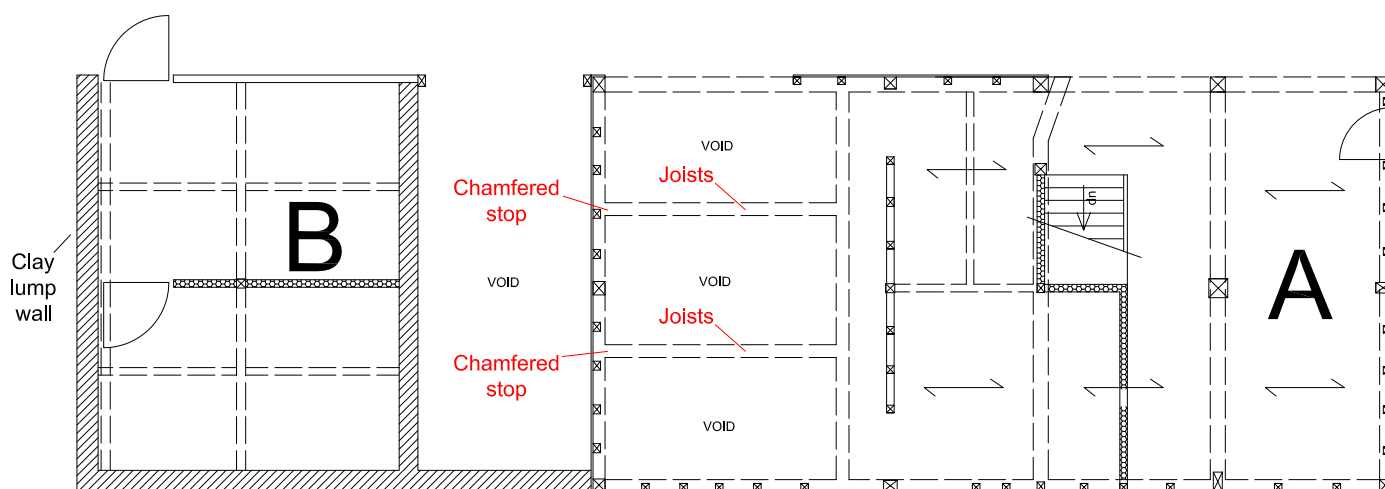
SECOND FLOOR PLAN A

SHOWING STRUCTURE OVER



FIRST FLOOR PLAN A

SHOWING STRUCTURE OVER



GROUND FLOOR PLAN A & B

SHOWING STRUCTURE OVER



Figure 3. Plans of Buildings A and B. Scale 1:100

Figure based on drawings provided by Brown & Co.



Plate 5. Building A south wall interior west end
showing lathe and plaster



Plate 6. Building A partition wall facing east



Plate 7. Building A first floor partition wall, staves just
visible to right of window



Plate 8. Building A second floor facing east
showing roof structure

4.1.3 Interior

Structure

From the interior of the building it is possible to see the general construction as a box frame design with the roof structurally operating independently of the frame below (Figs 3 and 4). The posts, of which there is one at each corner and a third pair either side of the cross-wall, rise the full height to the wall plates, terminating in jowled heads (Plate 3). Normal assembly has been employed at the junction of post, wall plate and tie beam with the wall plate seated in a right angled rebate cut into the top of the jowled head below a tie beam spanning the width of the building. Additional strength is provided by curved upward braces on the first floor rising from each of the corner posts to intersect with the wall plates. Diagonal upward braces are found on each end wall rising from the same posts to the tie beams while at the cross-wall diagonal braces are employed at ground, floor and roof levels.

The walls themselves are composed of studs; each of which is a full storey in height creating fairly narrow panels in proportion to their height. The infill of these panels varies with what appears to be lath and plaster on the southern wall where it survives and vertical staves and daub used on the western wall (Plates 4 and 5). The eastern wall makes much use of horizontal wooden boards nailed into place over the studs except above the first floor where corrugated iron has been used. Corrugated iron is also used on the ground floor of the northern elevation but the infill panels on the first floor remain intact and beyond the use of lime render between exposed timbers their construction could not be detected. The cross-wall infill also remains in good condition with a full lime render on the eastern face and exposed timbers between panels to the west. A small portion of damaged panelling suggests the use of vertical staves here (Plates 6 and 7).

The roof is of five bays with principal trusses of clasped purlins with reduced principals and curved wind braces. There is a second pair of butt purlins (Plate 8).

Ground Floor

The building is arranged over three floors with the ground floor divided into four bays (Figs 3 and 4) by partitions between the third and fourth bays and second and third bays from the east while the first and second bays are largely as one. The westernmost bay is open to the roof without any upper floor but there are indications that this has not always been the case with beams for a first floor still in place (Plate 6).

Notably the carpentry at the eastern wall of the ground floor in bay one is of a fairly crude nature in comparison to the remainder of the building with nails used in places rather than jointing (Plate 9). This may have been the result of extensive but localised repair work as the first floor and above appear to be of better quality. The opening in the northern wall of the first bay retains no doors and from the soffit of the mid rail above it several empty sockets denote the previous spacing of studs in place of this doorway (Plate 10). This is also the case at the western entrance where missing studs provide evidence for an original continuous wall at this end.



Plate 9. East wall of Building A facing north-east



Plate 11. Building A to west of stairs facing south towards shuttered window, brick floor below and blocked door to right



Plate 10. Empty sockets on north wall of Building A



Plate 12. Building A empty floor joist sockets to left of stairs

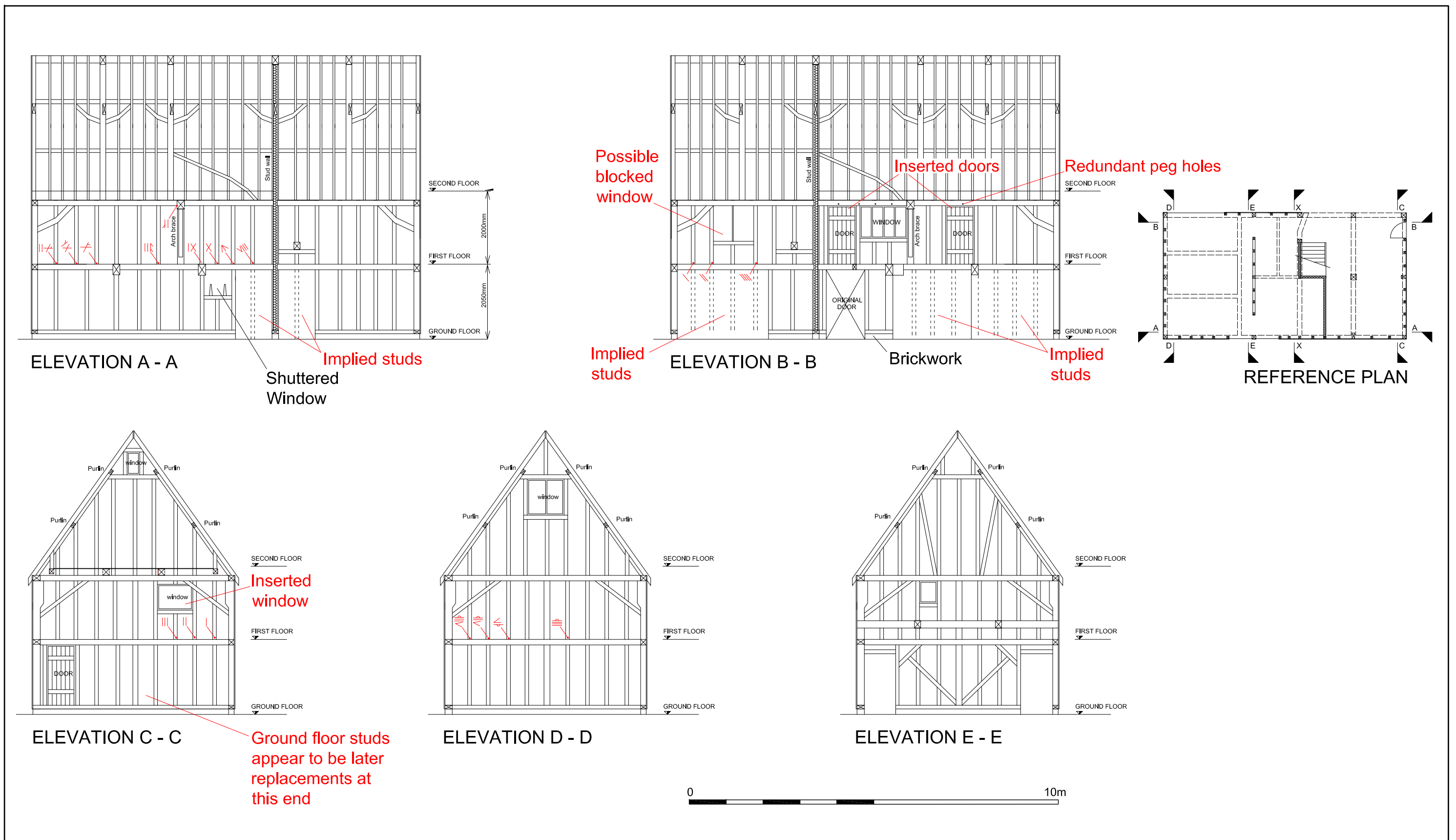


Figure 4. Building A internal elevations showing frame. Scale 1:100

Figure based on drawings provided by Brown & Co.

Further investigation indicates that based upon the spacing of stud work the original door is located within the centre of the northern wall within bay three and is only just over a metre wide. It is no longer in use having been covered over with corrugated iron. The majority of the ground level flooring is of dirt although other surfaces may be obscured beneath. The exception is at the rear of the third bay where a small portion of brick flooring survives *in situ*. Two further doorways not visible from the exterior are identified on the southern wall arranged immediately adjacent to each other either side of the partition wall dividing bays three and four. Neither appears to be original as they both coincide with empty stud sockets on the soffit of the rail above and both doorways have been boarded up. A small rectangular window with a wooden shutter hinged at the sill sits just to the east of the eastern most of these doorways (Plate 11).

Access to the first floor is provided by a staircase in the western end of the second bay but again empty joist sockets on the adjoining first floor beam indicated this to be a later insertion (Plate 12). Upon a board above the stairs is painted the initials 'IBP' with the dates of '1854' and 'AD 1910' to the right and below (Plate 13).

First Floor

The first floor (Figs 3 and 4) is laid with wooden floor boards and their fragility prevented full inspection of the northern end of the room however certain details could still be recorded. It is possible to see that the both of the first floor doors visible from the exterior are probably not original. A redundant peg hole at the centre of the wall plate above each door indicates the previous location of studs at intervals which fit the spacing pattern of those remaining studs (Plates 14 and 15). The same was also true of the four light window sited between these doors although it is possible these pegs holes relate to previous mullion positions rather than studs. An empty socket above the three light window on the eastern wall also suggests a later insertion or alteration while the small central square window in the cross-wall looking out over the open westerly bay gives no indication as to its provenance, although its soft wood frame is certainly of a later date (Plates 16 and 17).

Perhaps of most interest on this floor is the survival of numerous carpenters' marks scribed on the lower portions of the studs on the southern wall and also on the upward brace dividing bays two and three along this wall (Plate 18). Further marks are located at the base of the studs on the eastern wall and again on the western wall at the opposite end of the building and on the northern wall within bay four. It is possible that detailed investigation might reveal many more of these marks although those on the ground floor appear to have been lost through degradation of the lower timbers.

Also worthy of mention is the use of lambs tongue chamfered stops on the ends of several of the main floor beams for the joists above and in fact these are observed on the ground floor ceiling beams too (Plate 19).

A simple set of wooden steps positioned within the south western corner of the building leads up to the second floor.



Plate 14. Building A first floor door in north wall showing redundant peg hole above



Plate 16. Building A first floor east window, note empty stud socket in wall plate



Plate 13. Building A graffiti above stairs



Plate 15. Building A western first floor door and window on north wall, note redundant peg holes in wall plates above



Plate 17. Building A first floor internal window looking west



Plate 18. Building A carpenters' marks on beam joint



Plate 19. Building A chamfered beam stop



Plate 20. Building B facing south-east

Second Floor

The second floor (Figs 3 and 4) is set within the roof space although the steep pitch of the roof allows for plenty of head room. The roof is discussed in detail above (see Structure) and its access is restricted to what could be seen from the steps as the floor boards are deemed to be unsafe, however it is currently used for storage and there is no indication that it had ever served any other purpose. The only source of light is provided by a rectangular window high up at the apex of the eastern gable (Plate 8).

4.2 Building B

Building B is of a simple design projecting west from the western gable of Building A to which it owes its eastern wall (Figs 2 and 3, Appendix 1).

It has a length of 6.8m and width of 5.5m with a shallow gabled roof of red pan-tiles to the west and corrugated iron to the east reaching a maximum height of 5m (Plate 20). It is of just a single storey but forms two independent cells both accessed from the north with an opening to the east large enough to house a cart, and a second, smaller opening to the west. There is no provision for internal access between the two cells. The southern, western and partition walls sit on a plinth of red brick 0.6m in height with clay lump blocks above rising to the wall plates. The northern wall also has a brick plinth but here the original clay lump has been replaced with concrete block work probably as a repair. Internally the building's western cell has been laid out as a stable or cow shed with a brick floor and a makeshift partition across the length of the room dividing the space in two while the eastern cell has a concrete floor but no fixtures or fittings of any kind (Plates 21 and 22).

4.3 Building C

Building C is a large rectangular structure at 21.8m long and a little over 6m wide on an east-west alignment to the east of the farm house (Figs 2 and 5, Appendix 2, Plate 23). From floor to apex it measures 7.8m and is topped with a gabled red pan-tile roof. The walls are of clay lump construction above a red brick plinth in a Flemish bond to a height of 0.9m and are tarred externally and lime rendered internally (Plate 31).

A large full height opening, 4.3m wide, lies along the southern elevation, now serviced by sliding corrugated iron doors (Plate 24) while an opposing entry to the north is protected by a gabled porch projecting some 3.7m from the northern elevation with externally opening double doors (Plate 23). At the base of the jambs of the northern and southern doorways are the remains of grooves designed to receive horizontal wooden boards (Plate 25). These boards would have stretched across the width of the doorway thereby preventing corn from escaping into the yard during threshing. The northern entrance retains its board still *in situ*.

The floor is of concrete except between the two opposing doors where wooden boards have been laid (Plate 31). At the eastern end of the building a square room, equal to approximately one quarter of the overall length of the barn, is partitioned off (Plate 26). This room is accessible via a door at the southern end of the cross-wall partition and again via a second door in the southern wall leading into Building D. Three windows are bricked up in the northern wall of this cell along

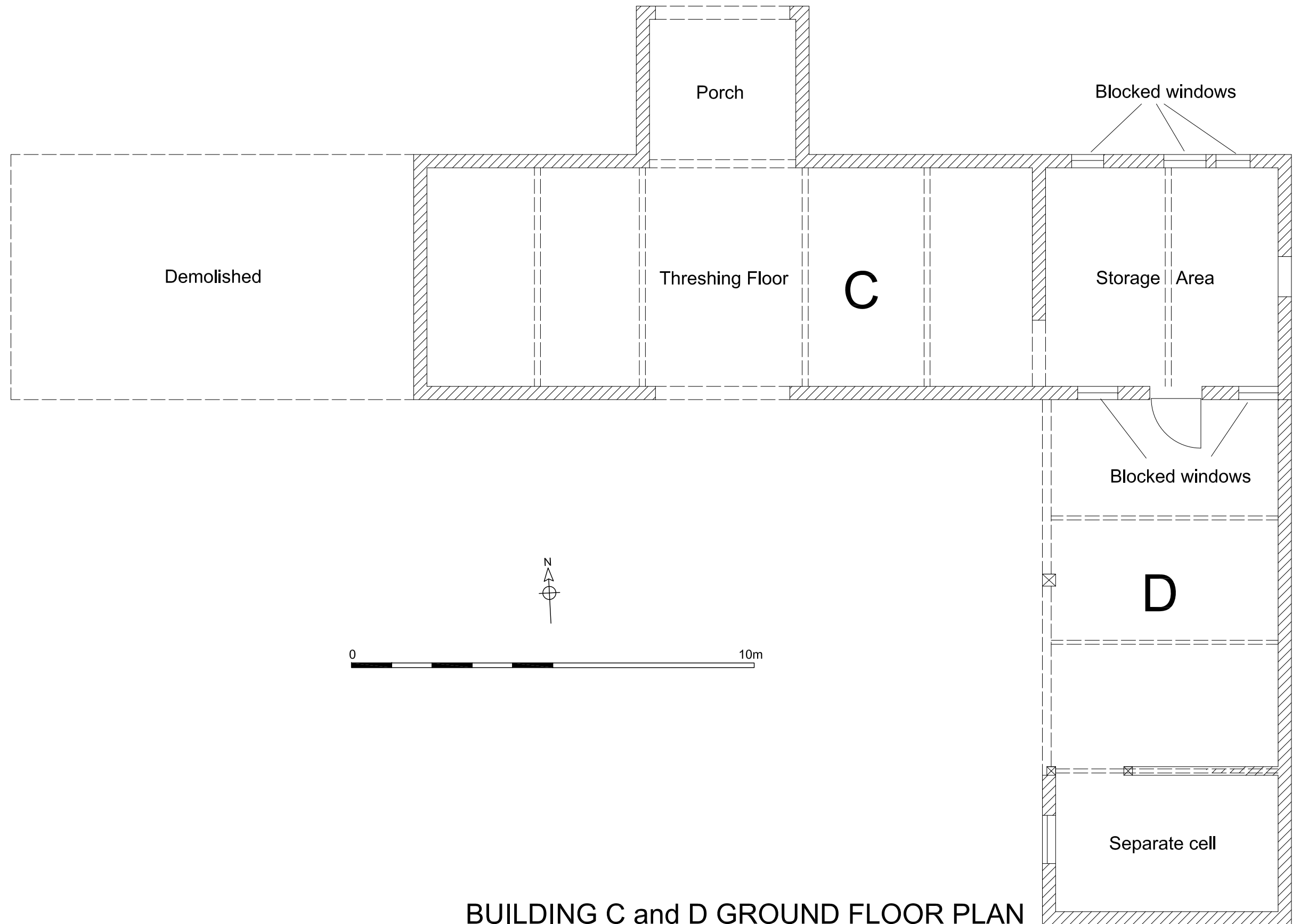


Figure 5. Plans of buildings C and D. Scale 1:100

Figure based on drawings provided by Brown & Co.



Plate 21. Building B interior west cell facing south-west



Plate 22. Building B east cell facing north



Plate 23. Building C facing south-east



Plate 24. Building C south elevation showing sliding doors



Plate 25. Building C groove at the base of southern door



Plate 26. Building C eastern cell north wall



Plate 27. Building C eastern cell, facing south east



Plate 28. Building C roof structure east end

with two more in the southern wall to the east and west of the door (Plate 27). From the evidence of in-filled joist holes in the northern and southern walls it is clear that a first floor has been removed and a third window on the southern wall at first floor level probably fell out of use at this time (Plate 27). This event may also account for the blocking of a rectangular window at the centre of the eastern gable wall at first floor height and another smaller one above the internal doorway of the cross-wall.

The roof is of king post design with diagonal struts rising to each truss. The purlins are carried on the backs of the trusses by cleats or in some cases by the cutting of trenches while each tie beam is attached to the wall by an iron strap (Plate 28). At the western external gable a date stone gave the names and dates 'FS Bevan 1850' and 'William Baxter 1885' (Plate 29).

4.4 Building D

Building D measures 6.18m wide and 4.95m high, projecting under a corrugated iron roof 13m southwards from the southern wall of Building C (Figs 2 and 5, Appendix 2, Plate 30).

It is divided into four bays with the three to the north open to the west, the arcade plate being supported at the centre of these northern bays by a single post (Plate 32). The roof trusses are of simple design consisting of roughly cut tie beams resting upon each wall plate with diagonal struts rising to clasp through purlins (Plate 32). The remainder of the building is of lime render and tarred clay lump on a brick plinth with the exception of the western wall of the southern cell which was composed of concrete blocks above the plinth. The building is being used for storage and what fixtures and fittings may be in place were either hidden from view or have already been removed, however the southern bay has been divided off at the truss to create a small rectangular cell accessed via an internal doorway at the western end of the partition wall. From its appearance it has probably been used as an animal shelter at some point. The erection of Building D certainly post-dated that of C as at least two of the windows on the southern wall of Building C have been obscured by the roof line and eastern wall of Building D (Plate 33).



Plate 29. Inscriptions on west gable of Building C



Plate 30. West elevation of Building D



Plate 31. Building C interior facing east showing rendered walls and wooden floor between opposing doors



Plate 32. Building C facing south



Plate 33. Building D interior facing north, note the blocked window to the right

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Building A

Building A appears to have undergone numerous alterations to both its form and function since its construction in the 17th century and as such it is difficult to offer a definitive explanation for its original use. It is well constructed as its survival for over 300 years testifies and whatever its original function was, it was deemed to be sufficiently important to spend a significant amount of money on it at the time of its construction.

The lack of evidence for original large openings precludes its use as either a cart shed or threshing barn while the present height of the floors is a little low for a stable. It may well have been used for livestock at some stage however its early date makes it unlikely that it was built for sheltering cattle - in the 17th century they would have been more likely to have wintered in the fields. The height of the roof might indicate it found use, at least partially, as a storage barn, perhaps for crops waiting processing, but without further evidence of original openings this view cannot be substantiated. The layout of the farm indicates that such openings are most likely to have been positioned to the north and more detailed analysis might uncover these. It has been suggested (Rose 2004) that the building was converted around 1700 to accommodate a first and second floor and if this were the case the upper floors may have been used as a granary at this time, perhaps with space for cart storage beneath.

Subsequently the flooring at the western end of the building was removed, although reasons for this are unclear, given the floors' beams have been left in place and as a result no extra height has been gained. Overall the structure is a fascinating example of an agricultural building in south Norfolk, built before a preference for brick took over and which has survived numerous adaptations and alterations resulting from the continuous evolution of farming practice.

Building B

The dating of Building B is a little difficult to determine based upon the cartographic evidence as earlier buildings may have been located on the same site; the use of clay lump indicates that the structure is unlikely to date to before the late 18th century. Like Building A, it too has seen alterations and repairs including the substantial rebuilding of the northern elevation, however the housing of livestock seems to be its most likely purpose given its size and the presence of a three-quarter door.

The eastern cell could easily accommodate a cart or other similar equipment and there is no indication to suggest any other purpose. Indeed it has a somewhat opportunistic design and may in fact have been the logical method of infilling a gap between Buildings A and B to create a more useful space.

Building C

Building C has the classic design of a threshing barn with two large central opposing doorways either side of a threshing floor. Such a building type was provided at most farms up until the later 19th century when mechanisation rendered them obsolete.

The freshly harvested crop would enter the building through one of the large entrances on fully-loaded carts to reduce the number of trips to and from the field. The cereal crop could be off loaded and stored in the bays either side of the threshing floor to await threshing. This provided a dry but reasonably well-ventilated space so as to prevent spoilage, although unusually no ventilation loops were recorded in this structure. The crop could be threshed on the wooden threshing floor using flails to loosen the grain. The large doors could be opened to provide light for the work and also to create a through draught for the next stage of processing when the collected grain was tossed in the air (winnowing) which separated the lighter chaff from the grain. In order to reduce the loss of grain out of the doors horizontal wooden boards set into grooves at the base of the jambs were set up across the threshold (the origin of the word). This practice also prevented other farmyard animals from wandering into the barn and consuming and/or spoiling the crop. The purpose of the porch at the northern side of Building C was probably to house the cart after unloading, keeping it ready at hand to take out the next day. The barn has been provided with an additional storage cell at the far eastern end of the structure which evidently had an upper floor prior to its removal.

The dating of the structure is not as obvious as it might seem based on the date stone. It may well originally date to 1850 as shown and replace an earlier L-shaped set of buildings however it appears that at first it was initially constructed as a building that extended approximately 8m longer westwards. The demolition of the western end did not occur until the second half of the 20th century, long after the second date of '1885' shown on the stone. The most likely explanation is that the building constructed by FS Bevan in 1850 was extended westwards by William Baxter in 1885 just before the onset of the agricultural depression that was to last for the next 50 years. After demolition of the west end the date stone was reset within the western gable of Building C.

Building D

Building D retains few of its original fixtures and fittings however based on its design there are two possibilities for its original use. The first is as an implement shed - the same purpose which it currently serves. Its open western face is ideal for storing carts, ploughs and other equipment that need to be sheltered from the elements. However the southern cell appears to have been used for housing livestock to be kept apart from equipment that they may damage and/or injure themselves on. With this in mind it seems more plausible that the building had originally been a shelter shed for cattle with a separate cell at one end for calving mothers or their young. Shelter sheds were often built as an informal way to protect the livestock from the worst of the weather during the winter months. Feed and bedding could be housed within the shed which faced onto an open yard in which the animals could move freely around.

The building's clay lump construction indicates that its construction date is no earlier than the late 18th century and its relationship with Building C suggests a date of post 1850, based on the various window openings it obscures and its dependence upon the large barn for its northern wall.

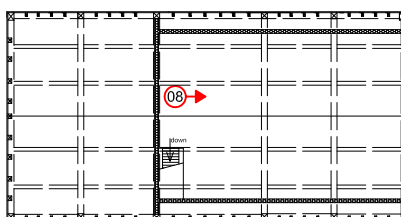
Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by Norfolk Historic Environment Service.

Acknowledgements

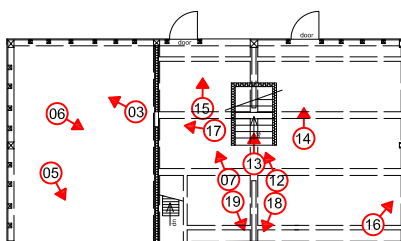
Thanks are due to Mr Alexander for his assistance with access to the buildings and for providing additional light. The fieldwork was carried out by the author, with graphics compiled by David Dobson and editing carried out by Jayne Bown.

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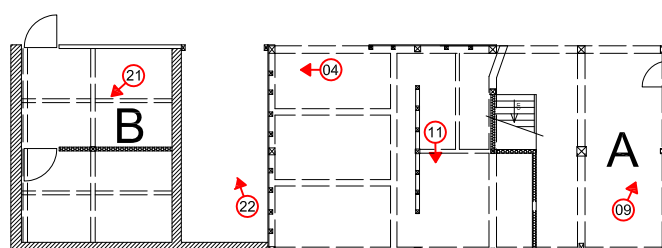
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BUILDING A SECOND FLOOR PLAN



BUILDING A FIRST FLOOR PLAN



BUILDING A and B GROUND FLOOR PLAN

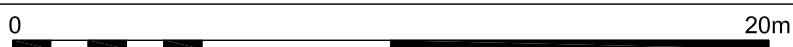


Figure based on drawings provided by Brown & Co.

Appendix 1. Buildings A and B, photo locations. Scale 1:200

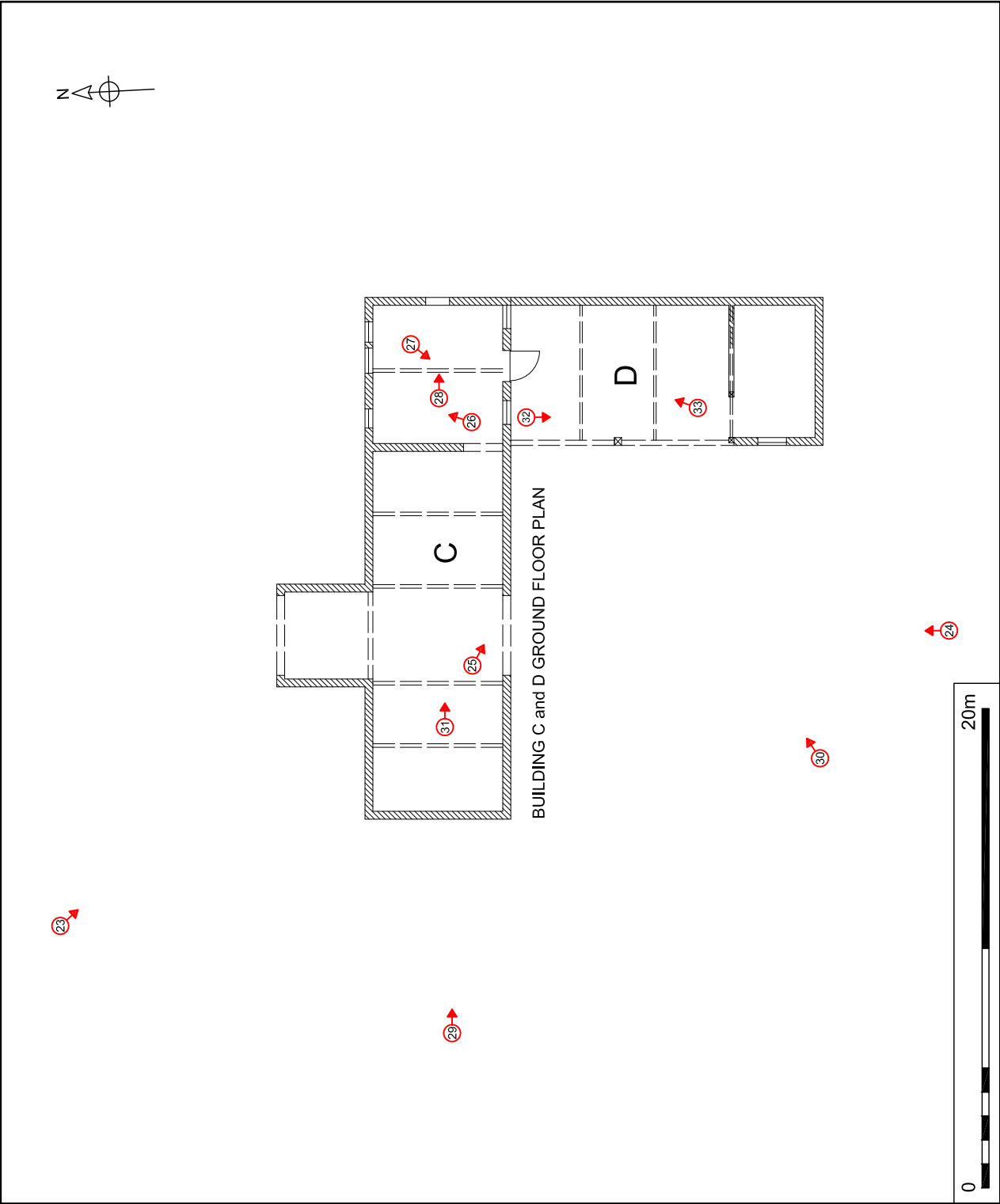


Figure based on drawings provided by Brown & Co.

Appendix 2. Buildings C and D, photo locations. Scale 1:250