



University of  
**Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**

**A Level 3 Historic Building Survey  
of the barn at Riverside Farm, Sysonby,  
Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 738 189**

Sophie Clarke



ULAS Report No. 2014-111  
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**A Level 3 Historic Building Survey  
of the barn at Riverside Farm, Sysonby,  
Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire  
SK 738 189**

**Sophie Clarke**

**For: Edren Homes Limited**

Checked by

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**ULAS Report Number 2014-111 ©2014  
Accession Number X.A84.2014**

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# **A Historic Building Survey of the barn at Riverside Farm, Sysonby, Leicestershire.**

**NGR SK 738 189**

**Sophie Clarke**

## **Summary**

*An historic building survey was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) of the threshing barn at Riverside Farm, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, as part of the conditions placed upon the granting of planning consent for the residential conversion of the listed building. The barn is likely to date to the late 17th or early 18th century and is the only surviving structure of a range of farm buildings associated with Riverside Farm that were listed for group value. The barn is first recorded on the preliminary series Ordnance Survey map of 1816, whilst Riverside Cottage, which had been demolished by the time of the fieldwork, was constructed between 1816 and 1842.*

*The report and archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the Accession Number X.A84.2014.*

## **Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an historic building survey (Level 3) of the barn at Riverside Farm, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (NGR SK 738 189; Figs 1 and 2). Level 3 historic building surveys are defined in the English Heritage guidance document – *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2006). Planning permission has been granted for the residential redevelopment of the former farm buildings (08/00388/FUL & 08/00389/LBC).

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the work is to provide a record and advance knowledge of the historic building, in advance of the proposed redevelopment.

The objectives of the historic building survey are:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of the threshing barn prior to the permitted conversion, as it represents upstanding archaeological/historical remains of local and regional importance.
- To provide a review of the local and regional historical context of the recorded structures, making reference to regional research agendas. This will be adequately detailed to place the findings of the recording in their context and

to be able to inform future conservation decisions and the subsequent management of the structure. This will allow the future interpretation of the building within the context for which it was originally designed and which subsequently evolved.

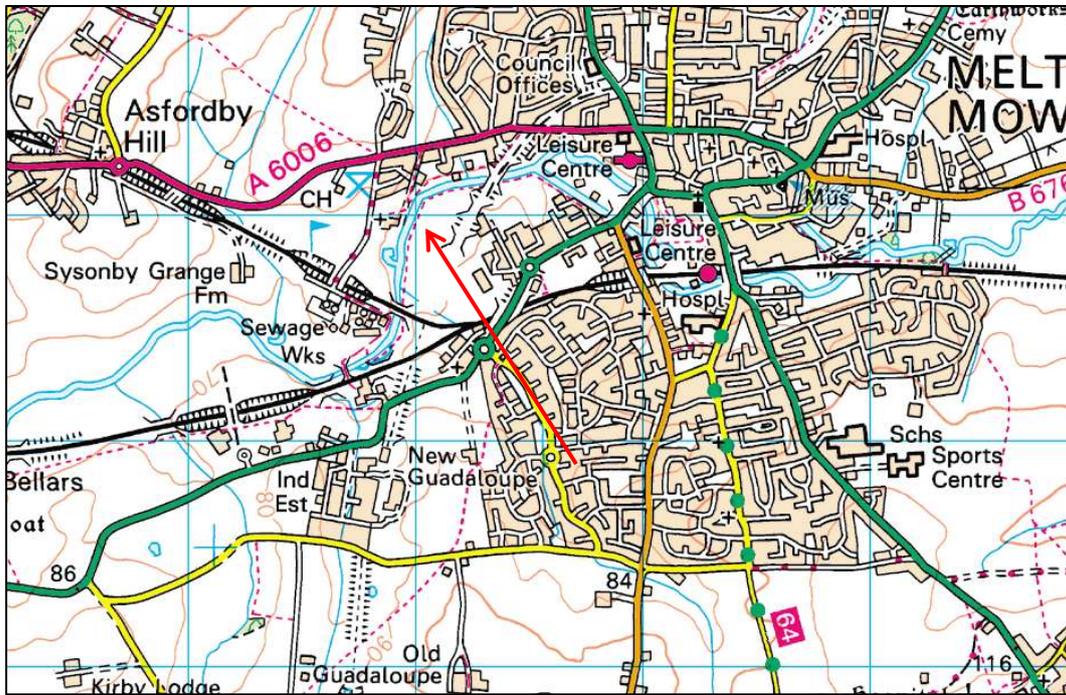


Figure 1. Site Location

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10009495.



Figure 2. Location of threshing barn within site plan (not to scale, supplied by developer).

- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through production of a high quality, fully integrated archive, suitable for long-term deposition.

## **Methodology**

The fieldwork was carried out by Sophie Clarke of ULAS on the 9th June 2014.

Black and white 35mm photographs and digital colour photographs were taken throughout the survey. Notes and sketches were also made and scale site plans supplied by the client were used and modified to suit the purposes of this survey. The specific levels of detail used in the Level 3 survey followed the guidelines laid down in the English Heritage (2006) specification, which were:

### 1. The Written Account:

- The precise location of the building, by name or street number, civil parish, town, etc, and National Grid reference and details of listing or scheduling.
- The date when the record was made, and the name(s) of the recorder(s).
- A statement describing the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given if known.
- An account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout) and its successive phases of development, together with the evidence supporting this analysis.
- An account of past and present uses of the building and its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations. An analysis of any circulation pattern or decorative, iconographic or liturgical scheme.

### 2. Drawn Record:

- Plans (to scale or fully dimensioned) of the building as existing, showing the form and location of any structural features of historic significance (eg blocked doors/windows)
- Measured cross-sections, long-sections, or elevational sections illustrating the vertical relationships within the building
- Measured elevations
- A site plan at 1:500 or 1:1250 relating the building to other structures and related topographical and landscape features
- In each of the above cases, use may be made of available plans (i.e. those prepared as part of a planning application). In all cases these shall be checked by the historic building specialist and supplemented or amended where necessary.

### 3. Photographic Record:

- General view of views of the exterior of the building.
- The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.

- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearance. In the case of a building designed by an architect, or intended to be seen from a certain point of view, it is important to have regard to the builder's intentions and to record the effect of the design or of the building's placing.

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2012) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures* (2010). In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire* (1997) was followed.

## Results

The threshing barn at Riverside Farm is a Grade II listed building, and forms a group with Riverside Cottage, Farmhouse and other farm buildings, along with Sysonby Church and Sysonby Grange Lane. The following listing description has been taken from the English Heritage Images of England website:

<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details/Default.aspx?id=426584&mode=quick>



© Mr Malcolm Sales ARPS ABIPP

IoE Number:426584

Location:BARN AT RIVERSIDE VIEW, RIVERSIDE ROAD  
MELTON MOWBRAY, MELTON, LEICESTERSHIRE

Photographer:Mr Malcolm Sales ARPS ABIPP

Date Photographed:27 May 2001

Date listed:04 February 1976

Date of last amendment:04 February 1976

RIVERSIDE ROAD  
Barn at Riverside View  
SK 71 NW 6/814.2.76.IIGV

1. 5305 RIVERSIDE ROAD Barn at Riverside View SK 71 NW 6/81 4.2.76. II GV 2. C17/early C18. Red brick barn. Steeply pitched roof with high coped gable ends. Riverside Farm, Riverside Farmhouse, Riverside Cottage and Barn form a group with Sysonby Church, Sysonby Grange Lane.

At the time of the site survey, the barn was the only remaining agricultural building formerly associated with Riverside Farm. The Farmhouse has been fully refurbished and was in separate ownership; other farm buildings, including Riverside Cottage (demolished 2013) were no longer present, and works to the barn itself, which is proposed for conversion, had already commenced.

The threshing barn is first recorded on the preliminary series Ordnance Survey map of 1816: although the map does not provide detail, the apparent absence of Riverside Cottage here may indicate that the building was a later addition, constructed on the south side of the barn between 1816 and 1842, when it appears on the Tithe map of that date.

<http://britishlibrary.georeferencer.com/map/GqTJGJTIPjOTO8brBIyE0M/201311111454-2Ki2aT/visualize>

### *Survey Drawings*

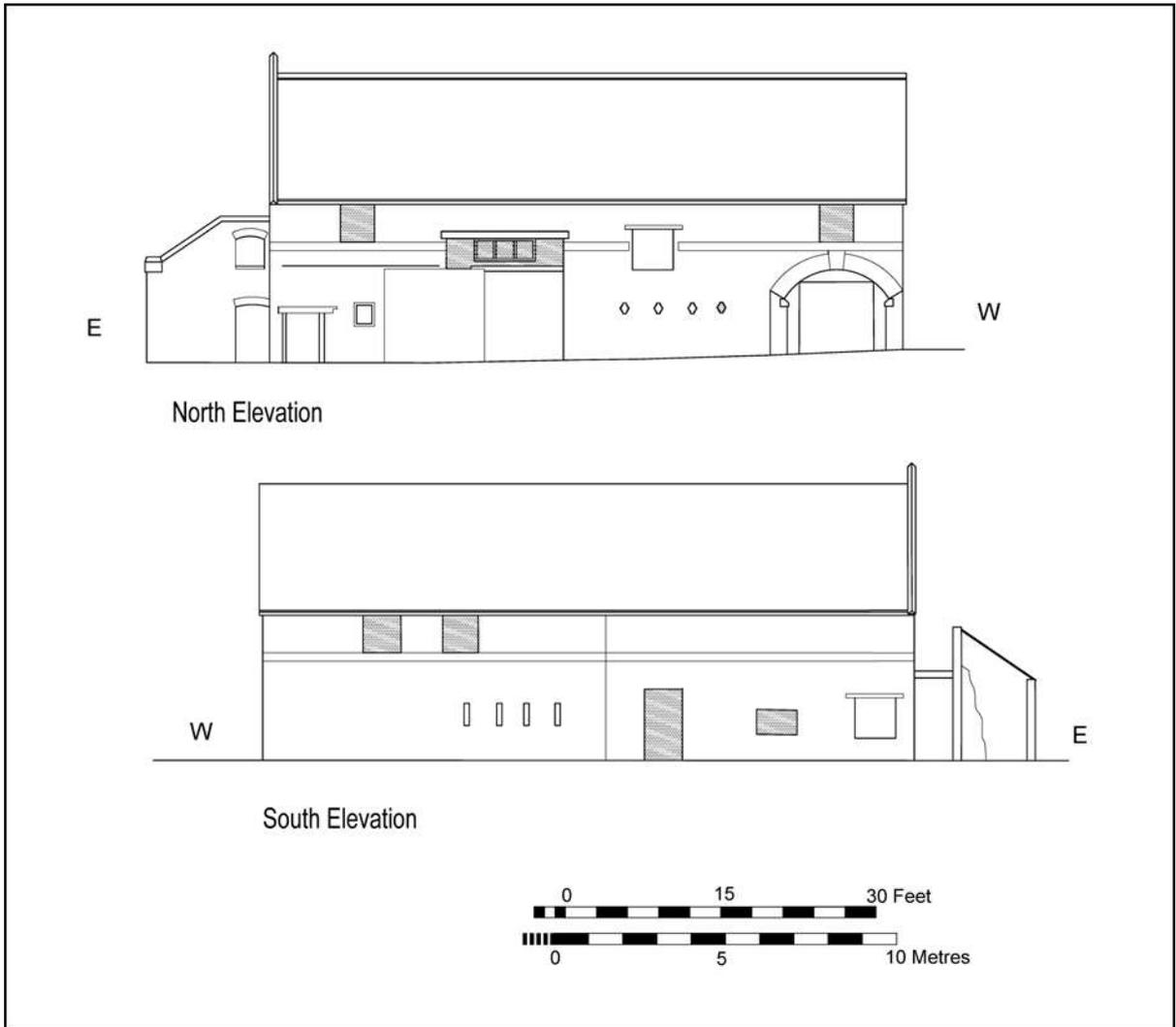


Figure 3. Elevations derived from drawings supplied by David Thompson.

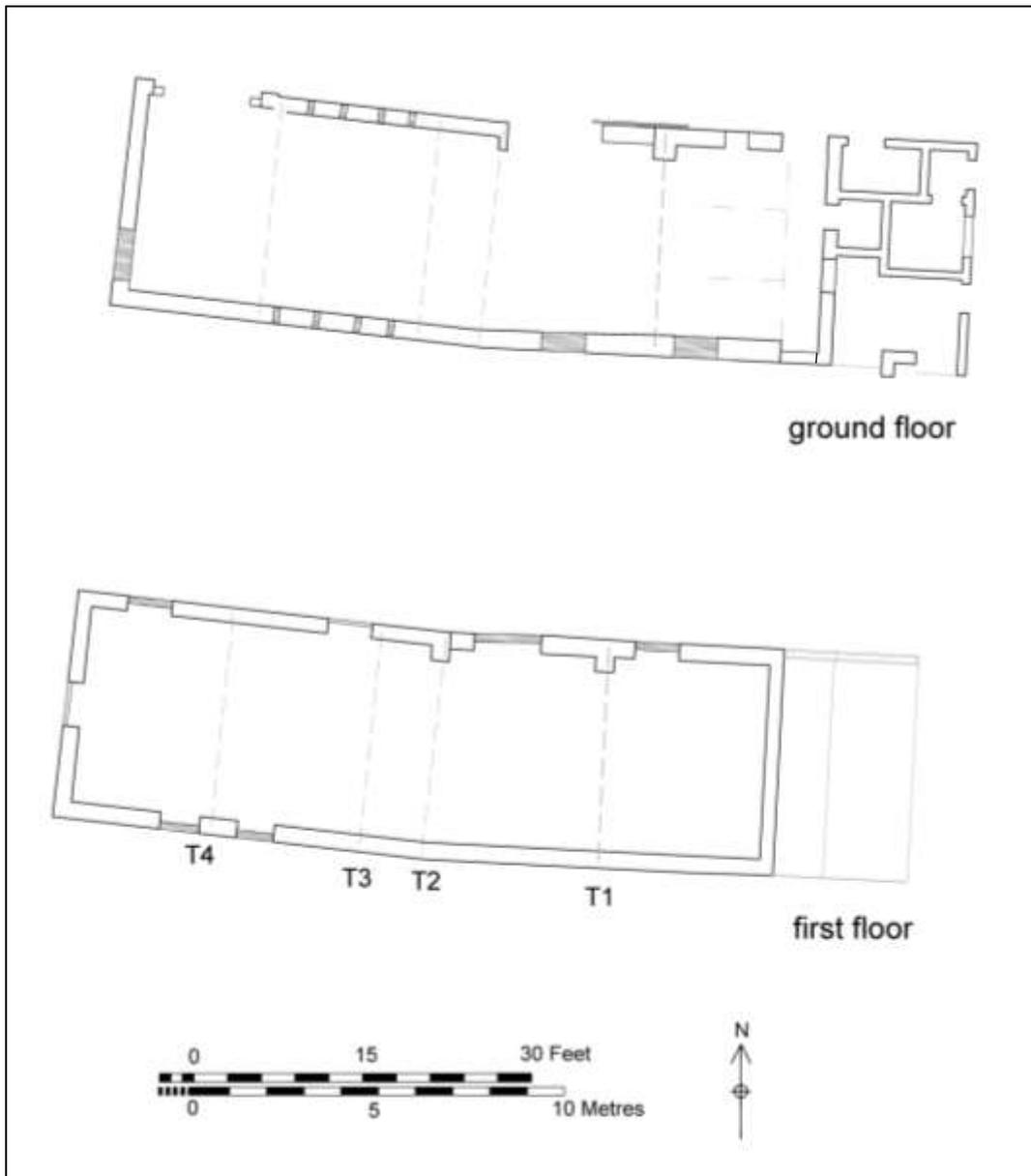


Figure 4. Floor plans, derived from drawings supplied by David Thompson.

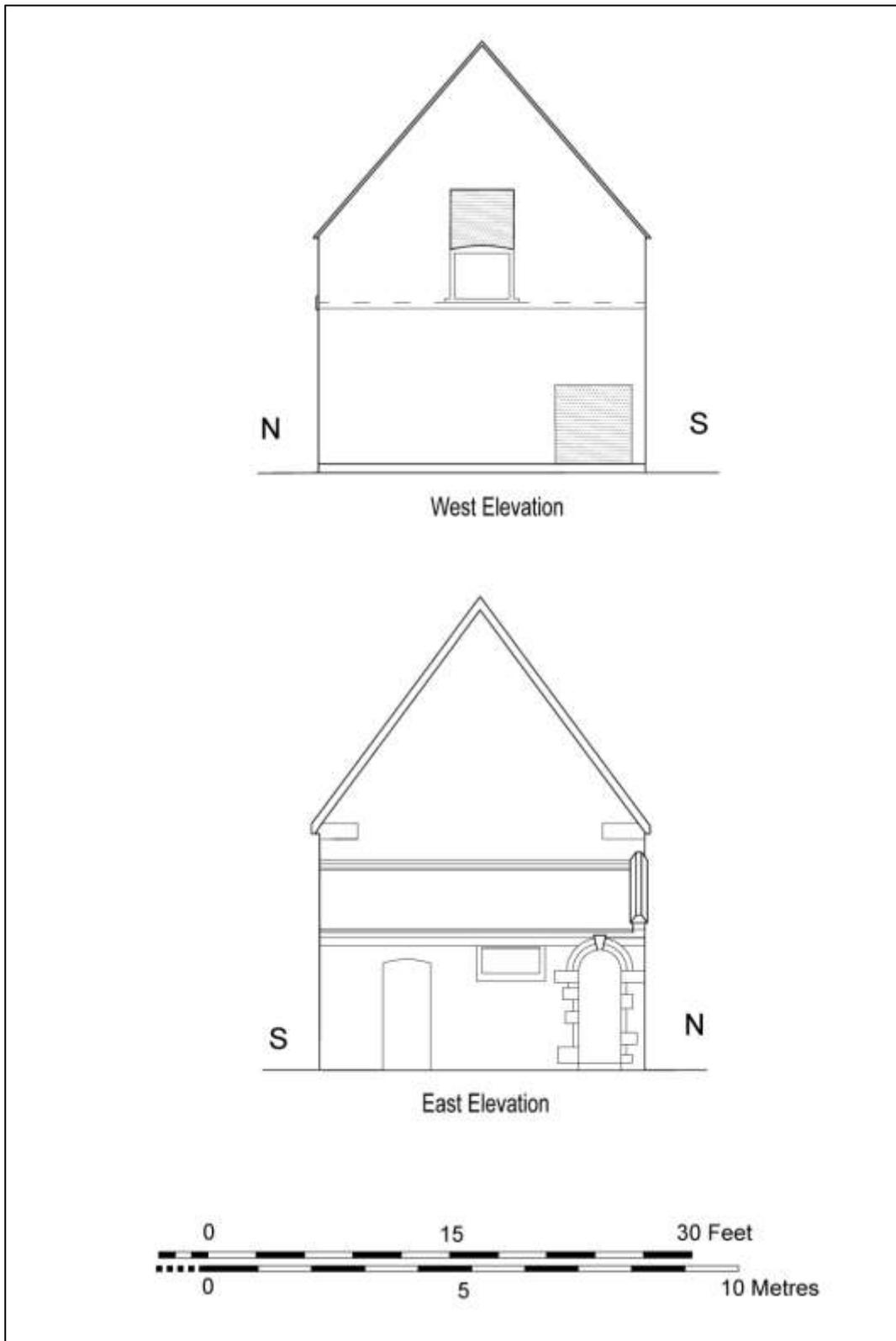


Figure 5. Gable elevations, derived from drawings supplied by David Thompson.

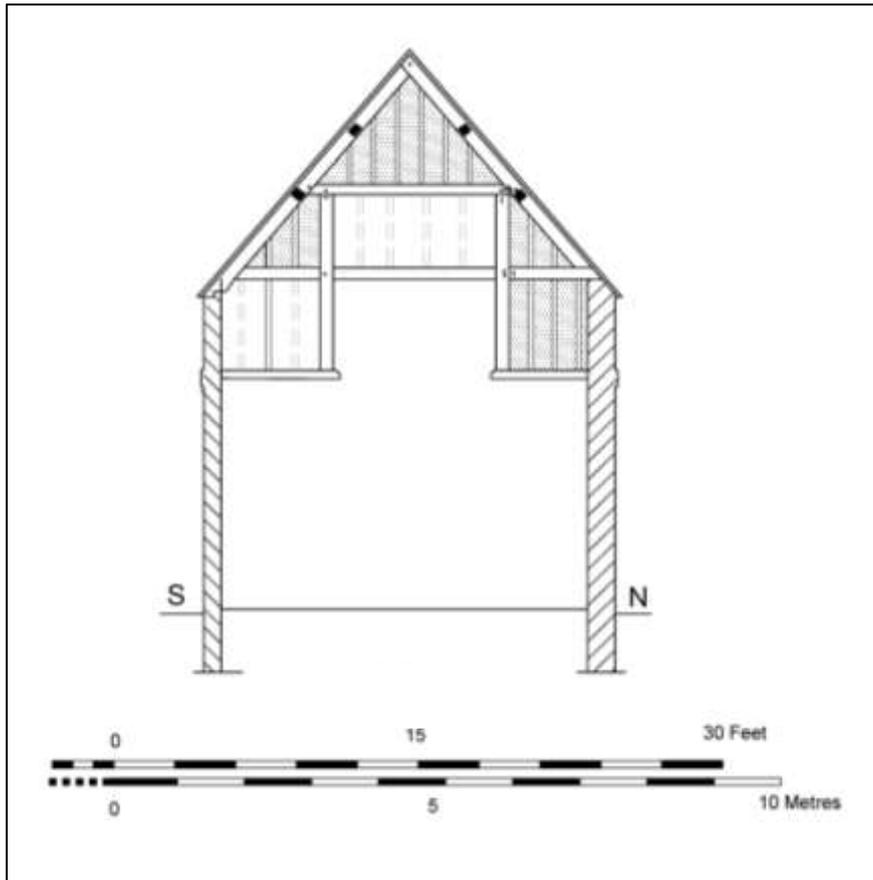


Figure 6. Cross-section through barn, showing Truss 4 (T4 above).

### ***Building Description***

The threshing barn is a large, red brick structure likely to date to *c.*1700, originally of four bays in length and two and a half storeys in height, although internal floors and dividing walls were no longer in place at the time of the site visit. The walls are constructed with handmade bricks, ranging in size from 2 ¼- 2 ½ inches deep, by 4 3/8- 4 ½ inches wide and 9 inches long, which are laid in a variation of Flemish stretcher bond. The roof is capped in Welsh slate, but the steep pitch and presence of the gable parapet at the eastern end may indicate that the roof was formerly thatched.

On the north facing elevation, at the western end there is an arched entrance to a former cart-shed, which was formerly separated from the rest of the barn by a closed truss at the bay division (Truss 4, see below). This bay formerly had a first floor hayloft (now removed), with a door in the gable wall providing external access at first floor level and (blocked) windows to the north and south elevations providing ventilation.

The cart-entrance to the former threshing area is located slightly to the east of the centre of the north-facing elevation, and appears to have been reduced in size at some point during the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. On the south side of the building, directly opposite the cart-entrance, is a smaller winnowing door, now blocked.

Ventilators on the western side of the entrance are decorative on the north-facing farmyard elevation, and plainer to the south.

Internally there are three early principal rafter roof trusses, which are pegged at the apex and supported by a collar. Truss 4 (see survey drawings above) has an interrupted tie-beam, the ends of which are tenoned into vertical struts. These rise from the transverse axial beam of the (now removed) floor structure to support the collar above. Surviving mud infill above the axial beam shows that the truss was partially closed, with the interrupted tie-beam designed to allow access into the former hayloft from the ground floor. Below the level of the axial beam, the truss was closed by an early brick wall, which had been removed by the time of the site survey.

Truss 2 is a later king-post roof truss, probably inserted during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in conjunction with a full-height inserted brick partition wall, which had also been removed by the time of the site survey.

At the western end of the barn, marks in the raised concrete floor indicate the former presence of three cattle stalls, with a feeding passage beyond, crossing through the building via opposing doorways. The doorway to the south is now partially blocked to form a window.

Constructed against the eastern gable end wall is a small, single storey brick structure, which is likely to have been constructed as an addition to the demolished Riverside Cottage, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pigeon holes within the roof space indicate that the building accommodated a dovecote, in addition to other auxiliary facilities, including a surviving privy toilet with enclosed cess pit. The somewhat ornate doorway on the eastern wall, with decorative sandstone quoins and moulded keystone within the brick arch-head, may have provided access into the nesting boxes but no evidence for these survive.

### ***Photographic Survey***

The following digital images have been selected from the site archive in order to illustrate the descriptive text above, and have been located on the ground floor plan.

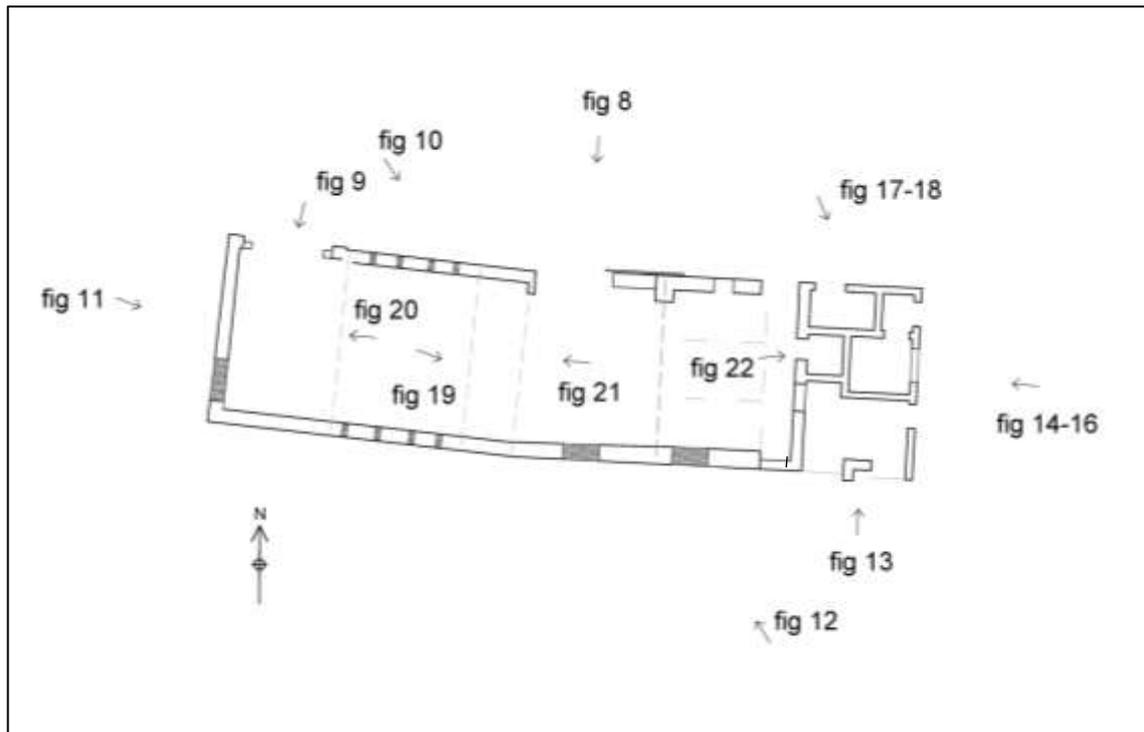


Figure 7. Location of figures 8-22 on ground floor plan



Figure 8. North-facing farmyard elevation, looking south.



Figure 9. Entrance to cart-shed, looking south.



Figure 10. Cart-entrance to threshing area, with ventilators, looking south-east.



Figure 11. West-facing gable-end, looking east.



Figure 12. South-facing elevation, looking north.



Figure 13. Auxiliary structure, with remains of Riverside Cottage, looking north.

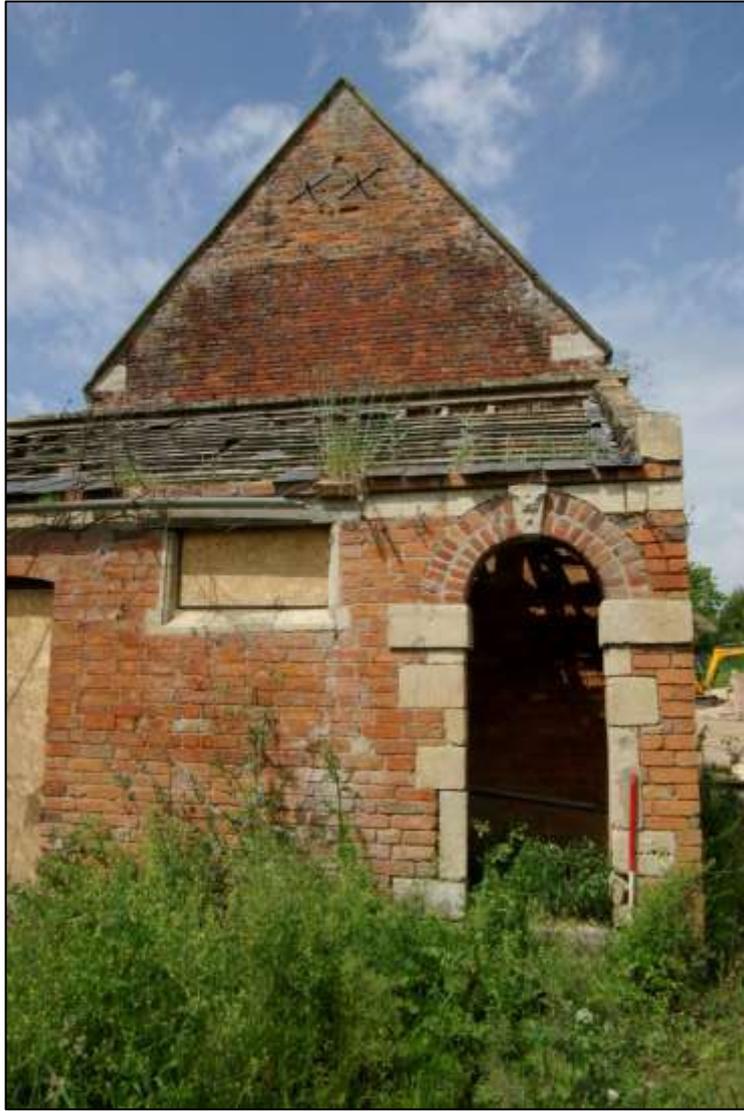


Figure 14. Auxiliary structure against eastern gable end. Looking west.



Figure 15. As above, looking west.



Figure 16. Detail of decorative doorway, looking west.



Figure 17. North facing elevation of auxiliary building. Looking south.



Figure 18. Pigeon holes into nesting boxes, formerly located within roof space. Looking south.



Figure 19. Barn interior, looking east.



Figure 20. Truss 4, looking west.



Figure 21. Barn interior, looking west, with winnowing door on left hand side.



Figure 22. Privy toilet located in auxiliary building, looking west.

### **Archive**

The report and archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the Accession Number X.A84.2014.

The archive consists of:

This report,  
Annotated site plans,  
Contact sheets of 25 digital photographs,  
25 35mm black and white photographs and negatives,  
1 Photographic record sheet, combined black and white and digital,  
Plans showing locations of archived photographs  
CD of this report and the digital photographs.

## Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Historical and Archaeological Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

## Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sophie Clarke, the project was managed by Patrick Clay.

## Bibliography

English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice*. London: English Heritage

Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) 2012, *Code of Conduct*,

Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) 2010, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.

## Oasis Information

Project Name	Riverside Farm, Sysonby, Melton Mowbray
Project Type	Level 2 Building Survey
Project Manager	P. Clay
Project Supervisor	S Clarke
Previous/Future work	Building Survey
Current Land Use	Former farm
Development Type	residential
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	Ongoing
Site Co ordinates	SK 738 189
Start/end dates of field work	09.06.14
Archive Recipient	NCC
Study Area	0.5ha

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