

**Historic Building Survey
of Units A and B, Bindleys Yard,
School Lane, Market Harborough,
Leicestershire**

(NGR SP 732 872)

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Conservation Area Consent: 08/00854/CON

For: Oastlodge Limited

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services was commissioned by architects le1 to undertake an historic building survey of two adjacent brick-built structures within Bindley's Yard, School Lane, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (SP 732 872). The survey has established that the two buildings, identified as Units A and B, both functioned as coach houses, probably associated with the adjacent Talbot Inn.

Unit B, the smaller of the two buildings, was probably constructed in the early 19th century and is shown on John Wood's 1839 map, within a walled enclosure at the west end of a long range of buildings to the rear of number 8 High Street. A carriage arch on its north side (since blocked) opened into Talbot Yard at the rear of the Talbot Hotel (number 9 High Street), one of Market Harborough's principal coaching inns. The building has been extensively altered subsequently, confusing the original layout, including the insertion of a 20th century staircase against the inside of the west wall.

Unit A was constructed on the west side of Unit B in the mid-late 19th century, certainly before 1886 when it is depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey. This is a two-storey coach house, which incorporates an earlier boundary wall between numbers 8 and 9 High Street. The principal elevation, to the south, has a range of five carriage entrances with depressed arch heads on the ground floor. On the first floor there is a loading door above the central carriage entrance, flanked by sash windows over each of the other carriage entrances. The first floor of Unit A may have provided a combination of domestic accommodation and storage space, although the original arrangement of rooms has been obscured by later alterations. A fireplace in the west gable wall suggests a possible domestic use for the room at this end of the building. Similarly, sash windows and a panelled internal door are indicative of domestic refinement. Access to the first floor is via an external staircase and doorway in the west gable wall. A door in the east wall opens onto an inserted staircase within unit B.

Historic map evidence demonstrates that the boundaries and internal layout of the plot within which the two buildings stood altered more than once in the course of the 19th century, possibly reflecting changes in ownership over time. The 1839 map and the 1853 tithe award indicate that the southern part of the plot then belonged to Thomas Garner Grundy, a linen and woollen draper, who is listed in local directories from 1830-1863. The two buildings, occupying the northern part of the plot, were probably associated with the Talbot Hotel, ranked the fifth largest coaching inn in Harborough in 1838, though in this case it is unclear why the principal elevation of unit A was to the south, rather than to the north overlooking Talbot Yard.

The name Bindley's Yard relates to Charles Bindley, builder and plumber, and his family, who owned the yard throughout the latter part of the 20th century.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) was commissioned by architects le1 to undertake an historic building survey of two structures, identified as units A and B, at Bindleys Yard, School Lane, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (SP 732 872). Conservation Area consent (Application no: 08/00854/CON) had been granted for the demolition of these and other buildings within the yard associated with proposals to develop the area for residential and office use.

An archaeological desk-based assessment, including a rapid assessment of the buildings within the yard, had previously been undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS report no: 2008-074), in accordance with a brief issued by Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team. Units A and B were identified in this report as being of historic architectural significance and the Conservation Officer at Harborough District Council subsequently requested the completion of an Historic Building Survey of the two structures, prior to demolition, to Level 2 standard as set out in the English Heritage guidance document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2006). The project was completed in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures*. In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* was followed.

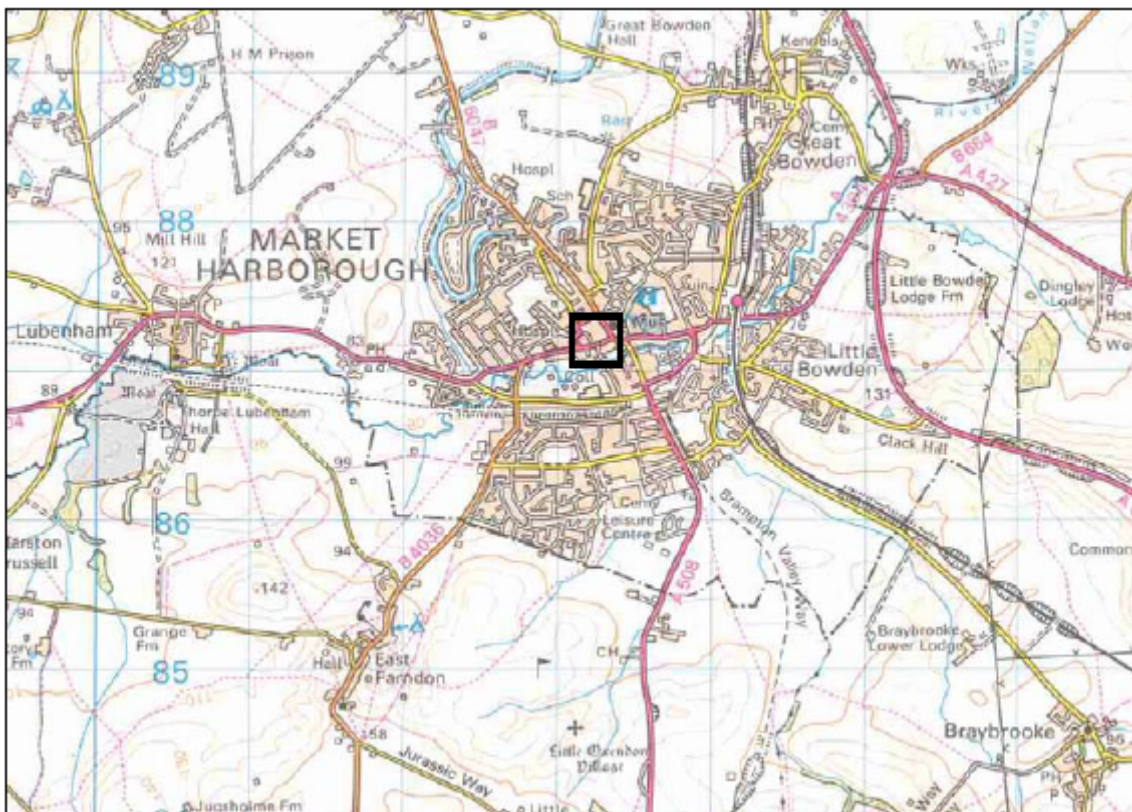


Figure 1
General site location within Market Harborough. Scale 1:50000

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The earlier assessment report differentiated the various built elements within Bindley's Yard using a nominal alphabetical code. The two buildings covered by this survey were identified as Units A and B in the earlier report (*Figure 3*). This identification has been retained here for the sake of consistency. An additional numerical suffix is used to identify internal sub-divisions.

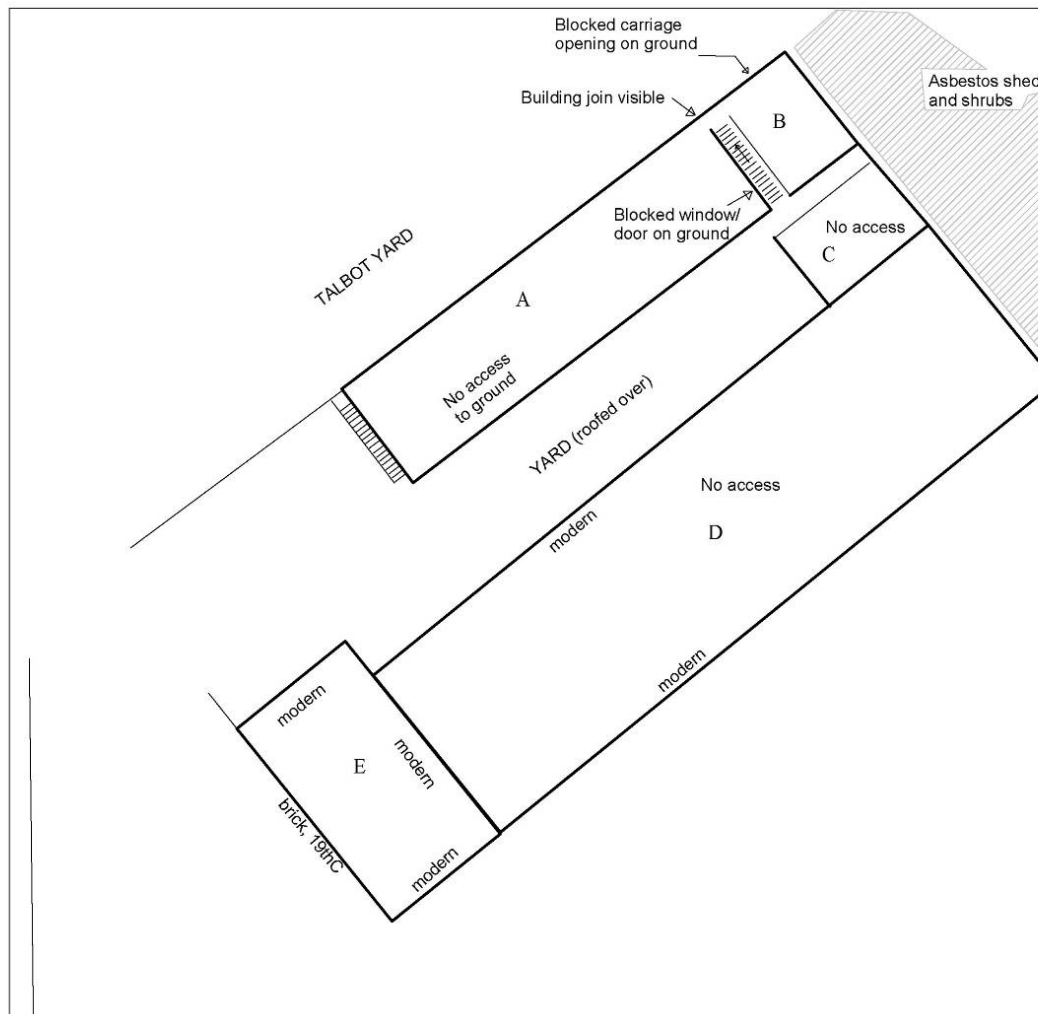


Figure 3
Block plan showing the various built elements within Bindley's Yard.
(after Desk-Based Assessment: ULAS report 2008-074).
Unspecified Scale. North at top.

3. Description of the Buildings

Units A and B occupy the north side of Bindley's Yard, with their north (rear) wall forming the site boundary between this plot and Talbot Yard. The buildings are arranged in a linear plan with Unit A to the west and Unit B to the east. Unit B is almost completely obscured by later buildings within the yard, but its north elevation is visible from Talbot Yard. The courtyard to the south is covered by a partly glazed roof supported on parallel trusses attached to the south front of Units A and B at eaves level and to the building opposite, Unit D (not included in this programme of standing building recording). Units A and B are brick-built and both are covered by a continuous roof of corrugated asbestos cement sheeting that has replaced the original roofing materials.

3.1 Unit A

Unit A is the larger of the two units; it is of two storeys and originally functioned as coach house, possibly with a combination of domestic accommodation and storage on the first floor. It is constructed in red brick, laid in Flemish Garden Wall bond. The bricks, measuring $9\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, are rather soft and some have weathered badly. The ground storey of the principal south elevation (*Figures 8 & 14*) is dominated by five carriage entrances, all originally with depressed arch heads though the central opening has since been modified (see below). There are bull nosed brick piers between the carriage entrances, with chamfered bricks at the top (*Figure 14*). The arches are constructed from two courses of headers. All of the carriage entrances have been blocked in some way, that at the west end has been bricked up and has a modern glazed door, the adjacent arch is also bricked in and has a three light casement window. Interestingly, the bricks used to block the arches are themselves early hand made examples, presumably reused here. The two carriage entrances to the east have recent timber and glazed inserts, one with a double door. The central carriage entrance has been modified, an inserted RSJ replacing the original brick arch. Below this is an inserted door and window. At the west end of the south elevation is an inserted window with a concrete lintel over. At first floor level there are timber sash windows above all but the central carriage entrance. These have chamfered blue brick sills; the later roof over the courtyard obscures any view of the lintels, but there does not appear to be any decoration at eaves level. Above the central carriage entrance there is a door at first floor level, with a projecting modern balcony that is a curious construction of mass-produced wrought iron gates. There is no indication that the doorway is inserted and this appears to be an original opening.

In the north elevation it is apparent that an earlier brick boundary wall, between this plot and Talbot Yard to the north, has been incorporated into Unit A (*Figure 9 & 12*). There is also a low blocked window with timber lintel in this elevation. The west gable wall has an external staircase giving access to a first floor doorway that is located to one side of an internal chimneystack. The stack is supported on the ground storey by internal brick piers.

Internally, the building is very plain with all walls having a painted brick finish (*Figure 16*). The ground floor is divided into three rooms by brick walls that do not extend the full width of the building, leaving an open passage against the front (south) wall. These walls are not tied in to the rear (north) wall but are likely to be original, supporting the first floor structure. Along the rear (north) wall in rooms 1 and 3 there are a number of early wrought iron eyelets and a series of internally projecting buttresses. A modern under-drawn ceiling conceals the first floor structure. Timber beams embedded in the north and south walls at this level presumably support the outer ends of the first floor joists.

The first floor area has been opened up to create a single large room (*Figures 7 & 19*), with the remains of a stud partition wall close to the centre, immediately to the east of the loading door. A fireplace opening in the west gable wall appears to have housed an integral cast iron grate/surround, though this has been removed. In the east wall there is a four-panelled door, opening onto an inserted staircase within Unit B (see below). The provision of a fireplace, sash windows and panelled internal door suggest the first floor may, in part at least, have provided domestic accommodation; in contrast the loading door suggests a storage or other ancillary function.

The trussed rafter roof consists of four approximately equally spaced trusses of similar design, as illustrated in (*Figure 10*). This variant on the king post truss, in which the king post is replaced by an iron rod (Peters' type 5a), came into common use after about 1865 (Peters 1988, 29; Campbell 2000). The purlins are carried on cleats fixed to the principals.

3.2 Unit B

Unit B is a small two-storey building on the east side of Unit A. It is constructed from red brick laid in Flemish Garden Wall bond (brick dimensions: 9 x 4 ½ x 2 ½ inches). The exterior of Unit B is largely obscured from view by later buildings within Bindley's Yard (*Figure 13*) and the north elevation (*Figure 15*), overlooking Talbot Yard, is the only visible external elevation. A wide ground floor opening in this elevation - presumably a carriage entrance - has been blocked and two small windows subsequently inserted. These windows, with concrete lintels over have also been blocked. On the first floor there is a blocked loading door. There is a staggered brickwork joint between Unit B and the boundary wall to the west; and a straight joint between Unit B and the north wall of Unit A (*Figures 9 & 12*), which is constructed on top of the boundary wall. The west wall of Unit B is visible from inside the later Unit A (*Figure 15*); there are two blocked openings at ground floor level in this wall. The opening to the south, with a segmental arched head, was a doorway that may have been blocked when the concrete staircase was inserted against the inside (east) face of this wall (see below). The second doorway, to the north, also now blocked, may have been created at that time to provide an alternative access. Internally, there is a single room on each floor and a 20th century concrete staircase against the inside face of the west wall. The conflict with the blocked arch-headed doorway in the west wall suggests that this staircase is not a replacement for an earlier stair in the same position; no evidence was seen to indicate the location of an earlier staircase and first floor access may originally have been by ladder. Internal wall finishes are painted brick. An un-chamfered axial beam supports the first floor joists, which are obscured by a modern underdrawn ceiling. The cut end of the axial beam is seen part way up the inserted staircase (*Figure 18*). At the top of the stairs a door to the east opens into the first floor room of Unit B (a door on the west side opens into Unit A). The blocked doorway in the north wall has been noted above; there is no indication of former openings in the east wall. The south wall has been removed to create a larger first floor room incorporating space within a later addition on the south side. The remaining wall-plate (*Figure 20*) indicates the earlier wall line; this appears to be a reused timber. The roof structure is entirely obscured.

4. Chronology

The chronological development of the various built elements can be established with reference to the structural sequence, historic map evidence and documentary source material. The earliest map of Market Harborough, Samuel Turner's map of c.1776, which was added to by Rowland Rouse and eventually published by John Nichols in 1804, shows no buildings within the development area (ULAS report 2008-074, 6, Fig. 3; Mullins and Glasson 1985, 10). John Wood's map published in 1839 (*Figure 4*) shows a small, near-square building within a walled enclosure at the west end of a long range of buildings to the rear of number 8 High Street. This may be reasonably equated with Unit B, indicating a construction date between c.1776 and 1839. Although a lack of diagnostic architectural detail precludes closer dating based on the fabric evidence, historical sources indicate that the population of Market Harborough increased significantly in the early 19th century and extensive new development

occurred within burgage plots to the rear of properties along the principal streets, including High Street, in the 30 year period between c.1810-1840 (Mullins and Glasson 1985, 12).



Figure 4
John Wood's Map of 1839. Development area outlined.

A construction date in the early decades of the 19th century therefore seems most likely for Unit B. Based on the fabric evidence this appears to have been a free-standing structure (as opposed to a further bay of the adjacent building to the east), as is also suggested by its location within a separate walled enclosure on the 1839 map. Building A appears on the first edition Ordnance Survey map published in 1886, indicating a construction date between c.1839 and 1886. Based on the type of roof trusses used in the building it is likely to have been constructed in the latter half of that period: J.E.C. Peters' study of post-medieval roof trusses in farm buildings in Staffordshire suggests that this type came into common usage after c.1865 and they seem to have appeared in Norfolk farm buildings around the same time (Peters 1988, 29; Carter and Wade-Martins 1987, 36). An existing brick-built boundary wall was evidently incorporated into the north side of Unit A and this is presumably the wall illustrated on the 1839 map, between this plot and Talbot Yard to the north. The relative chronology of the three built elements: Unit A, Unit B and the boundary wall is illustrated in the north elevation (*Figure 9*). Various alterations were made to both buildings over the course of the 20th century and the development of the site more generally is indicated with reference to subsequent Ordnance Survey map editions (see ULAS report 2008-074).

5. Discussion

Market Harborough seems to have been established as a planned town, probably in the mid 12th century. It was sited along an important route between Leicester and Northampton at a ford across the River Welland, equidistant between the two county towns. It served a market function throughout the medieval period but still retained an essentially rural character until the early 18th century. Analysis of probate inventories, for example, shows no significant

difference in the character and usage of burgage plots within the town compared with the surrounding villages. Harborough also provided services and accommodation to travellers on the busy Leicester to Northampton road during the medieval period.

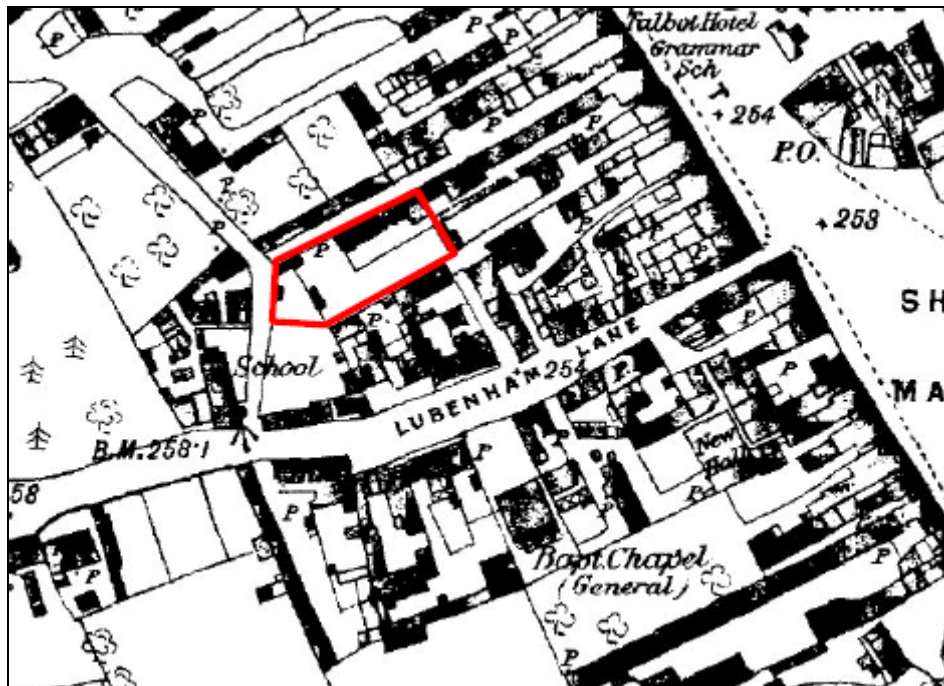


Figure 5

Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey map published 1886.
Development area outlined.

In the 17th century this route began to eclipse the older route via Welford (the modern A50) and servicing road traffic became an increasingly important aspect of Harborough's commercial life. By 1791 innkeepers or victuallers were more numerous and more prosperous than any other individual trade in the town. The Talbot Inn was ranked the fifth largest coaching inn in Harborough in 1838. The grade II listed inn has an 18th century façade but includes earlier, timber-framed elements. The yard behind the Talbot provided stabling, accommodation for coaches and a malthouse at the back of the plot (Mullins and Glasson 1985). A former stable block within Talbot Yard, immediately to the north of the current development site, was the subject of a recent recording exercise, prior to conversion for mixed residential and commercial use (ULAS report 2008-047).

Bindley's Yard is located immediately to the south of Talbot Yard and it seems likely that both of the buildings surveyed in the course of this project were associated with the Talbot Inn. Unit B, the earlier building, formerly had a wide opening in its north elevation, opening into Talbot Yard and this may have functioned as a carriage house accommodating a single carriage, with storage/loft over. Unit A, a substantial two storey coach house, could accommodate five coaches with domestic accommodation and/or storage on the upper floor. If Unit A was associated with the Talbot Inn, as seems likely, it is unclear why the principal elevation faced south, rather than to the north overlooking Talbot Yard. This may be linked to the decision at some stage to re-route coaches, via a back lane (now School Lane), directly to the rear of the yard, rather than through the original coach arch from High Street. The building on the west side of School Lane, directly opposite the yard, has a chamfered corner to its lower storey presumably to facilitate the turning of coaches into the yard.

6. Archive and Publication

The site archive consists of

2 A2 permagraph sheets containing plan, elevation & section drawings, plus site notes
70 Monochrome photographic negatives
2 A4 contact sheets
CD containing 70 colour digital images
A4 Photo Index Sheet
Paper building plans supplied by client
Unbound Copy of This Report (ULAS Report Number 2009-002)

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the Accession Number X.A149.2008

A version of the summary (above) will be published in *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

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8. Photographic Index

Digi	B&W	Unit/Room	Description
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002	002	A	First floor, general view, looking west.
003	003	A	First floor, general view, looking east.
004	004	A	First floor, general view, looking east.
005	005	A	First floor, chimney breast in west gable wall.
006	006	A	First floor, chimney breast in west gable wall.
007	007	A	Roof construction.
008	008	A	Roof construction.
009	009	A	Window detail.
010	010	A	Window detail.
011	011	B	Reused beam.
012	012	B	Reused beam.
013	013	B	First floor, general view, looking north.
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016	016	B	Blocked opening in rear wall.
017	017	A	First floor, panelled door in east wall.
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022	022	B	Axial beam showing in stair wall.
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028	028	A	West part of south elevation.
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036	036	B	Limited view of south front elevation.
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038	038	B	Limited view of east elevation.
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042	042	A1	Ground floor interior, general view, looking west.
043	043	A2	Internal south front wall & lintel.
044	044	A2	Internal south front wall & lintel.
045	045	A3	General view, looking east.
046	046	A3	General view, looking east.
047	047	A3	General view, looking west.
048	048	A3	General view, looking west.
049	049	A3	Blocked openings in east wall.
050	050	A3	Blocked openings in east wall.
051	051	A3	Timber at first floor level

052	052	A3	Timber at first floor level
053	053	A1	Original tether eyes? in north wall
054	054	A1	Original tether eyes? in north wall
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056	056	A	Exterior of west gable wall.
057	057	A/B	North elevation, general view.
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061	061	A	North elevation.
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065	065	B	Oblique view of blocked carriage entrance, north wall.
066	066	B	Oblique view of blocked carriage entrance, north wall.
067	067	B	Unusual repair of north gable wall.
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069	069	A	Blocked window in north wall.
070	070	A	Blocked window in north wall.

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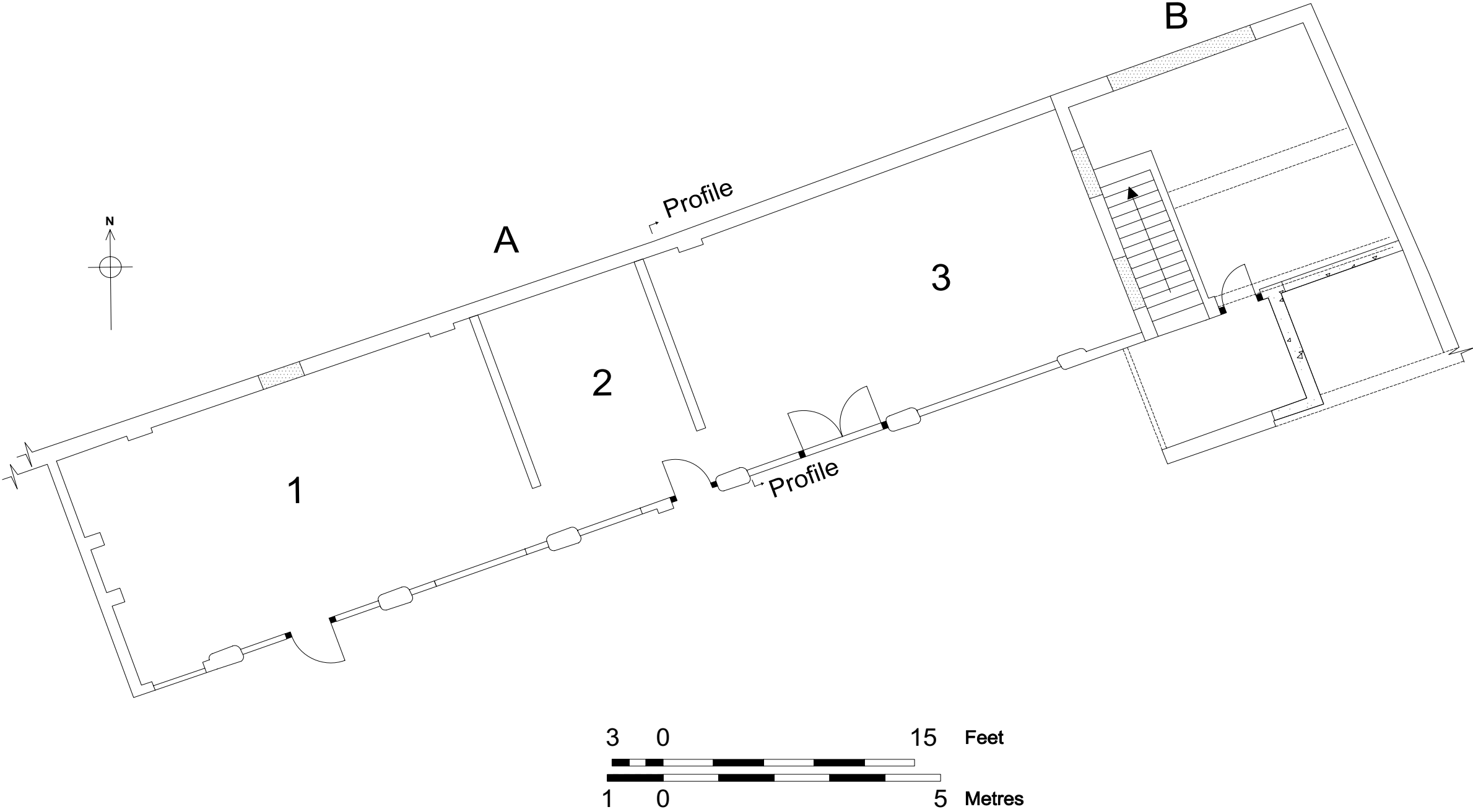


Figure 6 Ground Floor in Plan.

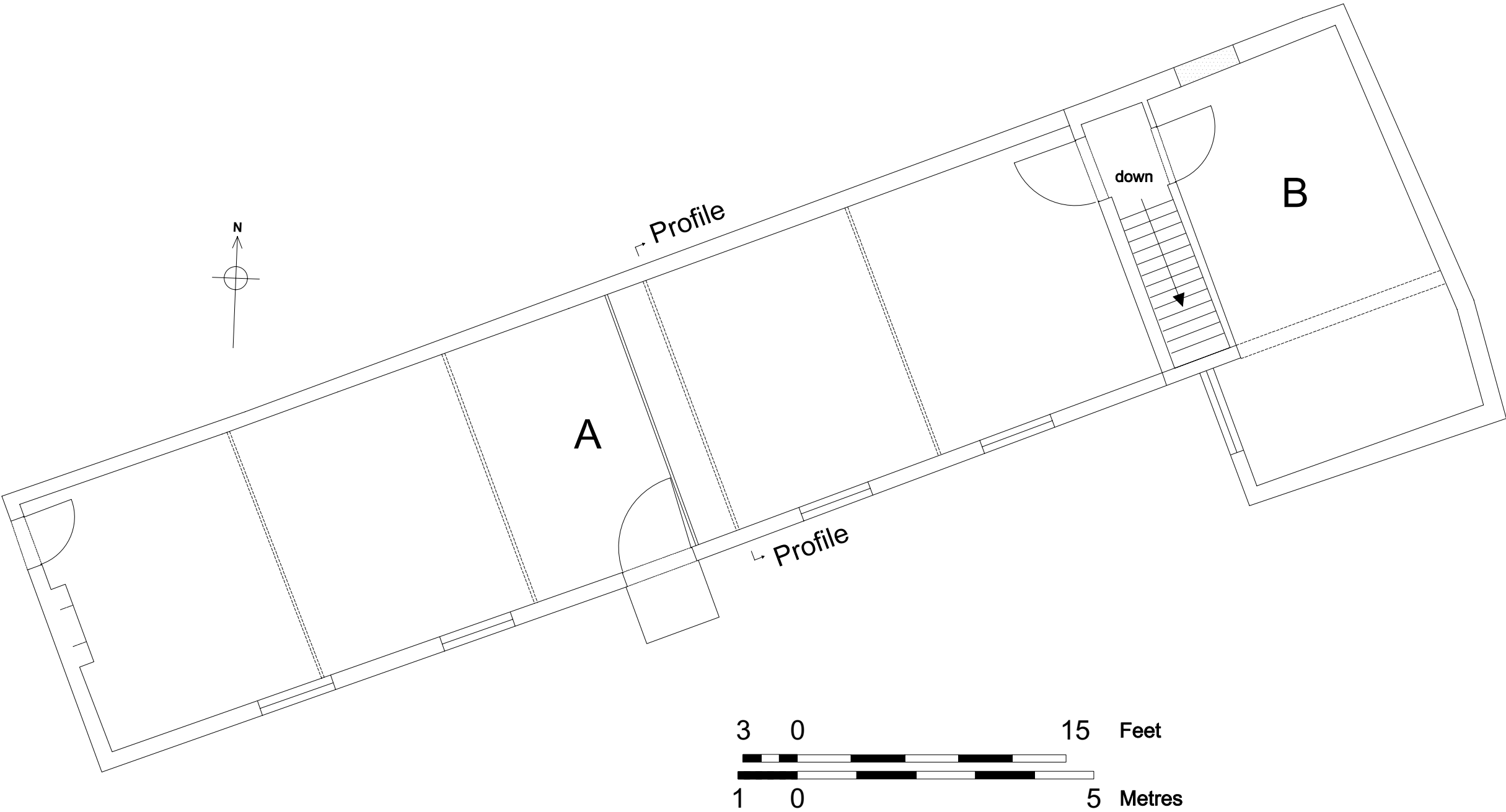


Figure 7 First Floor in Plan.

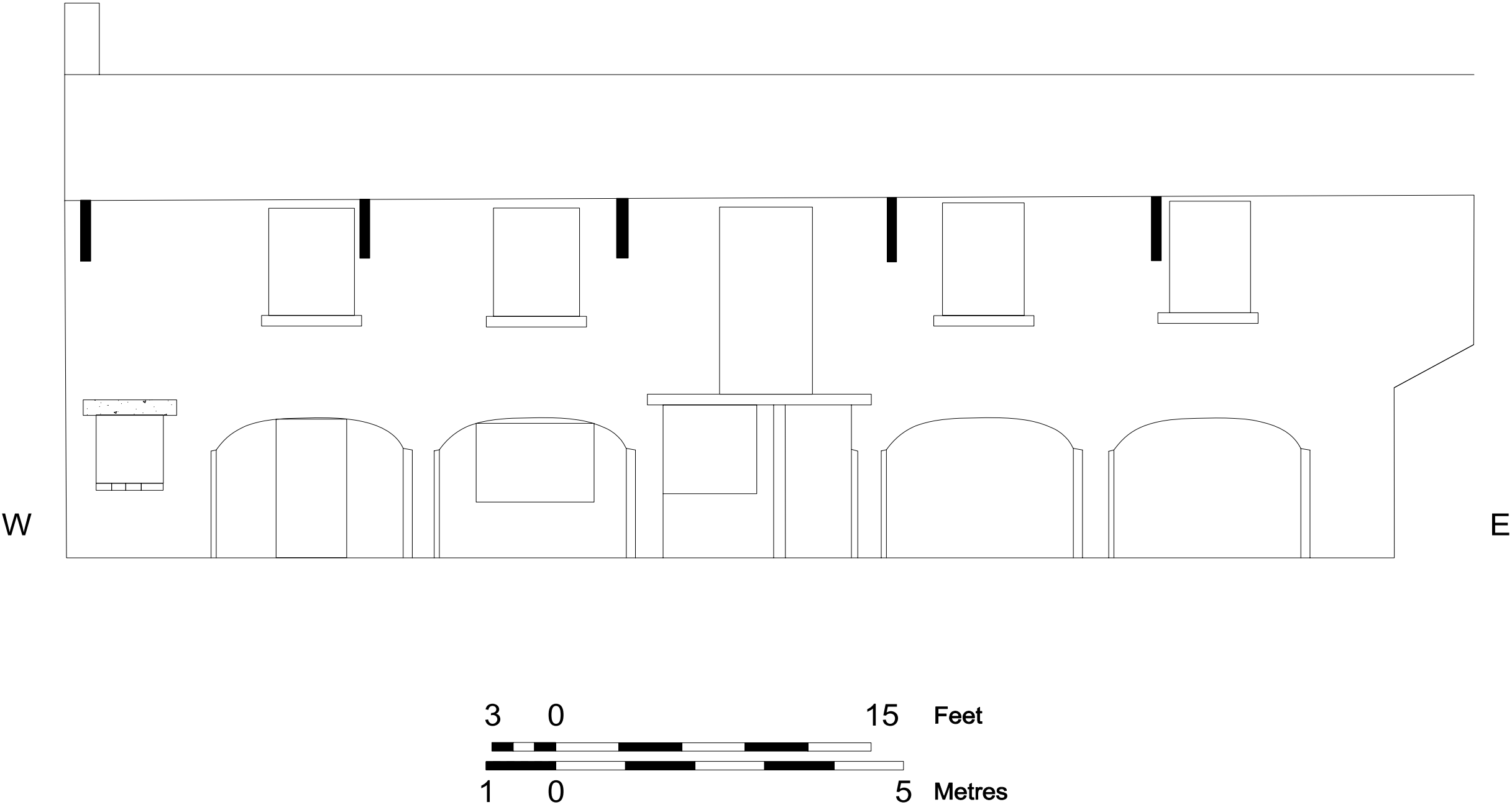


Figure 8 Front Elevation.

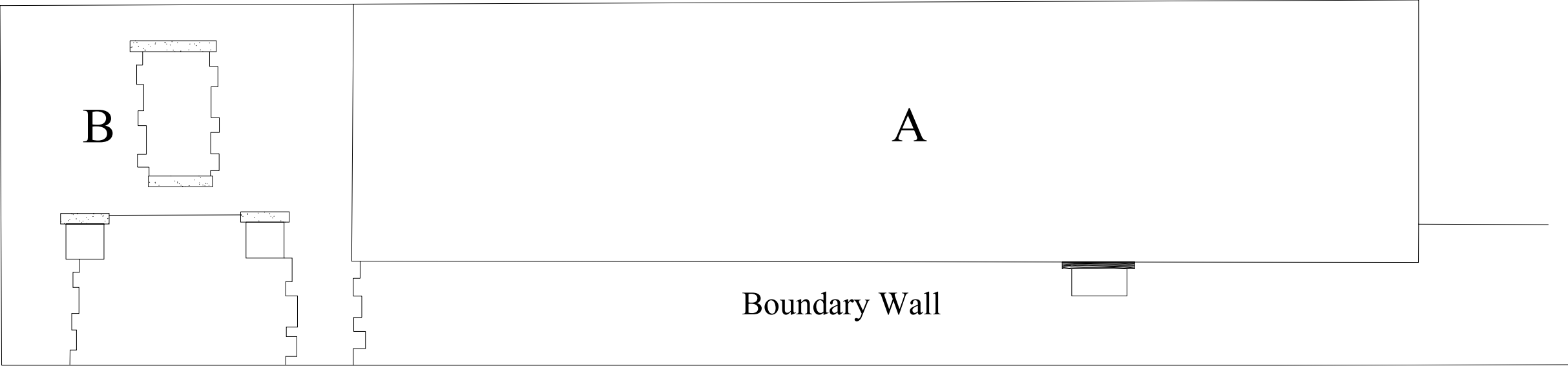


Figure 9 Sketch of Rear Elevation Showing Major Events (Not to Scale).

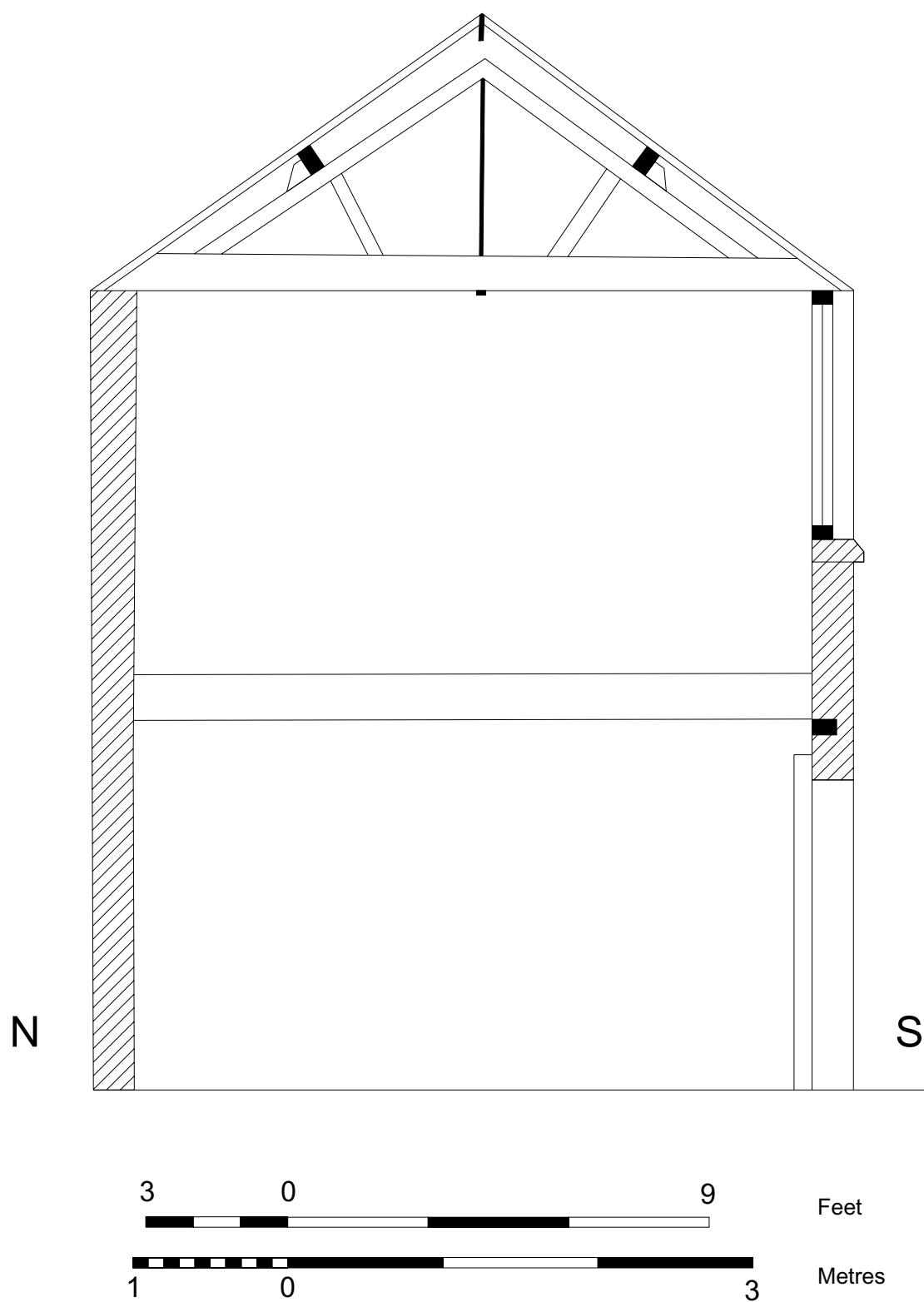


Figure 10 Profile Unit A.

Colour Plates



Figure 11 Unit A Front (South) Elevation.



Figure 12 Unit A & B Rear (North) Elevation.



Figure 13 Unit B Limited View of Front (South) Elevation.



Figure 14 Detailed View of Carriage Entrance.



Figure 15 Unit B Detailed View of Rear (North) Elevation Showing Blocked Openings.



Figure 16 Unit A Ground Floor Internal.



Figure 17 Unit A Blocked Openings in Right Hand (Eastern) Gable.



Figure 18 Unit B Axial Beam Seen in Stair Wall



Figure 19 Unit A First Floor.



Figure 20 Unit B Wall Plate Showing Position of Original Wall.