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# Farm Buildings at Greens Yard High Street, Compton West Berkshire

Historic Building Record



Ref: 103440.01  
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**Farm Buildings at Greens Yard  
High Street  
Compton  
West Berkshire**

**Historic Building Record**

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# **Farm Buildings at Greens Yard High Street Compton West Berkshire**

## **Historic Building Record**

### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Persimmon Homes Thames Valley, to create a Historic Building Record of a number of redundant farm buildings at Greens Yard, High Street, Compton, West Berkshire. The work was commissioned as part of a planning application for the redevelopment of the site to create 25 residential units with ancillary buildings and access from the High Street.

The scheme will involve the demolition of all of the existing buildings on the site with the exception of the former farm buildings known as the Coach House, Manor Barn, and Old Bank, which are to be retained for conversion and alteration.

The archaeological work consisted of a site survey and photography of the three buildings mentioned above, in addition to a fourth building, the 'Workshop', which will be demolished as part of the development. This was augmented by a detailed background search for available historic maps and documents at the Berkshire Record Office. Existing client supplied plans and sections of the Coach House and Manor Barn have also been used to create a lasting record of the structures in their present condition.

Background research indicates that Greens Yard was historically once two large separate farms: Green Farm and Manor House Farm. The earliest sources consulted suggest that both farms were late medieval in origin and, in the case of Manor Farm, possibly earlier. Map evidence from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century has shown that these farms consisted of tithe barns, houses, ponds and associated features. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the Coach House was moved and re-built in its present position. Manor Barn was built as a large brick stable, possibly replacing an earlier stable, with sling-braced roof trusses.

It was not until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that significant changes took place on the site. Green Farm and Manor Farm were bought in 1937 by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC). The ARC continued to acquire land and expanded its operations and this involved redeveloping the two farm yards with the demolition of a tithe barn and other farm buildings. The Old Bank was probably constructed after WWI and the other buildings gradually adapted for use as garages, store and offices. Although constructed on the site of an earlier building, the present Workshop appears to be early 20<sup>th</sup> century in date, comprising a large steel-framed shed, clad in corrugated iron sheeting and with a vented roof ridge. The presence of vents and tall sliding doors on the east side suggests that the building may have housed steam-driven traction engines and or other agricultural vehicles.



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The site survey was undertaken by Bob Davis and Grace Flood. This report as compiled by Bob Davis and the illustrations prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Matt Rous.





# Farm Buildings at Greens Yard High Street Compton West Berkshire

## Historic Building Record

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Persimmon Homes Thames Valley to create a Historic Building Record (HBR) of four redundant farm buildings at Greens Yard, High Street, Compton, West Berkshire (hereafter “The Site”). The work was commissioned as part of a planning application (ref: 11/01159/XOUTMA) for the redevelopment of the Site to create 25 residential units with ancillary buildings and access from the High Street.

1.1.2 The scheme will involve the demolition of all of the existing buildings on the site with the exception of the farm buildings known as the Coach House, Manor Barn and Old Bank which are to be retained for conversion and alteration. A fourth building, the Workshop, which will be demolished as part of the development, was also included in the scope of the survey.

1.1.3 In granting the planning permission West Berkshire Council (WBC) asked for certain conditions to be satisfied prior to the commencement of the conversion works to ensure that the historic farm buildings were adequately recorded, and that historic information was not destroyed as part of the development process. Condition 26 of the planning permission states that:

*No demolition/ site works/ development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To ensure that an adequate record is made of these farm buildings of historic interest. In accordance with Policy CS 19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 and advice contained within the NPPF.*

1.1.4 The former Archaeological Officer of WBC (Duncan Coe) requested for the buildings to be recorded to *Level 2* as defined in the document: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006). Following consultation in January 2014, a detailed historical and archaeological background was also required to enable an understanding of the development of the farm complex.

1.1.5 The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2014) which was submitted to and approved in advance of the work by the Archaeological Officer of WBC.



## 1.2 Site location and description

- 1.2.1 The site is located within the village of Compton in West Berkshire and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) 451917, 179995 (**Figure 1**). The site formed part of the Institute for Animal Health (IAH) which occupies a large area of land on the north side of High Street. The south-east corner of the site, containing the four buildings subject to this report contains a mixture of building types and styles that formed part of the IAH's infrastructure. These include a number of mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural buildings situated alongside some older buildings, which once formed part of the earlier farms.
- 1.2.2 The area is generally flat with a mixture of concrete hard standing tracks and grassed areas. Laurel hedging had been planted for screening purposes and recent metal security fencing used to delineate the site boundary.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims and scope

- 2.1.1 The principal aim of the project, as set out in the WSI was to provide a descriptive record (English Heritage *Level 2*) of these historically significant farm buildings which will be subject to conversion, alteration or demolition so they are 'preserved by record'.

### 2.2 Photographic record

- 2.2.1 Digital photography was carried out using a Canon 5D MkII Full Frame camera with a 21 megapixel capability. General views as well as details of significant historic features were taken of each of the four buildings as well as other structures on the site.
- 2.2.2 A selection of these images is used to illustrate this report (**Plates 1-28**).

### 2.3 Drawn record

- 2.3.1 Accurate measured and drawn floor plans of the Manor Barn and Coach House had previously been captured and were supplied by the Client to Wessex Archaeology for reproduction within this report.
- 2.3.2 The Old Bank and Workshop were surveyed to create accurate orthographic floor plans of each building. This was undertaken using a Leica Disto™ combined with traditional hand-measuring techniques, which were recorded in real time onto a Motion Tablet PC running AutoCAD software.

### 2.4 Documentary record

- 2.4.1 A detailed search was undertaken at the Berkshire Record Office and online for cartographic and documentary information relating to the site. The sources consulted are shown in section 6.

### 2.5 Site visit

- 2.5.1 The site survey was carried out on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and a visit to the Berkshire Record Office was made on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014.



### 3 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The manor of Compton is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 and was formerly held by Edward the Confessor. The estate remained with the Crown until the reign of Henry II (1135-54) who made a grant of Compton to Gilbert de Crispin. During the later medieval period, Compton was divided into three manors: West Compton (the present village), East Compton (the area around the church) and Ashden, although the settlement around East Compton later dwindled during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the early 14<sup>th</sup> century West Compton became joined with the manor of Hampstead Norreys before reappearing as Stokes Compton (or Stocking Compton) in 1506-7, which was held by William Norreys (British History online). Later it became Compton Parva (or Little Compton).
- 3.1.2 During the medieval period the open field system flourished around West Compton. From local field names it appears that there were four or more common fields, each of which was divided into strips cultivated by different tenants. The surrounding downland was used for sheep and cattle pasture typical of chalk landscape. West Compton before the enclosures was divided into 14 farms. One of these farms consisted of 102 fields scattered throughout the parish, the average size of which was less than an acre. Hearth Tax returns of the 1660's give East Compton 20 households and West Compton 29 showing that by this time West Compton was the larger village (McMahon and Mankin 2000).

#### 3.2 Manor Farm and Green Farm

- 3.2.1 The Bishops Manor in West Compton was in the ownership of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. In 1648 it was held by Thomas Smith, and then by several generations of the Potenger family. In 1812 the Bishop of Bath and Wells was still the Lord Paramount but leased his estates to Sarah Head Potenger when West Compton was enclosed by an Act of Parliament in 1812. The enclosure Act redistributed and allotted land in the 1814 Award. Reverend Head Pottinger, Sarah Head Potenger, Richard Potenger, John Strange (who held Green Farm), Joseph Collins and William Church were the main beneficiaries. After the enclosures there were only six instead of 14 farms, ranging from 400 to 1200 acres and some downland was ploughed up for wheat and barley (*ibid*).
- 3.2.2 The 1814 Enclosure Award includes a detailed map (**Figure 2a**) of West Compton showing farms, barns and yards, houses and cottages. At the western end of the High Street, Compton Manor comprised the large Manor house and farm (Manor Farm) with several barns (*ibid*). Green Farm was situated behind Compton Manor.
- 3.2.3 During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Green Farm was held by Richard Cox, with a large barn by the road and two houses. Compton Manor became the home of John Brown, and then William Brown until his death in 1896, when the 600 acre estate of 'fertile arable, pasture, down with a good mile gallop, and woodland' was sold, together with the general stores and 11 cottages including two at Hill Barn (*ibid*).
- 3.2.4 The 1896 inventory for Compton Manor describes a brewhouse, game larder, office, wood and coal house, a well and pump. There was 'nag stabling including a coach house for four carriages', and the grounds included 'tennis and croquet lawns, woodland walks, rockeries, a capital walled kitchen garden, a choice young orchard and a meadow'. The home farm, presumably Green and Manor Farms, had '4 barns, 3 carthorse stables with accommodation for 20 horses, cow, cart and implement sheds, piggeries, fowl and wood houses, granary, and cattle yards'. Compton Manor House was bought by the Bakers in

1907 for £3,000. Brigadier General Sumner Burder then lived there with his mother and his two sisters Isabel and Constance (*ibid*).

- 3.2.5 In the 1940s horses were gradually replaced by the tractor, and more and more stables stood empty. Another big change to the farming scene came with the arrival of the combine harvester. F. Fox recalls that the tractor shed in Greens Yard held three Standard Fordsons and the Case, with drivers Bill Munday, Topsy, himself and his mother Frances Fox (*ibid*). The new machines drastically reduced the demand for agricultural labour in the area. Two or three people could work a farm, in contrast to the enormous amount of manual labour which had previously been used. The down land remained pasture until the wartime demand for home-grown food, and the shortages and rationing after the War, land was again ploughed for corn as it has been since (*ibid*).

### 3.3 The Animal Research Council

- 3.3.1 In October 1937, Alfred Barclay, a former rancher from Patagonia, sold the Manor Farm estate of 1500 acres to the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) for a little over £37,000. Alfred Barclay had owned the farm since 1912 and gained a reputation for a progressive and efficient approach, controlling disease and improving yields. He set up some good dairy herds first of Friesian and then Ayrshire cattle, producing superior milk at his 'Superity' Dairy. Barclay was one of the first to have a tractor in the area. However, he got into financial difficulties and was forced to sell the estate.
- 3.3.2 Compton was chosen as the site for the Field Station, according to the ARC's Secretary Mr F. Meakins, because 'they had already had the previous estate owner's cooperation with various experiments, and the site at the time complied with the need for a fairly isolated position'. The ARC later acquired a further 500 acres of land between Compton and Ilsley, including the small farm called 'Moonshine' in Dennisford Lane, and also Chandlers Dairy at Woodview, and his brother-in-law White's land at Woodside, Cowdown (*ibid*).
- 3.3.3 The ARC Field Station was established in 1938 to provide 'strictly isolated accommodation for diseases of farm animals, to be investigated on a large scale, and to breed farm and laboratory animals of known health history'. Its first director was Major George Dunkin who lived in the Manor House. At the time cattle were wintered in Manor and Greens Yards. After the War his successor Dr W. S. Gordon, in Compton House, continued its expansion, bringing in several colleagues from Edinburgh. In 1950 a unique Isolation Compound was built on a 15 acre site, with two units, each for 24 cattle or small animals. Diseases studied included mastitis, brucellosis and tuberculosis, and later scrapie.
- 3.3.4 On the farm, oats, hay (for silage), kale and root crops increasingly gave way to barley; later on maize and oil seed rape were grown too.
- 3.3.5 A photograph dated 1942 (**Plate 1**) indicates that much of the earlier buildings and yard layout was still extent at this time. The photograph is a view looking west along the High Street. It shows the Manor House and a long Tithe Barn with thatched roof next to it. The barn was demolished shortly after. This was probably to provide vehicular access into Manor Farm yard from the High Street and possibly as part of the expansion of the ARC (*ibid*).
- 3.3.6 The Field Station, or the Institute for Research on Animal Diseases as it became in 1963, had a major impact on village life, building over 100 houses to accommodate staff. In 1975 there were 350 staff. In 1986 the Compton Laboratory became part of the new

Institute for Animal Health, which worked to improve both the well-being of farm animals and the quality and safety of food and human health. Study of poultry disease was added to that of cattle and pigs, necessitating new buildings and, after some years of decline, more staff, with about 40 staff transferring from Cambridge (*ibid*).

- 3.3.7 In 1987, Compton, Houghton and Pirbright became the Institute for Animal Health, being funded by BBSRC. Houghton closed in 1992, operations at Compton have been wound down with the site due to close last year, although avian elements of the campus may remain until 2015.

### 3.4 Cartographic evidence

#### 1814 West Compton Enclosure map

- 3.4.1 The earliest map consulted is the West Compton Enclosure Map of 1814 (**Figure 2a**). This is a detailed large scale map of Compton annotated with landowners and plot numbers. The plot numbers provide information about the owner and also, in some cases, the occupier of a particular property. In the case of High Street, Compton, all of the settlement is shown along the north side of the road with various plots and buildings marked accordingly.
- 3.4.2 The map also indicates that, at this time, there were several large plots to the west of the village covering the area of Manor Farm and Greens Yard. These plots contain many buildings within their respective boundaries. The key plots are numbered 72, 73, 74, 75, 76 and 77 and are each described in the attached legend with owner/occupier. Plot 72 was called 'Green Farm Homestead' and was owned by three sisters: Sarah, Rachael and Mary Letitia Hewitt and occupied by John Strange esquire. Their ownership also included plots 73, 74 and 75, which are described as 'late Pitman's house yard + garden', 'house + garden' and 'buildings yards gardens + close' respectively. All of these properties were tenanted by John Strange.
- 3.4.3 Plots 76 and 77 (Manor Farm) were owned by Sarah Head Potenger (freehold) and were described as 'house buildings yard garden + pond' and 'part of stack yard' respectively. This implies that the two farmsteads were in separate ownership at this time.
- 3.4.4 The colour tinted Enclosure map does not differentiate between dwelling house and outbuildings so some interpretation is based on the plan form of each building. Plot 72 is a large rectangular plot of land with many buildings including the Green Farm Homestead and various outbuildings or farm buildings. Along the south edge of the plot are the very small plots 73 and 74. These contain two small houses with what appears to be some small outbuildings. The larger plot 72 appears somewhat hemmed in with no clear access point. This may be due to cartographic convention not showing access tracks. To the south and south-east of plot 72 the map is annotated with two open areas, one is called 'J. Strange allotment' and the other 'watering place'.
- 3.4.5 The core of Green Farm homestead would appear to be centred around a three-sided yard open on its south side. Along the west boundary are two rectangular buildings clearly standing on the east side of the marked boundary between plots 72 and 75. The south of these two buildings, a long narrow plan, stands in the approximate position of the present Coach House. To the north stands an irregular plan building (possibly a barn) at an angle to the others with projections to the south and south-east sides. Two other buildings are shown to the north-east of the angled barn in relatively open ground.





- 3.4.6 Along the east side of the yard, standing on the east side of the boundary, are a series of three buildings on a north-south alignment. Together with the north-east buildings, these appear to form part of a large 'L' shaped plot of land which extends to the north. The northern-most building is a narrow free-standing rectangular outbuilding, the centre building is free-standing and rectangular in plan with a small projection to the south-east corner. The southern-most building is irregular in plan and consists of two square plan sections joined at the north-west or south-east corners respectively. It is thought that this building represents the house. A rectangular free-standing building, orientated parallel with the other buildings in this group, is located to the south-west of the house.
- 3.4.7 Plot 75 is shown situated between plot 76 and plot 72. Within its long rectangular boundary are shown four buildings and interestingly, only listed as 'buildings yards gardens and close', there is no 'house'. This plot appears to be a separate plot between the two larger farms with large houses.
- 3.4.8 Along the south side and fronting onto the High Street is a large building (possibly a barn) with a small central projection on its south side and a small square projection on its north-west corner. A small building is shown on the west side of the plot and just to the east of Manor Farm house. Two other, large rectangular buildings (possibly barns) are shown in the approximate centre of the plot; the more southerly of the two is at an angle.
- 3.4.9 Within plot 76 there are six large buildings. In the south-east corner of the plot is an irregular shaped building, broadly 'L' shaped in plan (Manor Farm House). To its west is a large enclosed yard with large buildings shown to the north, west, south and east. The north building appears slightly irregular in plan with projections to the north and south sides, the west building has a stepped plan form consisting of a large rectangular building, and smaller rectangular building joined to its north end (this is the site of the present workshop). These two structures mark the west boundary of the plot. Along the south side, facing directly onto the High Street is a long continuous building (probably a barn) with many projections along its north side. The south side is shown as a continuous line with no projections. The site of the present Old Bank building is, at this time, mostly empty, the corner shown clearly as a step in the plots south-west corner boundary. The east building (the site of Manor Barn) is also shown as a continuous narrow building with various projections and steps along its east side. Its south end is positioned close to the north side of the main house.
- 3.4.10 To the north of these four buildings and the enclosed yard is another open yard with a long building along the north boundary of the plot. In the centre of this open yard is a pond, considered to be the pond mentioned in the Enclosure legend. The north building (possibly animal sheds) is shown as a continuous structure with a slight step in its plan form.

1842 West Compton Tithe map

- 3.4.11 The 1842 Tithe map appears similar to the earlier 1814 map showing little apparent change to the earlier building and plot arrangements in the village (**Figure 2a**). The attached Tithe Apportionment is a document that provides information about ownership and occupiers of each plot at this time. Generally speaking the Tithe map distinguishes between outbuildings and residential properties by colour. Farm buildings are shown as dark grey and dwellings are shown red.
- 3.4.12 It would appear that the earlier plot 72 had changed ownership as this part of the site was now owned and occupied by John Brown Esq and is numbered 4. The apportionment describes plot 4 as 'Greens Farm &c (etc)'. The northern part of the plot had been



widened to the west and a boundary established to the north of Greens Farmhouse. One of the free-standing buildings to the north had been demolished.

- 3.4.13 The key change shown on the Tithe map occurs at Greens Farmhouse which appears with a very different plan form. It is now 'L' shape in plan with an east-west range and an east wing. The earlier plan had been replaced with only the south half being possibly absorbed into the west end of the new house plan.
- 3.4.14 Other changes noted on the Tithe map include an extension to the east side of the building opposite the main house, and located in the position of the present Coach House. This now forms a 'T' plan. The building to the north of the Coach House is now cruciform in plan and another long narrow rectangular building had been built to its south.
- 3.4.15 The main house faces south and where the earlier Enclosure map indicated allotment and watering place is now shown as open. It is possible that the south approach to the house had been landscaped. As part of this landscaping episode the houses and buildings depicted within plots 73 and 74 on the Enclosure map were demolished presenting wide open views to the south from the new house.
- 3.4.16 The centre plot, previously numbered 75 on the Enclosure map, is also numbered 4 on the Tithe map and remains largely unchanged. The very small building, noted to the east of Manor Farmhouse, is not shown and is assumed to have been demolished by this time.
- 3.4.17 Manor Farm and its associated buildings appear virtually unchanged and are numbered 3 on the map. The landowner is listed as Rev Richard Potenger and occupied by James Fuller. It is described as 'West Compton Manor Farm Homestead &c'.

#### 1858 Estate map

- 3.4.18 An Estate map dated 1858 shows land owned in the village by The Right Honourable Lord Overstone (**Figure 2a**). The land on the west side of the village is not shown on this map and the whole area is annotated 'Rev Richard Potenger'. Unfortunately, the map does not depict Greens Farm or Manor Farm.

#### 1877 Ordnance Survey map

- 3.4.19 The first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey (OS) Map of 1877 (**Figure 2b**) clearly shows that the area of the site divided into two farms: West Compton Manor Farm and Green Farm. The arrangement of Green Farm appears broadly similar to the picture as revealed in the earlier map of 1842 with the area to the south of the main house depicted with carriage entrance and tree-lined walks to the south and formal gardens to the east. The plan form of the house had changed slightly by this time with small extensions to the south-east. The yard to the north-west of the house had also changed. Two large buildings are depicted opposite each other to the west and east sides. The west building appears larger than that shown on the Tithe map, although still has a basic cruciform plan. The east building may be a new structure as it is a long narrow rectangular plan, replacing two previous buildings previously shown along this side of the yard.
- 3.4.20 To the west of the main house the 'T' plan building had changed by this time. The west arm of the 'T' is now shown on the west side of the boundary line and the east arm of the 'T' appears longer. The long narrow building to the south is still extant and is located on the east side of the boundary as before. It is considered that the west arm of the 'T' is the present Coach House. Other buildings associated with Green Farm appear not to have changed significantly by this time.

3.4.21 West Compton Manor Farm is annotated and there appear to have been some minor changes to the buildings around the yard. The east building (on the site of the present Manor Barn) appears to have been extended to the south and the house has been extended to the north-west. The building on the north side of the yard has also been extended with a central projection to the south side. The pond to the north of the yard is still present as is the building to the north side of the pond. The location of Old Bank is shown empty at this time. The west end of the large barn appears as a small enclosure.

3.4.22 West of Manor Farm the land is largely open with a tree-lined enclosure immediately to the west of the barns and a large open field to the north-west.

1899 Ordnance Survey map

3.4.23 The 1899 OS map (**Figure 2b**) shows Green Farm as virtually unchanged from the arrangement in 1877. The only significant change to the buildings appears to be the addition of a series of three long narrow rectangular structures located along the west boundary of the centre plot between the two farms. These structures are possibly open-fronted as they are depicted with dotted lines to the east face.

3.4.24 The Coach House is shown as open-fronted along the northern two-thirds of its western face. The south end has a wall division and a stepped plan forming a narrow projection.

3.4.25 Manor Farm also appears little changed at this time. The building to the north of the pond appears to have been shortened and is depicted as being open-fronted with a dotted line convention along the south side. The building on the west side of the yard (site of the Workshop) has the same plan form but the plan shows an internal division indicating that most of the building was one build.

3.4.26 The west end of the large south barn is also more detailed and indicates that the building was divided at this end with a small square room and a smaller room on its west side forming a stepped plan.

1912 Ordnance Survey map

3.4.27 The 1912 OS map (**Figure 2b**) shows little significant change at Green Farm. The only change to extant building appears at the south end of the Coach House. The south end does not appear to have a stepped profile and is now depicted as 'L' plan. Manor Farm remains unchanged from the 1899 OS map.

1969 Ordnance Survey map

3.4.28 There is a considerable gap in the available mapping for Compton between 1912 and 1969. From 1937 the site was occupied by the Institute for Animal Health, and by the time of the 1969 OS map (**Figure 2c**), the site had changed significantly having been developed into its present form. Green Farm is now referred to as Compton House and Manor Yard is annotated to the west of The Manor House.





## 4 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

### 4.1 Coach House

- 4.1.1 This building is located along the east boundary and is orientated approximately north-south (**Figure 1**). Access is via a track leading north from the High Street.
- 4.1.2 The present building measures 18.7m in length and 7.2m in width and would appear to occupy the location of the building first shown here on the 1877 OS map. The building consists of a single-storey rectangular aisled timber-framed structure of six bays with a half-hipped roof covered in red clay tiles (**Figure 3, Plate 2**). The west facing elevation is divided in half with the south three bays being enclosed with a low modern brick wall and glazed window panels above. The north three bays are aisled and have sliding wooden doors over open fronted bays.
- 4.1.3 The 1899 OS map suggests that the west facing side of the building was open with no enclosing walls or doors. The existing doors and glazed walls are therefore thought to be mid-20<sup>th</sup> century changes made by the ARC.
- 4.1.4 The east wall of the building is constructed in red bricks laid in predominantly English bond and set in lime mortar. Some areas of brickwork consist of two or more courses of headers. The north end wall is constructed entirely of modern concrete blocks with new timber elements forming the wall plate and hipped roof at this end (**Plate 3**).
- 4.1.5 The structural timber frame of the building consists of paired opposing principal arcade posts, aisle plates, tie beam, queen posts, collar and clasped purlins (**Plate 4**). The two side aisles are formed with timber aisle ties supported by a timber wall plate. Most of the common rafters and roof purlins are regular softwood replacements and there is roofing felt throughout. It seems evident that a certain amount of remodelling and repair has been carried out to the timber frame in the last 50 years. In particular, the arcade plate along the west side of the building has angled corner braces smaller than the original mortises (**Plate 5**).
- 4.1.6 The timber arrangement of the west aisle ties is also different from the opposing east aisle ties (**Plates 6-7**). The east aisle ties are notch-lap jointed to the north face of the arcade post and are set onto the wall plate of the east wall. The west aisle ties are much higher and have a small angle timber brace below. The height of the west aisle ties is so that a taller door head can be achieved and allows access for carts etc. to be stored inside each bay. This work is consistent with the historic mapping consulted and shows that the building was probably dismantled from its original location and rebuilt here as an open fronted shed or store.
- 4.1.7 The south end of the building shows that the build style is similar to that at the north end, although the interior has been plastered out and a low ceiling inserted (**Plate 8**). The west side of the three south bays is not aisled suggesting that the building may have had a dual purpose. A modern suspended ceiling has been inserted at the south end, although access into the roof space was possible and revealed that this end of the building was originally partitioned off from the north. A section of surviving lath and plaster partition was recorded (**Plate 9**). The studs of the partition had been nailed to the roof truss collar.
- 4.1.8 The fact that this building appears likely to have been moved from its original position within Green Farm is further highlighted by the difference in ridge height to the Dovecot building to the east (see plate 2). Visible within the south end roof space of the present Coach House is the west brick gable of the single-storey element of the Dovecot. It would

appear that the original building first seen on cartographic evidence of the 1842 Tithe map, and located within the boundary of Green Farm, formed part of the dovecot structure. This was subsequently moved to its new position within the boundary of Manor Farm to create an open-fronted shed. The west end of the original Dovecot structure was extended to join with the newly positioned building and the roof ridge, from the older Dovecot section, was slightly higher. This formed the peculiar arrangement visible today. At the same time, the west end of the Dovecot was bricked up with a gable further demarcating the boundary difference between the two farms. This is now hidden within the present roof space and difficult to see. Due to the fragile nature of the modern suspended ceiling, it was not possible to photograph this feature.

## 4.2 Manor Barn

- 4.2.1 This long rectangular building is located to the north of the existing Manor House (**Figures 1 and 4**). The present building differs in plan from that seen on the 1842 Tithe map which may indicate adaptation or a total rebuild. In total, the entire building measures 38m in length and has a maximum width of 7m.
- 4.2.2 The building consists of three joined elements, each with a different roof height. The south element (Manor Barn) is two-storeys with brick walls and a half hipped and plain clay tiled roof (**Plate 10**). The central element is built against the north end of Manor Barn, is lower in height and comprises an open-fronted two-bay brick structure with a half-hipped roof (**Plate 11**). The third or north element is a single-storey modern garage plus workshop constructed from concrete blocks under a pitched roof covered with corrugated asbestos sheeting (**Plate 12**).
- 4.2.3 Manor Barn has also undergone numerous alterations with external changes in fenestration and internal floor level changes. The west facing elevation best illustrates these changes. At the north end there is a large tall opening with wooden sliding door. In the centre, at ground floor level, there is a wide opening with a steel joist lintel that has been in-filled with wooden boarding and two glazed windows. At the south end there is a further ground floor opening with steel lintel and a first floor fire escape door (see **Plate 10**).
- 4.2.4 The west wall is constructed from a mixture of red and blue bricks laid in Flemish bond and set in lime mortar. Most of the headers are flared or blue bricks creating a highlighted decorative pattern. Most of the original openings have disappeared, although there is some evidence of these. A single window opening on the ground floor is original and there is some evidence of a second window on the north side of centre ground floor opening. A series of brick closures, matching those down the sides of the original window, can be seen in the brick work. These do not correspond with the present opening and therefore are thought to represent a similar sized window opening. The location of the first floor fire escape possibly marks the location of an original hay loft door. The present door occupies a modern narrowed opening, again marked by a series of brick closures down the sides. The width of this opening is probably too wide for a window and is therefore thought to be a west facing hayloft door used for pitching hay from a cart into the inside.
- 4.2.5 Internally, Manor Barn consists of six bays with a half bay at the north and south ends (**Figure 4**). The ground floor is now concrete with no evidence of any horse stalling or fixtures and fittings. The bays are marked by opposing timber sling-brace trusses (**Plate 13**). This style of truss, with long curving braces rising up to a high collar, is typical of stable buildings in Berkshire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Barnwell and Giles 1997). There is evidence that the original first floor level has been altered as the floor joists have been removed in this part of the building creating an open space. The curving sling braces are

set onto the large main floor beams, although not correctly (**Plate 14**). The floor beams are set onto concrete piers built against the walls and the exposed floor joist mortises show that the foot, or bottom, of the sling brace impacts with a joist mortise. Visible within the wall fabric is a wooden plate which probably marks the original height of the hayloft floor; the large floor beams would originally have been set onto these.

- 4.2.6 At the south end of the building, the series of sling braces continues with some modern replacements (**Plate 15**). There is some evidence of partitioning at this level. There is a series of three empty mortises, still with wooden pegs, visible in the third collar from the south (**Figure 4, Plate 16**). The apex of the roof consisted of a ridge board with the common rafters nailed to each side (**Plate 17**).
- 4.2.7 The centre element consists of a single-storey brick structure with a half-hipped roof (north end) abutting the north end of Manor Barn. The walls are built with red brick laid in English bond. The roof is covered with plain red clay tiles and the west façade converted into two wide garages (**Plate 11**). The large up-and-over doors are clearly modern and have removed any signs of original openings in the west side.
- 4.2.8 Internally, the floor is now concrete with no evidence of any stall divisions or drainage. The east wall does have some evidence including tether rings and vented windows suggesting three wide stalls (**Plate 18**). The roof consists of softwood timber trusses including tie beam principal rafters, splayed struts and iron King tie rod. Single cleated purlins support the common rafters which, in turn, have tile battens nailed to the upper surface (**Plate 19**).
- 4.2.9 The north end of Manor Barn consists of a small single-storey garage constructed using concrete blocks (**Plate 12**). There is a single up-and-over door to the north side and a small workshop area to the south accessed by a door in the west side and is lit by a metal framed window. The roof is covered with corrugated asbestos sheeting.

### 4.3 Old Bank

- 4.3.1 The origins of building known as the 'Old Bank' are unclear. The building exterior appearance is similar to that of the Coach House and the roof is also similar in style to both the Coach House and Manor Barn with a half hip to the west end (**Plates 20-22**). The building stands at the very south-west corner of the site and has a front access onto the entrance of the Institute for Animal Health (**Figure 1**). The building plan is approximately rectangular with an angled west front that runs parallel with the historic west boundary to Manor Farm. On its east side is a covered structure, once used for bicycle racks.
- 4.3.2 The north facing elevation has been modified (**Plate 20**). The original brickwork has been laid in English bond and all of the present widow and door openings appear modern. There is evidence, however, of original openings in the form of brick closures recorded down the sides of the west door. These closures are at relatively high level which, suggests that at least one window was set into this wall just below the present eaves level. Over the inserted door is a glazed panel which is covered by an iron security grill. This suggests that the interior was secured, however there is no physical evidence as to why this building has the name 'Old Bank'.
- 4.3.3 The south facing elevation comprises a continuous wall of English bond brickwork set in lime mortar (**Plate 21**). The curved south-west corner of the building appears to have been deliberately formed to allow access, probably pedestrian, around this part of the building. The present openings in the west facing elevation appear to be modern and provide both access and light into a small sealed room (**Figure 5, Plate 22**).

- 4.3.4 At first floor level there is possible evidence of blocked openings. The colour of bricks and the use of cementitious mortar have highlighted a possible window at high level. There are no structural signs of this as the brick bond has been correctly maintained with no exposed closures.
- 4.3.5 Internally, the building has been converted into an open space and area for toilets and shower room (**Figure 5**). Historical mapping, such as the 1912 OS map has indicated that there was a square plan building located here at that time. The plan of this building may be 'fossilised' within the present structure. A steel joist (**Plate 23**) has been inserted into the building at the approximate position of the end west wall shown on the 1912 plan.
- 4.3.6 The roof of the Old Bank consists of a simple 'A' frame including composite purlins set into a brick gable at the east end, and angle struts (**Plate 24**). At the west end there is further internal evidence of blocked openings with concrete blocks and Fletton bricks used (**Plate 25**). It is possible that the roof is a later replacement than 1912 as it spans the angled extension in one build.

#### 4.4 Workshop

- 4.4.1 The Workshop building stands to the north of the Old Bank and along the west side of the historic west boundary of Manor Farm (**Figure 1**). The present building is rectangular in plan with a small projection on the west side and measures 27.6m long and 8.7m wide. A building is shown in this location from the earliest available mapping (1814) to the most recent (1970s).
- 4.4.2 The footprint has changed little, although the design and materials used in the present building suggest that it is of early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The building is constructed from a steel frame of six bays with steel roof trusses. Between each bay is a low brick wall laid in Flemish bond with bricks set in hard lime mortar. The upper part of the exterior is clad in corrugated iron sheeting as is the roof. Along the top of the roof is an arched ridge vent running the length of the roof (**Plates 26-27**).
- 4.4.3 Along the east side are three large door openings with high sliding doors. The height and width of these openings suggest that large vehicles such as tractors or combines were able to be housed and serviced within. The fact that the building has a vented ridge suggests that fumes were allowed to filter out from the building when the doors were closed.
- 4.4.4 Internally a modern suspended ceiling has been installed which has obscured much of the roof structure and the wall spaces have been filled with insulating material (**Plate 28**). Whilst it was possible to examine the style of roof it was not possible to photograph it. There is a concrete floor to all bays and evidence of more recent machine fixings have been set into the floor. In the third bay from the north is an in-filled vehicle inspection pit (**Figure 5**).
- 4.4.5 The small projection along the west side would certainly appear to have been built after 1912 as it does not appear on the OS map of this time. It is constructed from Fletton brick with a glazed panel on top. In more recent times concrete wall divisions have been inserted into what was originally a continuous open space.

#### 4.5 Other buildings

- 4.5.1 The rest of the site contains various disused buildings which date from the period of the ARC's occupation. To the north of Manor Yard is a large covered cattle shed built over the location of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century pond. A workshop has been built within the centre of the



yard and the large Tithe barn that originally stood along the south boundary has been replaced with a gated entrance.

## **5 DISCUSSION**

- 5.1.1 An examination of the remnant farm buildings at Greens Yard has shown that, like many other historic agricultural communities, Compton has changed from its traditional farming background. The major changes to Greens Farm and Manor Farm were, like many other estates and large farms, due to social upheaval, gradual mechanisation and changes to agricultural production. Imported food during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century placed immense pressure on home grown produce and forced changes across the country. However, it was not entirely external forces at work which caused change to the farms and background research has shown that, in the case of Green Farm, individuals were responsible for financial problems leading to the sale of the properties.
- 5.1.2 Up until 1937 the farm buildings remained little changed, however with the purchase of the farms by the ARC, major redevelopment took place. A number of historic buildings were demolished or altered and new ones built to provide for the expanding research centre. Although the most significant historic buildings are no longer present, there still remains some residual evidence, particularly in the Coach House with its re-used timber framing, of the earlier farm. The 19<sup>th</sup> century stable building known as Manor Barn is also a survivor from a later period which reflects the status of traditional agricultural practice before the machine age. Its large size and robust construction reflect the importance of the horse in agriculture at the time.
- 5.1.3 In the case of the Old Bank and Workshop, these buildings have almost certainly been constructed to accommodate the machines and research practises of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Manor House, Coach House and Old Bank are to be retained and redeveloped which will help to preserve the memory of these interesting former agricultural and research buildings for the future.



## 6 REFERENCES

### 6.1 Bibliography

Barnwell P S and Giles Colum 1997 *English Farmsteads, 1750-1914*. Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England

McMahon, Linnet and Mankin, David 2000 *The Story of Compton: A Berkshire Downland Village*

Wessex Archaeology 2014 *Farm Buildings at Greens Yard High Street Compton West Berkshire. Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished client report reference T18466.01

### 6.2 Cartographic and photographic sources

Berkshire Record Office:

1814 West Compton Enclosure Map doc ref: Q/RDC/79A and B

1842 Tithe Map of Compton Parish and Apportionment doc ref: D/D1/41/1

1858 Map of The Compton Estate Berks doc ref: D/EL P4

1877 Ordnance Survey 25 inch series Sheet 27-3

1899 Ordnance Survey 25 inch series Sheet 27-3

1912 Ordnance Survey 25 inch series Sheet 27-3

1969-73 Ordnance Survey 25 inch series SU5279-SU5280

1970-73 Ordnance Survey 25 inch series SU5179-SU5180

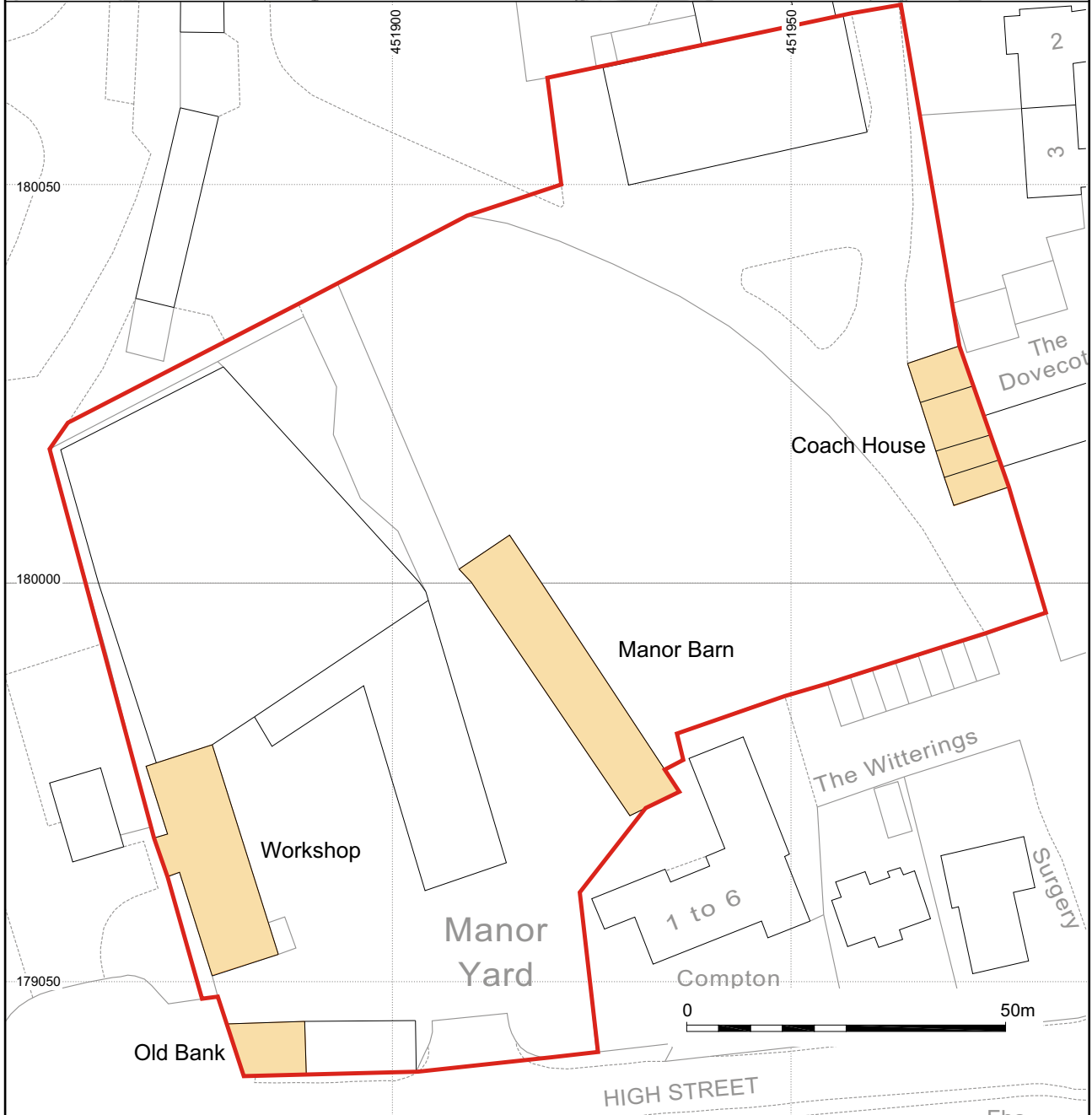
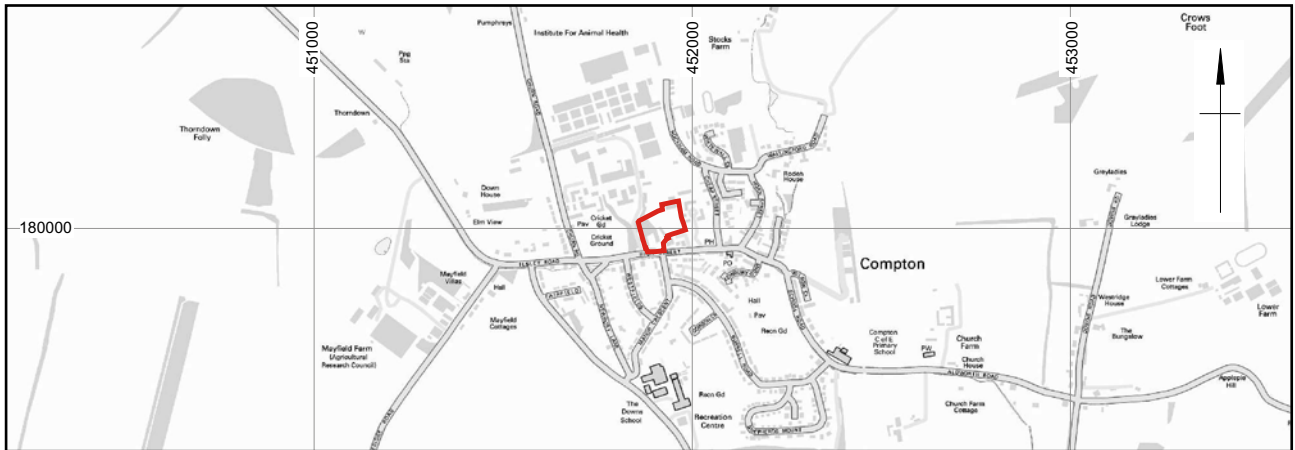
Photographs ref D/EX 1028/191/S1-16 Photographer C. M. M. Jotcham




S4 = Compton Berks The old Manor House 1942

S6 = Compton Berks Old Tithe Barn 1942

S7 = Compton Berks Old Tithe Barn-adjoining Old Manor House 1942





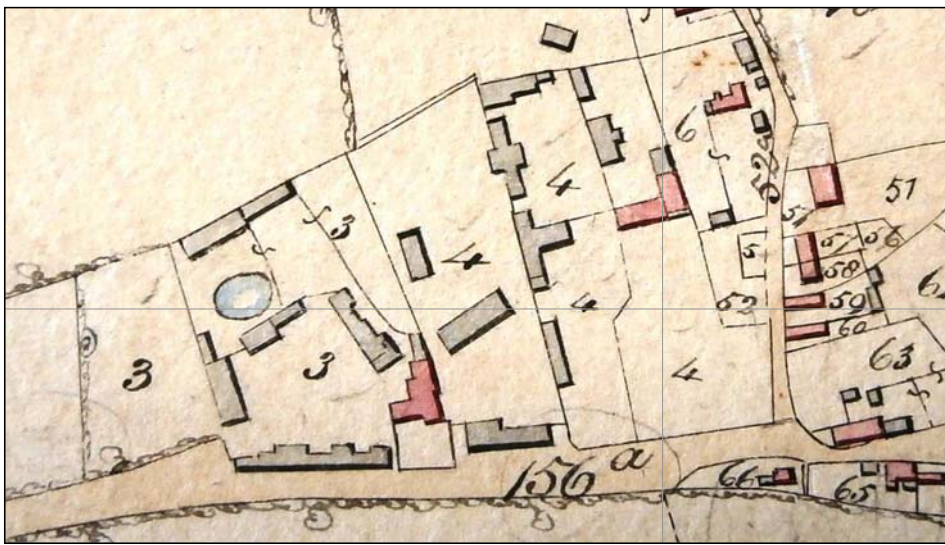
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Site location

Figure 1




1814 Compton Enclosure Map - detail



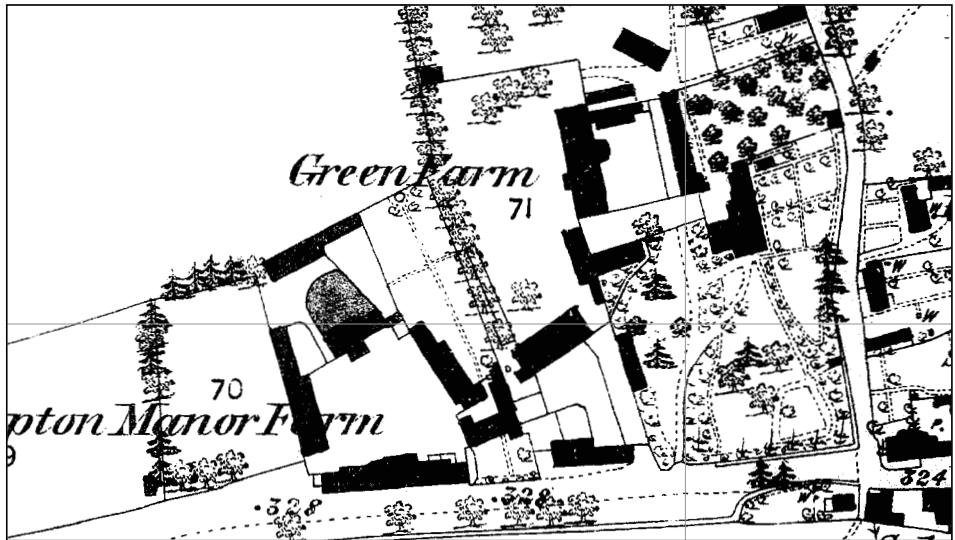
1842 Compton Tithe Map



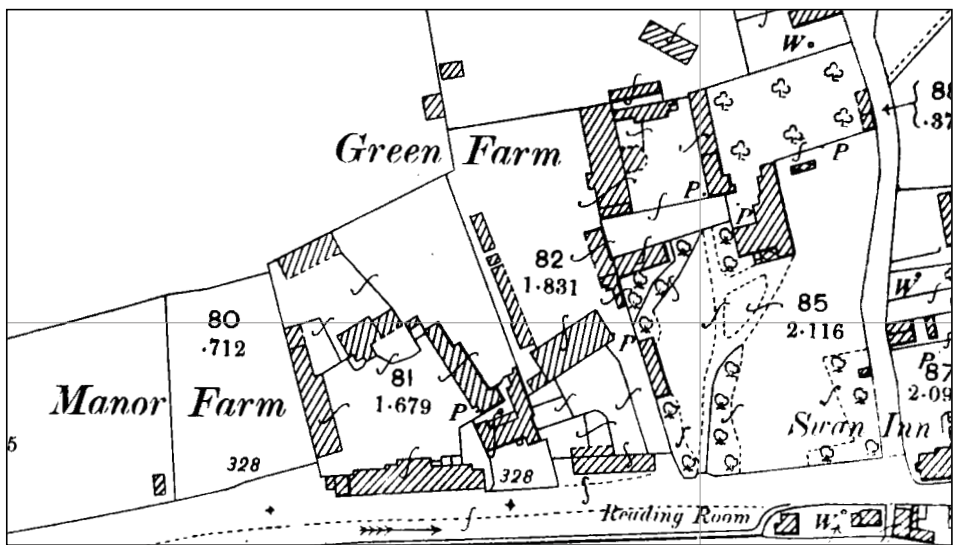
1858 Compton Estate Map

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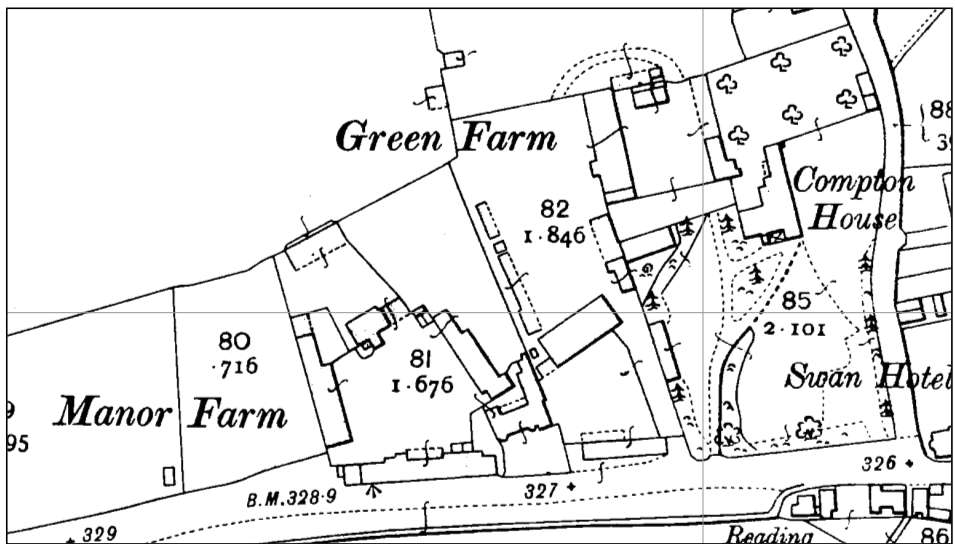





1877 Ordnance Survey Map

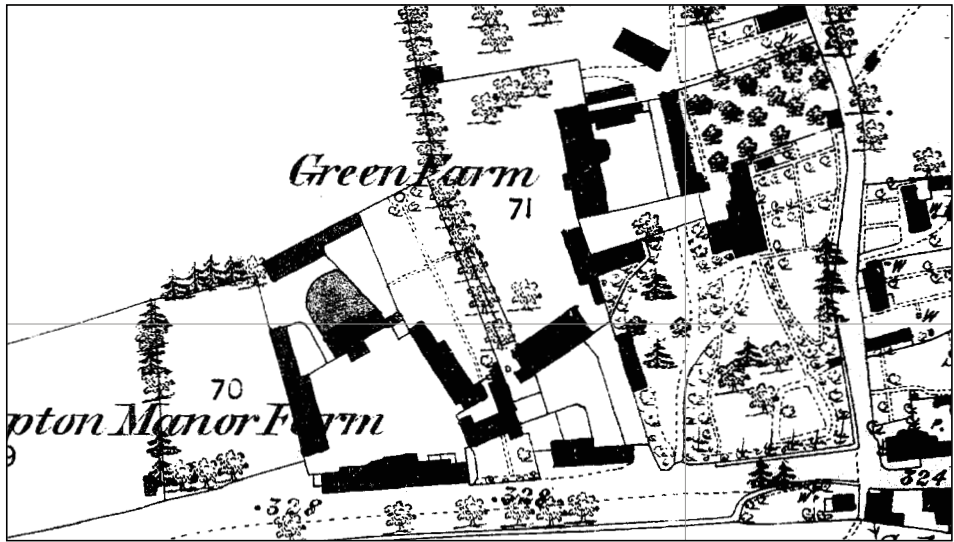


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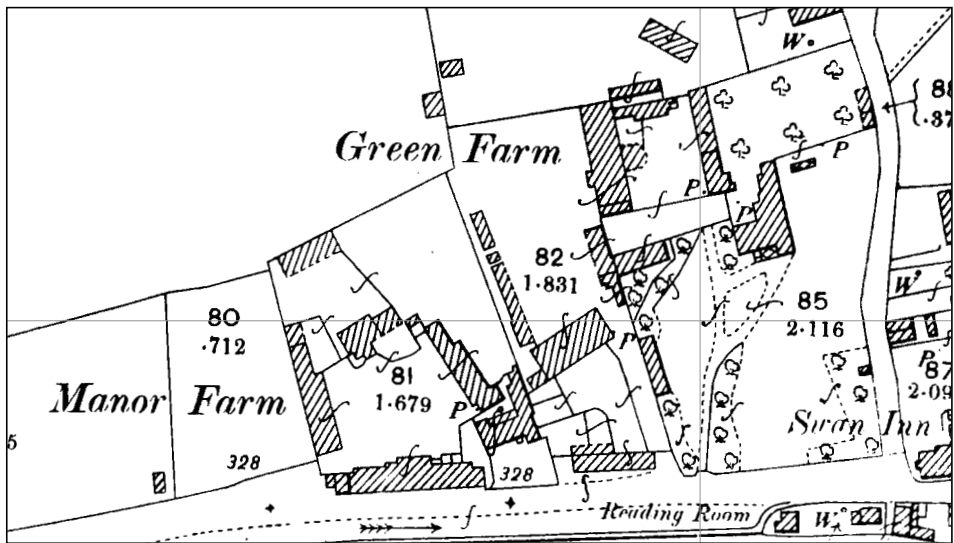


1912 Ordnance Survey Map

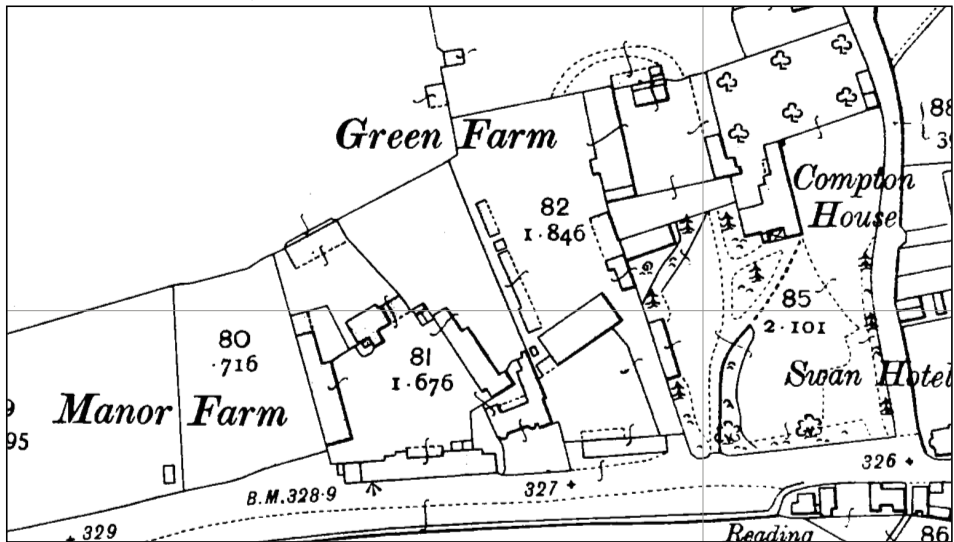
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1877 Ordnance Survey Map



1899 Ordnance Survey Map



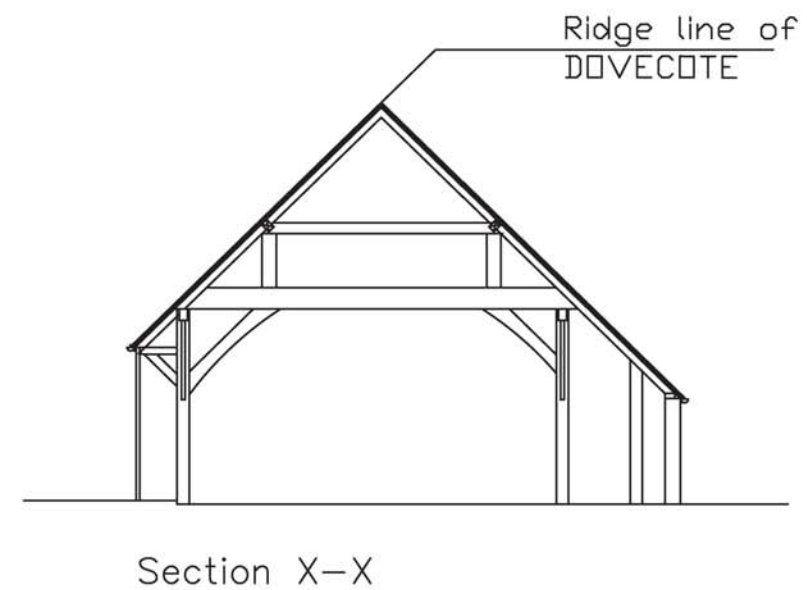
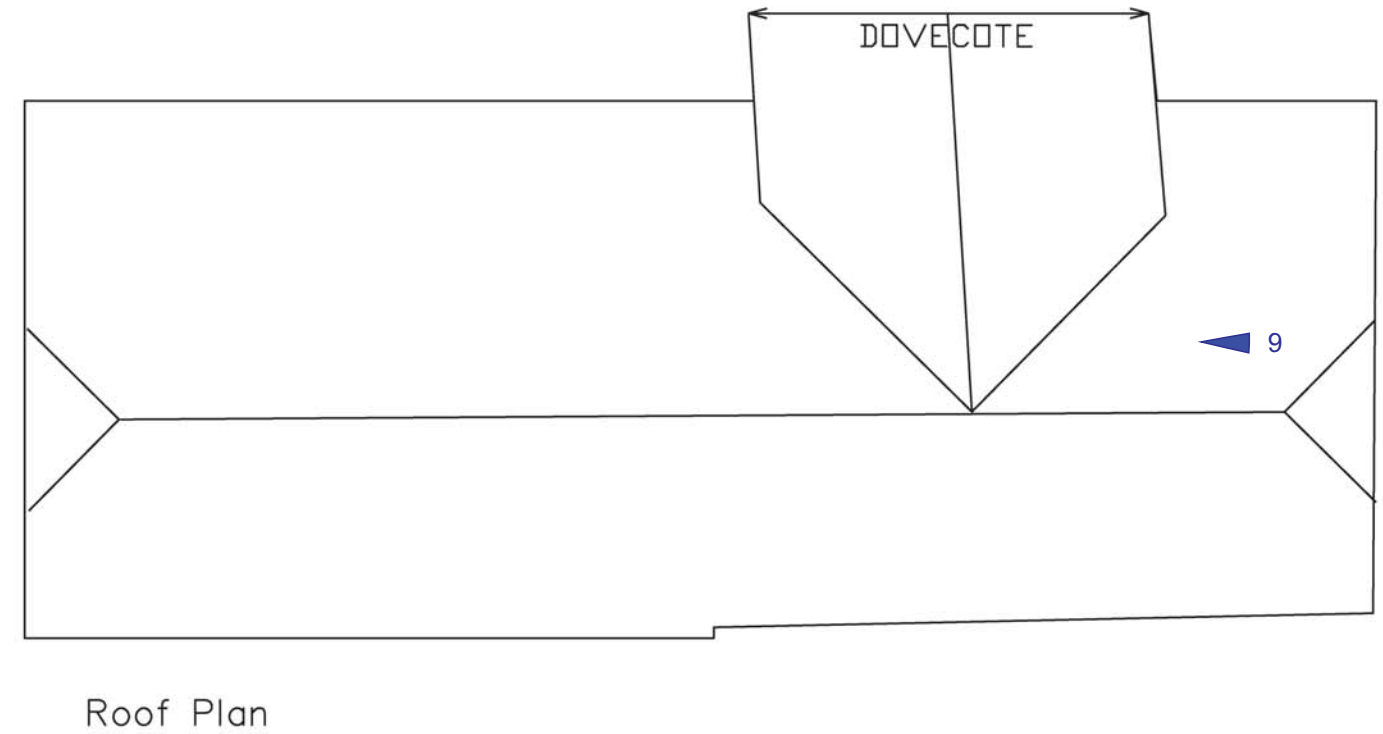
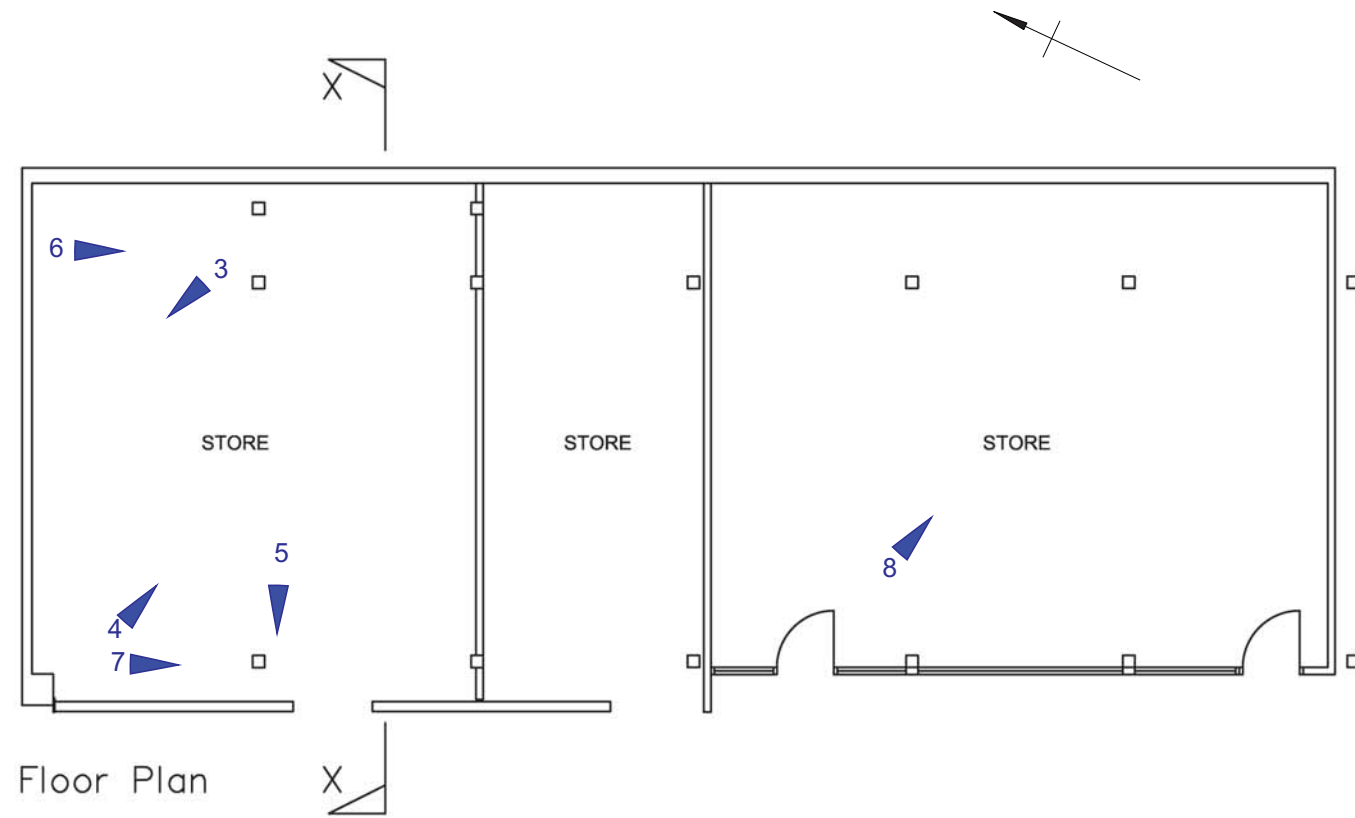
1912 Ordnance Survey Map

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# Greens Yard Compton

# As existing

COACH HOUSE / STORE  
FLOOR PLAN, ELEVATION & SECTION



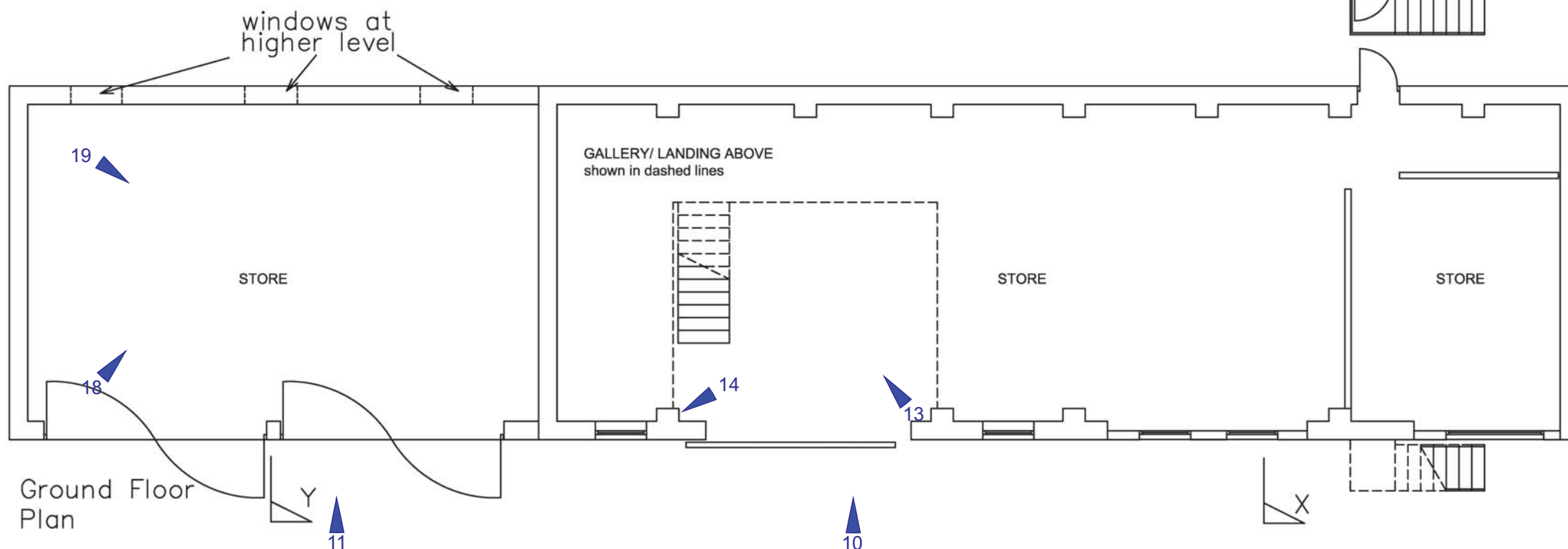
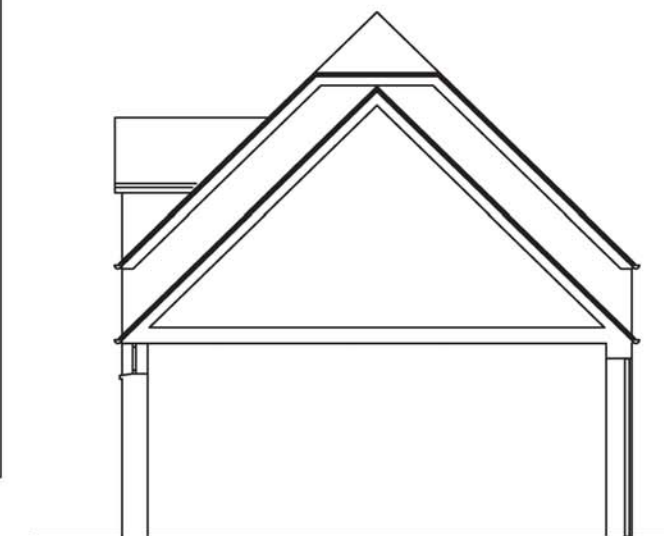
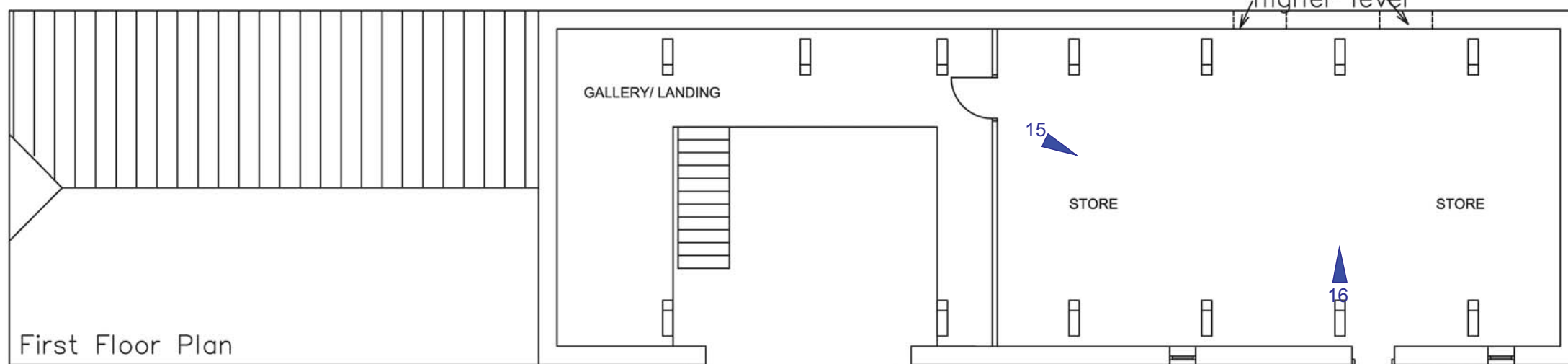
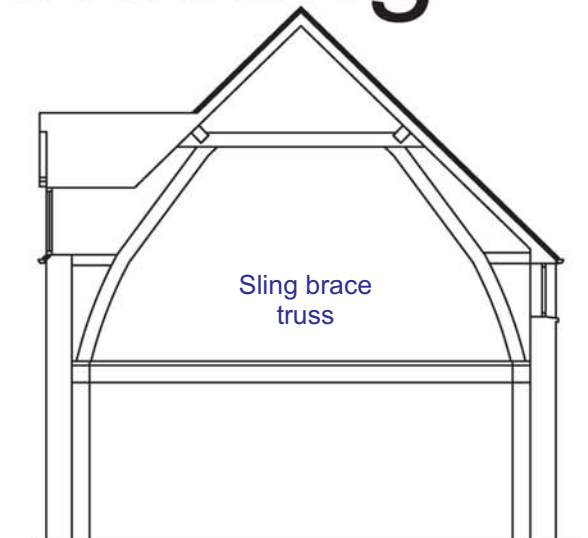
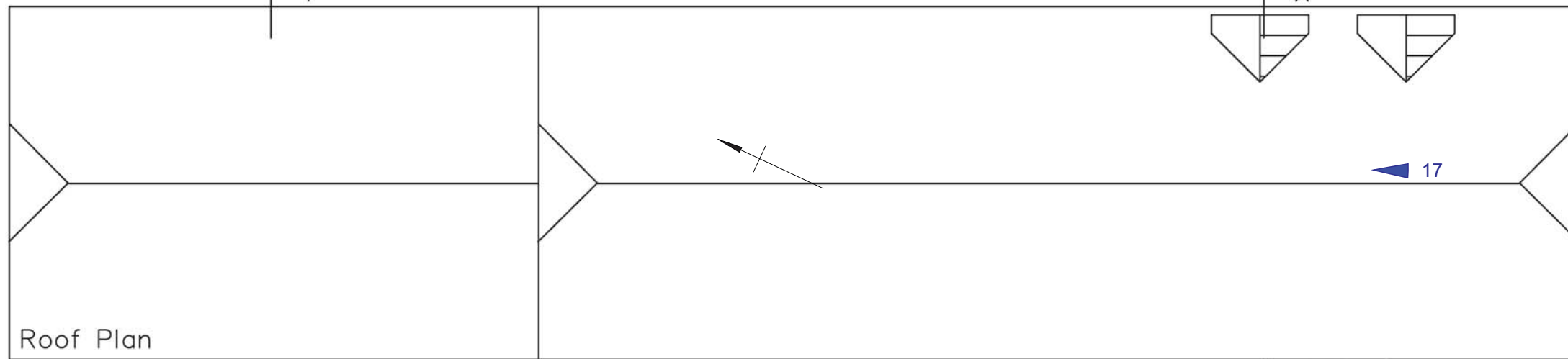
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Floor Plan, Elevation & Section as existing		
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<b>Rev</b>		

**119**

**Wrigley Associates**  
30 Alexandra Road  
Lyncombe Hill  
Bath BA2 4PW  
Tel: 01225 337420  
Fax: 01225 337467

# Greens Yard Compton

# As existing

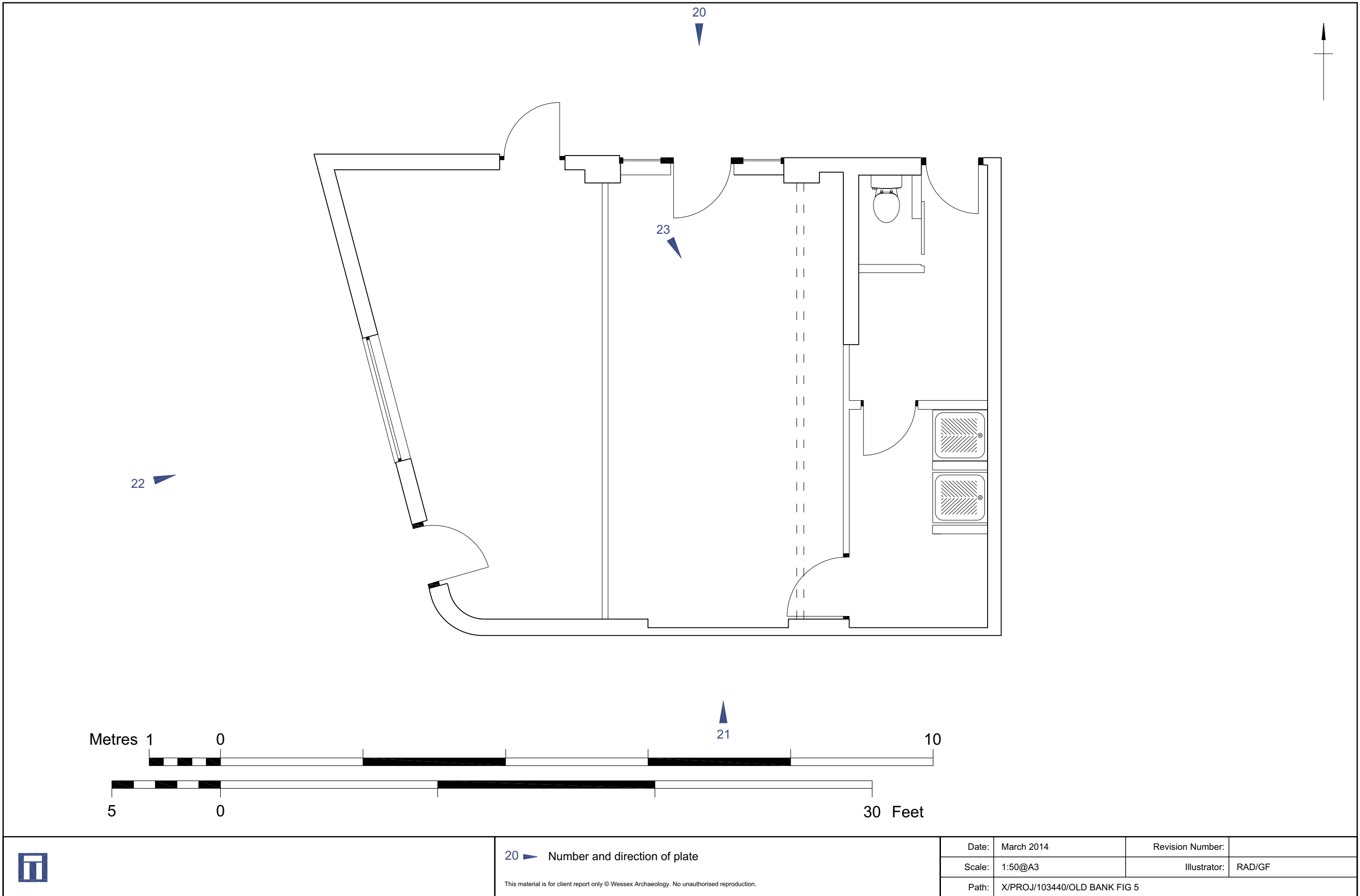


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FLOOR PLANS  
& SECTIONS

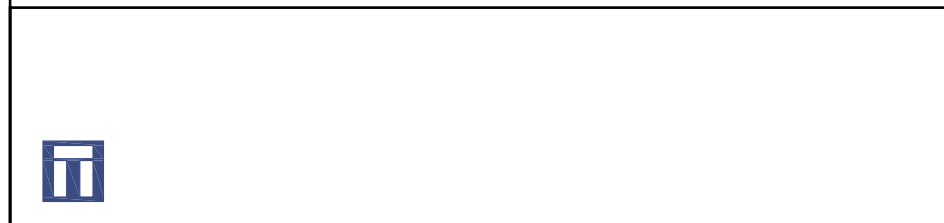
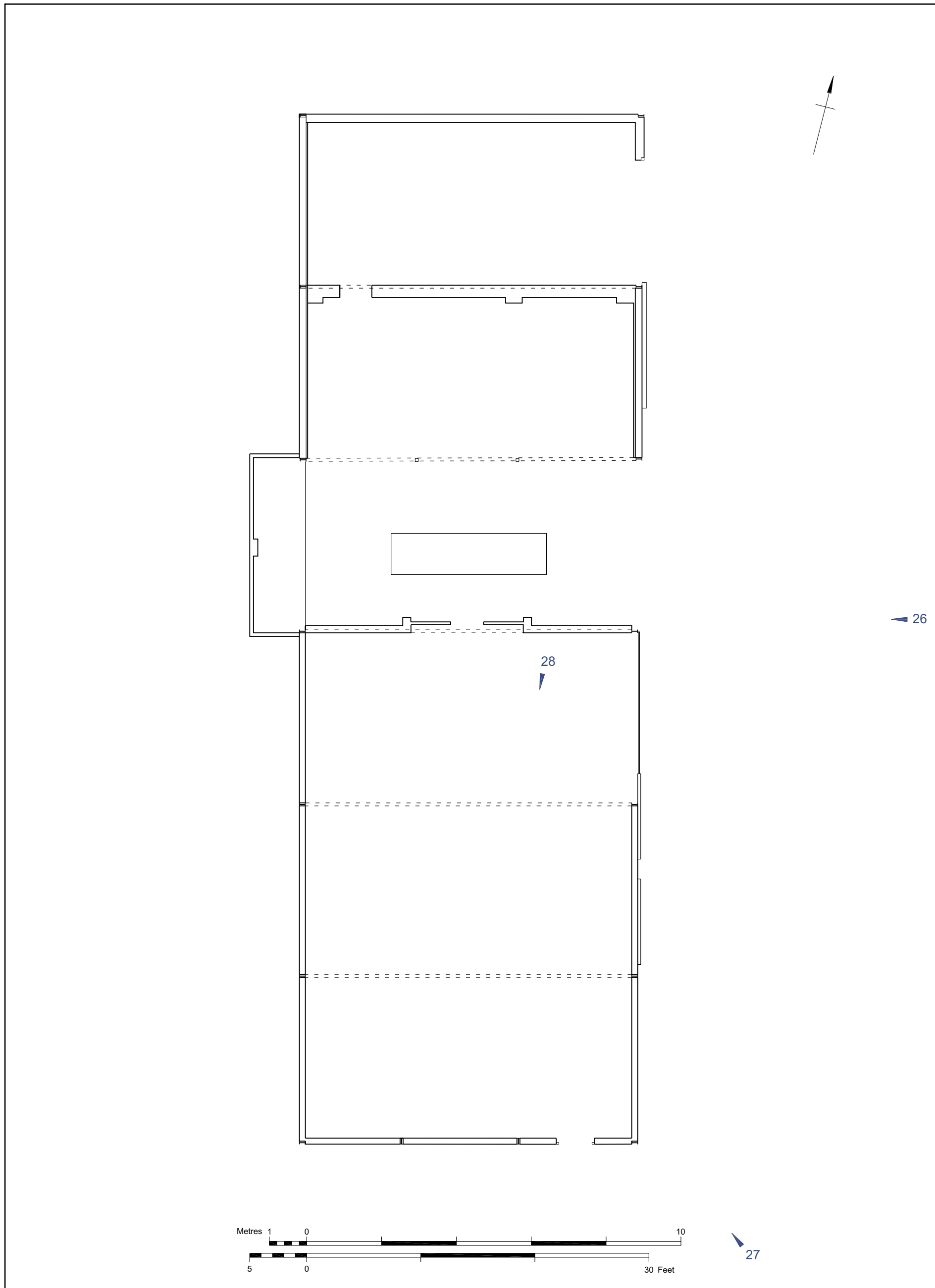
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Plans and cross sections of Manor Barn



Ground floor plan of Bank

Figure 5



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Ground floor plan of Workshop

Figure 6





Plate 1: Photograph dated 1942 showing Manor House and thatched Tithe barn along the High Street


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Plate 2: Coach House viewed from south-west



Plate 3: Interior concrete block wall north end of Coach House


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Plate 4: Interior framing of Coach House



Plate 5: East arcade post and aisle tie of Coach House


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Plate 6: East arcade post and aisle tie of Coach House



Plate 7: West arcade post and aisle tie of Coach House



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Plate 8: South end interior of Coach House



Plate 9: South end of Coach House roof space showing lath and plaster partition


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Plate 10: South end of Manor Barn



Plate 11: Manor barn centre building


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Plate 12: Manor Barn north end modern garage



Plate 13: North end interior of Manor Barn showing sling braces and reset first floor


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Plate 14: Manor Barn detail showing floor level change



Plate 15: Manor Barn first floor south end


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Plate 16: Manor Barn detail of roof apex


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Plate 17: Manor Barn detail of roof apex



Plate 18: Manor Barn centre section interior


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Plate 19: Manor Barn centre section roof timbers



Plate 20: Old Bank north elevation


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Plate 21: Old Bank south elevation



Plate 22: Old Bank west elevation


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Plate 23: Oblique view of east side of Old Bank



Plate 24: Old Bank roof structure


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Plate 25: Old Bank roof view looking west showing blocking



Plate 26: Workshop viewed from east


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Plate 27: Workshop viewed from south-east



Plate 28: Workshop interior space

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