



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Building Recording at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire July 2012



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

Amir Bassir

Report 12/135

July 2012



STAFF

Project Manager: Steve Parry BA MA FSA MIfA,
support from David J Leigh BA Hons
Text: Amir Bassir BSc PlfA
Fieldwork: Amir Bassir
Illustrations: Amir Bassir

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signature	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Tim Upson Smith		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No 130501
Project title	Archaeological Building Recording at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out buildings recording on a threshing barn at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire, prior to the conversion of the structure to housing. The stone and brick-built, two-storey building dates to the 19th century and was found to be unused though in good condition at the time of this survey. Apart from a narrowed window in the south elevation, no sign of alteration was visible in the structure.	
Project type	Building assessment	
Previous work	Unknown	
Future work	Watching Brief	
Monument type and period	19th- century threshing barn	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire	
NGR	SP 7958 9087	
Area	0.007 ha	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Assistant Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Amir Bassir	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	July 2012	
End date	July 2012	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Building Recording at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 12/135	
Author(s)	Amir Bassir	
Page numbers	20	
Date	July 2012	

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	3
3	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	3
	3.1 Historic background	3
	3.2 Historic maps	3
4	BUILDING RECORDING	5
	4.1 Ground floor	7
	4.2 First floor	7
5	CONCLUSION	21
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	21

Figures

Cover: General view of the site, looking west

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: 1807 Inclosure map of Ashley

Fig 3: 1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey map

Fig 4: Plan of the threshing barn

Fig 5: Elevations and section of the threshing barn

Fig 6: The southern elevation, looking north

Fig 7: The northern elevation, looking south

Fig 8: The eastern elevation, looking west

Fig 9: The western elevation, looking north-east

Fig 10: The northern door, looking north

Fig 11: The central threshing floor, looking north

Fig 12: Room G1, looking east

Fig 13: The threshing floor and the floor of Room G1 with the column to the right

Fig 14: The top of the column

Fig 15: The column base

Fig 16: Rooms G2 and G3 with brick partition, looking west

Fig 17: Room G2, looking west

Fig 18: The window in G2 with floor joists resting on the lintel

Fig 19: The brick partition supporting joists above rooms G2 and G3

Fig 20: Room G3, looking west

Fig 21: Room G3 showing joists supported by timber beams

Fig 22: The roof structure, looking east

Fig 23: Room F1, looking east

Fig 24: Room F1 showing the altered window with scar of former building visible to the right, looking south

Fig 25: View across the barn into F2, looking west

Fig 26: Room F2, the western elevation

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING
AT 1 GREEN LANE, ASHLEY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out buildings recording on a threshing barn at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire, prior to the conversion of the structure to housing. The stone and brick-built, two-storey building dates to the 19th century and was found to be unused though in good condition at the time of this survey. Apart from a narrowed window in the south elevation, no sign of alteration was visible in the structure.

1 INTRODUCTION

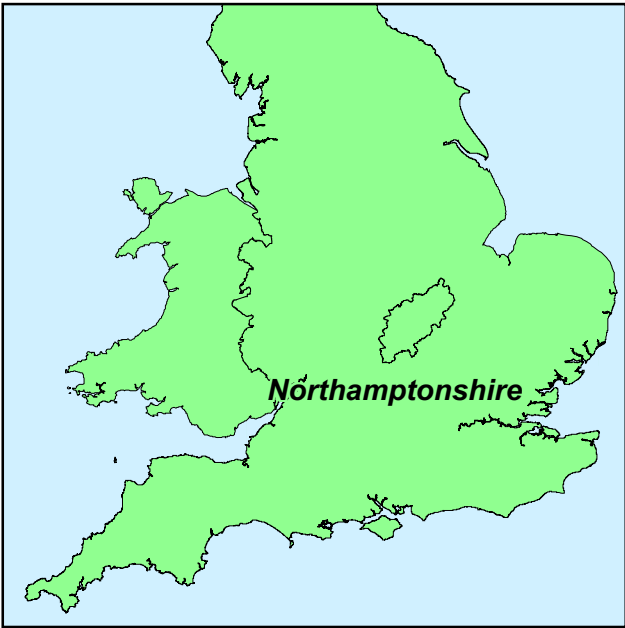
Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) were commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological buildings recording on a threshing barn at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 7958 9087, Fig 1).

The work was carried out in July 2012 in response to a condition of planning consent granted by Northamptonshire County Council for the conversion of the building to residential use and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Leigh 2012) in response to a brief for archaeological work issued by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council on the 26 June 2012 (Mordue 2012).

The site lies within the village of Ashley and is bound to the north by Main Street and to the west by Green Lane. Green Lane and Main Street enclose an open area of fields to the south and south-east of the site.

The underlying geology of the area is of Triassic and Jurassic mudstones, sandstones, siltstone and limestone (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>).

At the time of recording, there was ongoing work to other structures on the site. Some work, such as the removal of floorboards from the second floor and boarding, both internal and external, had already been undertaken in the threshing barn, therefore limiting access to the second floor and what could be recorded.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The principal objectives of the building recording are set out in the Brief (NCC 2012): to record and understand the nature, function and character of existing buildings and to place them in their historic, cultural and environmental setting. The level of recording was specified as Level 2 – a descriptive record (English Heritage 2006, 14).

The specific aims of the building recording were to:

- Provide a comprehensive visual record of the structures prior to conversion;
- Provide a comprehensive review of the local and regional historical context of the structures recorded;
- Produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long term deposition in order to “preserve by record” the buildings in their current form, prior to conversion;

A site visit was made in July 2012, when the principal exterior elevations were photographed. The interiors were photographically recorded to include structural details that might be lost during the conversion and notes were made of any features and alterations. Measured plans, sections and elevation of the buildings were obtained from North Point Surveyors.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Historical background

The village has origins in the Roman period. Excavations in the 1960s and 1970s revealed the remains of a Roman villa and ancillary buildings. The Roman road of *Via Devana* ran north of the village.

The village is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Ascele*, meaning “a clearing in the woods” as it was a hamlet comprising 320 people and 73 houses within the large hunting grounds of Rockingham Forest.

The village underwent extensive demolition and rebuilding in the mid to late 19th century. Thirty-one listed buildings and monuments are present within the village and part of the village is a designated conservation area.

3.2 Historic maps

The site lies within the village of Ashley and is bound to the north by Main Street and to the west by Green Lane. A visit was made in July 2012 to the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO) to look at relevant historic documents for the area.

1807 Inclosure map of Ashley (NRO Ref Inc 2 & 3)

This map shows several buildings on the site including a range of buildings concurrent with the position of the threshing barn (Fig 2). It is difficult to say with certainty how this range relates to the threshing barn but it is likely that these are earlier structures which were demolished prior to the construction of the current building. The barn shows no evidence to indicate that other structures previously abutted it. The site is shown on the plan as belonging to a John Peppin.



1807 Inclosure map of Ashley Fig 2

1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey map

The current barn is shown on the 1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of Ashley with another structure, aligned north-south, to the south. The farm has undergone some changes with additional buildings present which are not visible on the 1807 Inclosure map.



1886 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map Fig 3

4 BUILDING RECORDING

A survey of the barn was carried out in July 2012 during which all main exterior elevations and internal features and detail were photographically recorded.

The recorded building consists a 19th-century, two-storey, threshing barn. Threshing barns were constructed for storage and processing of grain and straw. They traditionally feature large opposing doors opening onto a central threshing floor where the processing of grain took place. Variations in threshing barn layout include multiple threshing floors within the same structure.

The invention of a threshing machine by Andrew Meikle in 1784 started a decline in the traditional hand process. Improvements to the mechanised process in the early to mid 19th century led to a decline in traditional threshing barns, some of which were altered to incorporate horse powered threshing machines.

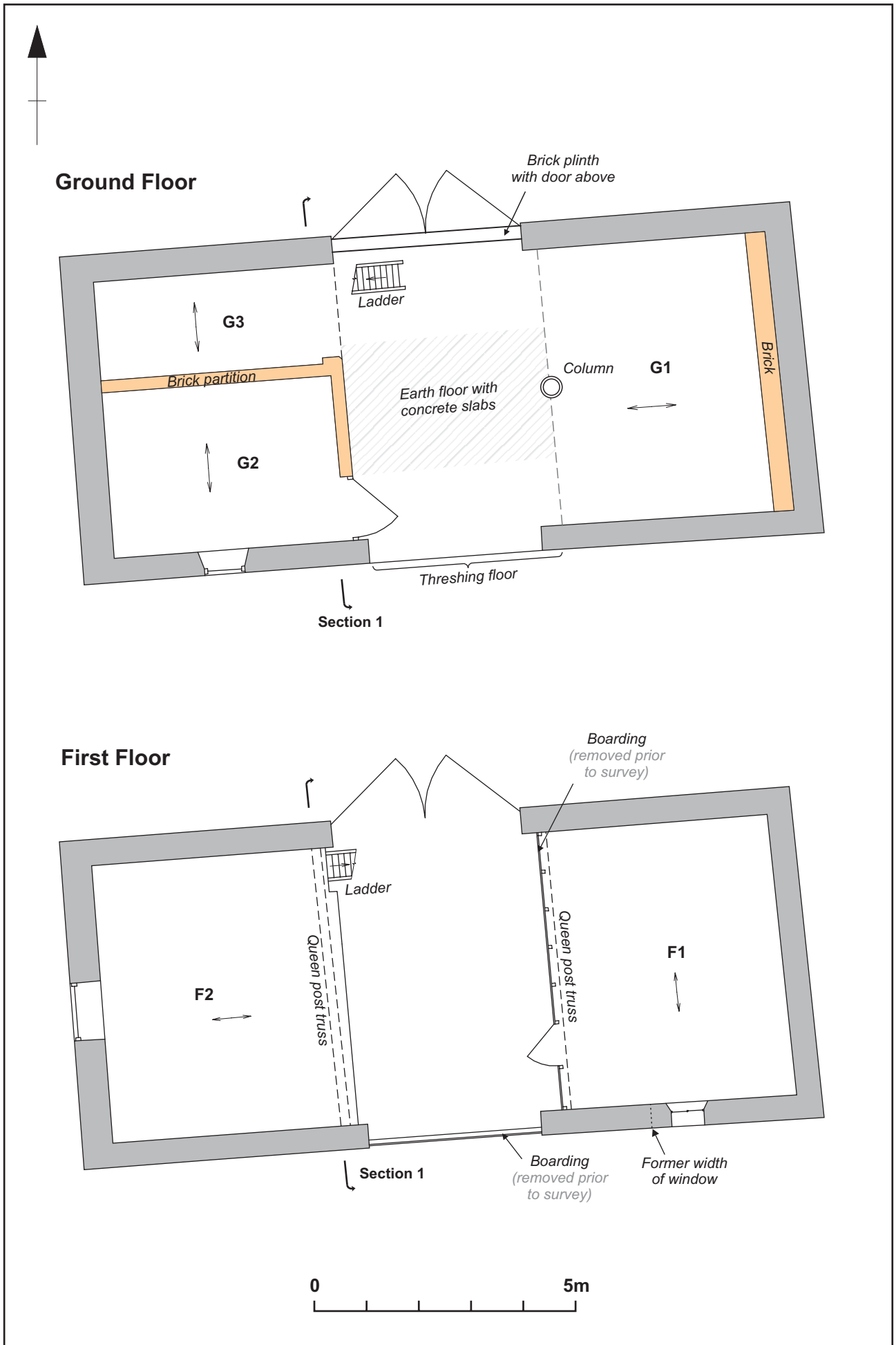
The building is primarily constructed from ironstone and pale yellow sandy limestone set in a lime mortar (Figs 6-9). Fragments of other stone, including flint, are also present in the fabric. The internal partitions of the barn are constructed from red brick and abut the main stone walls. Levelling timbers are also built into the fabric of the building.

The ground floor of the building is divided into the three rooms flanking the central threshing floor and two large doorways (Fig 4). The western side is divided into two rooms of unequal size, G2 and G3, by a red brick partition (Fig 16). The eastern side consists one large, open fronted room, G1. The first floor comprises two large rooms, F1 and F2 (Figs 23 & 26).

The structure is covered by a timber roof with grey Welsh slate tiles. The two doorways are flanked by a pair of queen post trusses with iron ties, which support a frame of machine sawn purlins, rafters and battens (Fig 22). The purlins are supported externally with iron ties. Two transverse beams join the truss tie beam of room F1 to the eastern wall (Figs 22 & 23). These are not supported externally with iron ties.

The building has two large entrances on the north and south elevations. A large wooden, double door is present on the northern elevation (Figs 7 & 10). Due to a roughly 0.3-0.4m drop in ground level from the street to the interior of the building, the door is atop an internal brick plinth and rises to eaves level, topped with a black painted timber lintel which is only visible externally. The interior face of the door features an iron locking and opening mechanism (Fig 10). The 2011 surveyors drawings of the building show boarding across the top half of the southern entrance. This boarding was not *in situ* during this survey but was present on site.

Electrical fittings and wiring were present throughout the structure on both floors.



Scale 1:100 (A4)

Plans of the threshing barn Fig 4

4.1 The ground floor

The ground floor consists a central threshing floor flanked by room G1 to the east and rooms G2 and G3 to the west (Fig 4). The threshing floor had been disturbed by the time of this survey. Flat lain, red brick surfaces lay before the two main entrances, with an earth floor between (Figs 4 & 11). It is possible that the area of earth floor may have been covered with flat concrete slabs.

Room G1 is a simple, open fronted room in which no functional fixtures or fittings were present. A wall of red brick is built against the eastern elevation of the room up to joist level, running the full width of the building (Figs 12 & 13). This wall supports the joists of the second floor. A concrete column with a classical style stone base is present, central to the western edge of the room, supporting the timber axial beam of the first floor (Figs 10 & 12). The stone base of the column rests on concrete slabs atop the brick floor of the room (Fig 15). The top of the column has been roughly cut to the required height, indicating that it was reused from a different location (Fig 14).

The room has a floor of flat lain, red bricks, lined with bricks on edge where they meet the threshing floor (Fig 13).

Rooms G2 and G3 are separated by a partition of red brick which supports the joists of the first floor (Fig 19). This partition abuts the western, stone wall of the main structure. The bricks are chamfered at the entrance to room G3.

Room G2 is approximately 3.2m wide with a timber framed, white painted window in the southern elevation. The window has white painted, red brick reveals and brick sill internally and has a white painted timber lintel which also supports joists for the first floor (Fig 18). A door (not *in situ* at the time of this survey) previously separated this room from the threshing floor. The room has a floor of red bricks laid flat. The walls, including the brick partition were painted white.

Room G3 is approximately 1.8m wide with no windows and no remains of a door. It is uncertain if a door had once separated the room from the threshing floor. The walls of the room, including the brick partition are painted white (Fig 20). The bricks of the partition to the south of the entrance to the room are chamfered. As with G2 and G1, room G3 has a floor of red bricks laid flat.

4.2 The first floor

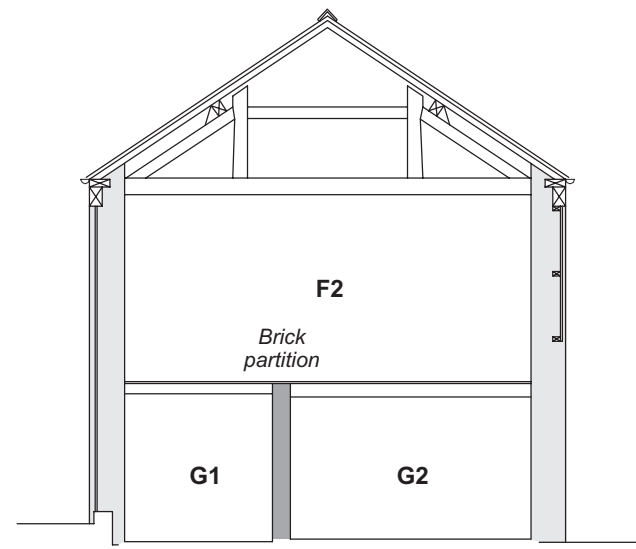
The first floor is divided into two large rooms F1 and F2 (Figs 4, 22 to 26), separated by and overlooking the central threshing floor and main entrances of the building. The floorboards of room F2 had been removed by the time of this survey and the room was inaccessible for closer observation. Access to the first floor from ground level is by wooden ladders, two of which were present in the building, fixed to the axial beams. It is unclear if the ladders present during the survey were original to the building.

The 2011 surveyors plan of the barn shows boarding along the western edge of room F1 (Fig 4). Evidence for this boarding was still visible on the wall of the room (Fig 24).

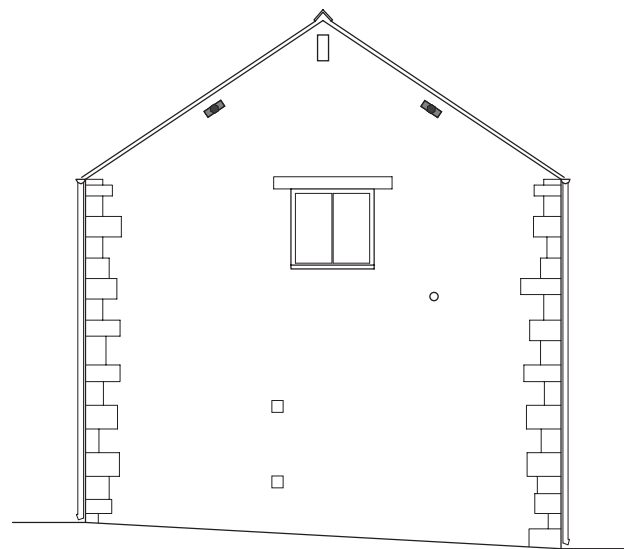
A single window is present in the southern wall of room F1 and shows signs of alterations, suggesting that it was originally wider than its current form (Fig 24). The window is topped with a timber lintel which runs the width of the current and former window.

The floor structure of Room F2 consists of two runs of joists on a north-south alignment, spanning rooms G2 and G3 (Fig 19). These are supported at either end by the brick partition and the north and south elevations. One joist above room F2 showed signs of reuse. Lengths of timber in the north elevation provide support for the joists at that end. The floor boards had been removed by the time of this survey and the room was inaccessible.

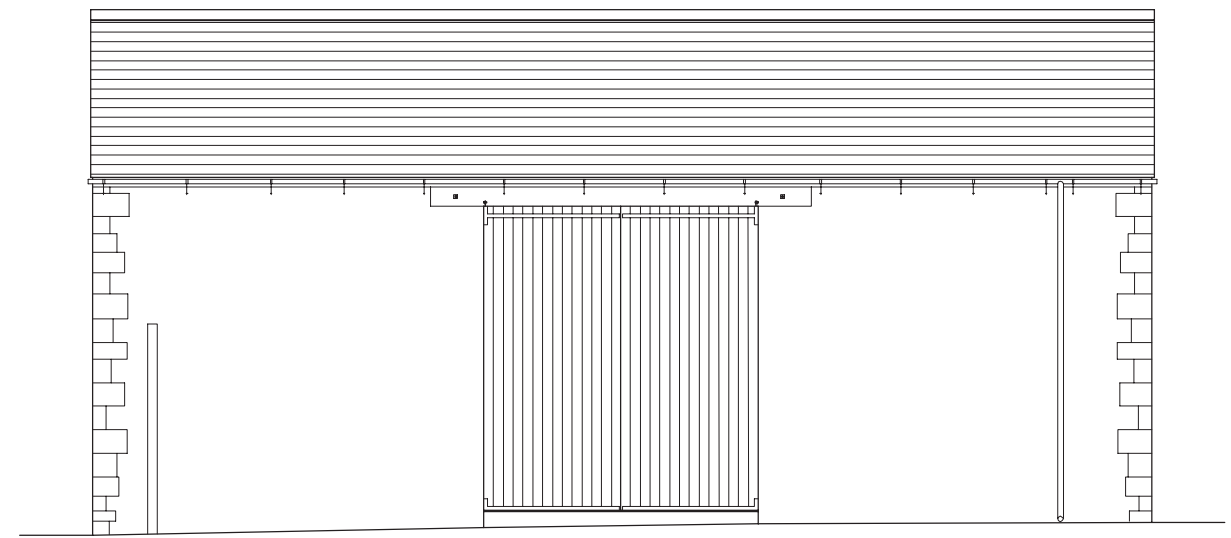
A two light, timber framed window with a curved, concrete sill is built midway up the western elevation, topped with a timber lintel just below eaves level (Figs 9 & 26). A narrow, rectangular vent is present just below the peak of the gable (Fig 26).



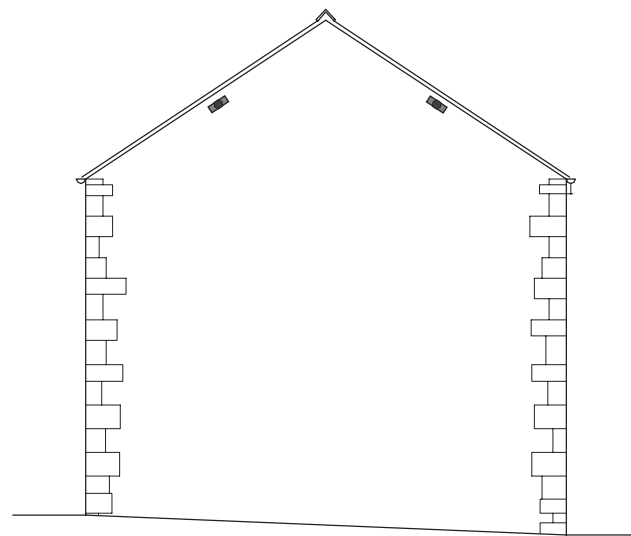
Section 1



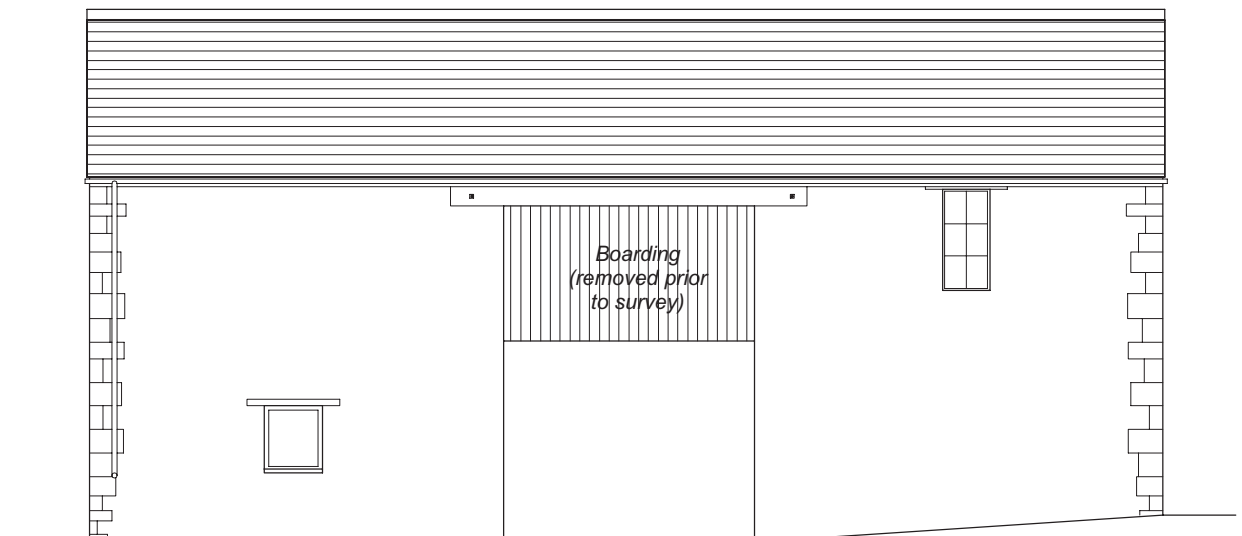
West elevation



North elevation



East elevation



South elevation





The southern elevation, looking north Fig 6



The northern elevation, looking south Fig 7



The eastern elevation, looking west Fig 8



The western elevation, looking north-east Fig 9



The northern door, looking north Fig 10



The central threshing floor, looking north Fig 11



Room G1, looking east Fig 12



The threshing floor and the floor of Room G1 with the column to the right Fig 13



The top of the column Fig 14



The column base Fig 15



Rooms G2 and G3 with brick partition, looking west Fig 16



Room G2, looking west Fig 17



The window in G2 with floor joists resting on the lintel Fig 18



The brick partition supporting joists above rooms G2 and G3 Fig 19



Room G3, looking west Fig 20



Room G3 showing joists supported by timber beams Fig 21



The roof structure, looking east Fig 22



Room F1, looking east Fig 23



Room F1 showing the altered window with scar of former boarding visible to the right, looking south Fig 24



View across the barn into F2, looking west Fig 25



Room F2, the western elevation Fig 26

5 CONCLUSION

As is fairly typical of agricultural vernacular architecture, the building is a mix of various building materials, utilising available resources such as the stone column in room G1. Other than the narrowing of the window in room G1, no evidence of structural alteration was visible in the barn.

The building has been in agricultural use since its construction in the 19th century and has remained so until recently when it will be converted into housing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atkins, T D, 1906 *Glossary of terms used in English Architecture*

Brunskill, R W, 1969 *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture*, Faber

EH 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*, English Heritage

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures*, Institute for Archaeologists

Leigh, D, J, 2012, *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Building Recording at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire*

Mordue, L, 2012 *Brief for a programme of archaeological building recording at 1 Green Lane, Ashley, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire County Council

Websites

<http://www.ashleyvillage.co.uk/> (accessed July 2012)

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> (accessed July 2012)

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html> (accessed July 2012)



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk

w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council