



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Buildings recording at Somerby House Farm  
8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire  
August 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire  
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Report 12/160

September 2012



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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		OASIS No 133308
Project title	Archaeological Building Recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out buildings recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire, prior to the demolition of a single storey outbuilding used as stables and a garage. As well as the demolition of the outbuilding, the construction of a new extension onto the existing house and the conversion of stables into garage and store will also take place. The main scope of this survey encompasses the outbuilding. At the time of this survey, the building was used for storage. The structure showed evidence of three phases of construction: a pre 19th-century fabric visible on the north-western external elevation, the 19th-century garage with adjacent wood shed and a modern brick extension to the south.	
Project type	Building assessment	
Previous work	Unknown	
Future work	Building recording	
Monument type and period	19th-century outbuilding	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby	
NGR	SK 7787 1047	
Area	0.32ha, approximate area of Somerby House Farm	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Richard Clark, Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire CC	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Amir Bassir	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	Ross Thain & Co Ltd	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	August 2012	
End date	September 2012	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Title	Archaeological Building Recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire	
Serial title & volume	12/160	
Author(s)	Amir Bassir	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING  
AT SOMERBY HOUSE FARM, 8 CHURCH LANE, SOMERBY  
LEICESTERSHIRE**

***Abstract***

*Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out buildings recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire, prior to the demolition of a single storey, outbuilding used as stables and a garage. As well as the demolition of the outbuilding, the construction of a new extension onto the existing house and the conversion of stables into garage and store will also take place. The main scope of this survey encompasses the outbuilding. At the time of this survey, the building was used for storage. The structure showed evidence of three phases of construction: a pre 19th-century fabric visible on the north-western external elevation, the 19th-century garage with adjacent wood shed and a modern brick extension to the south.*

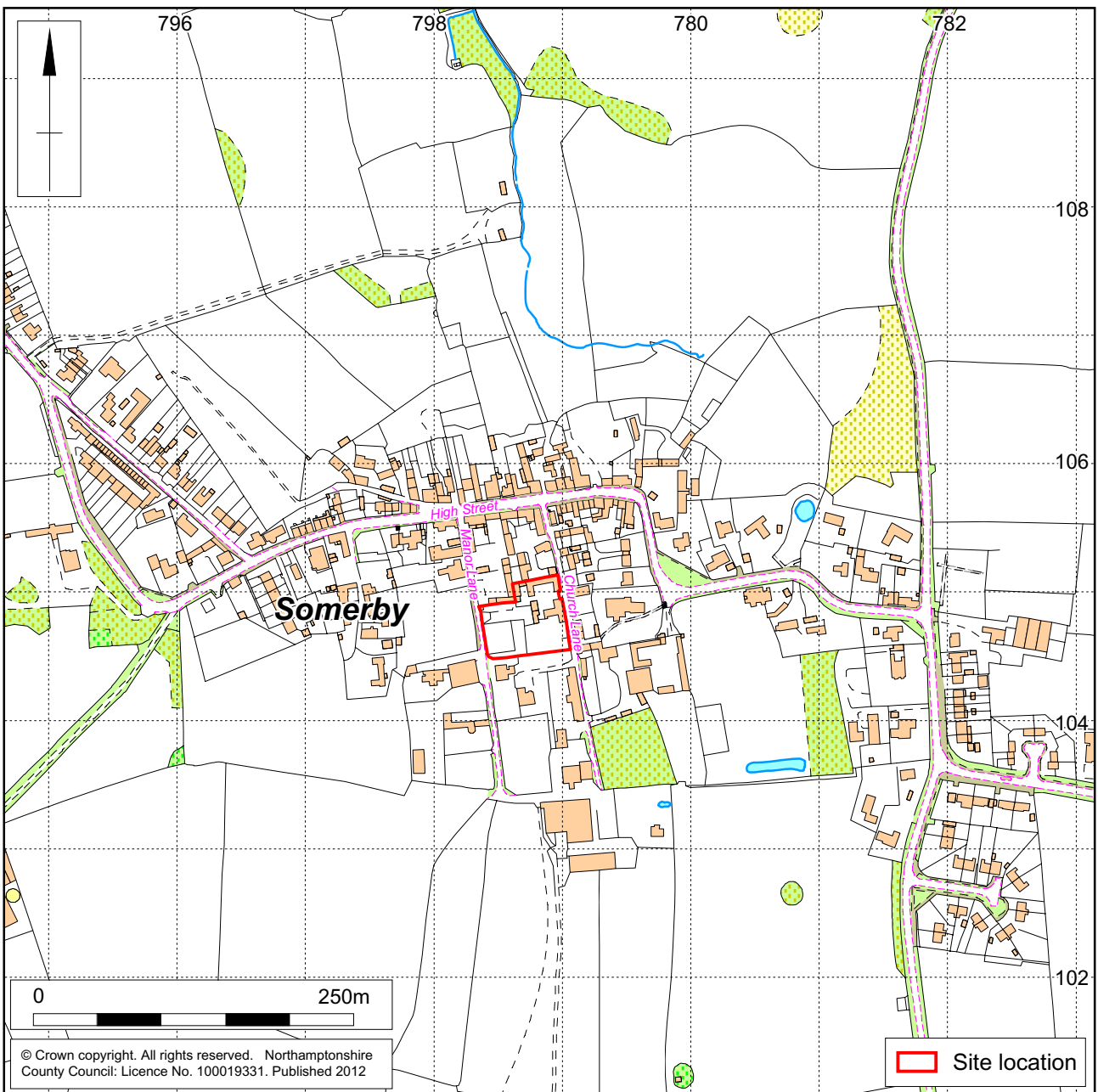
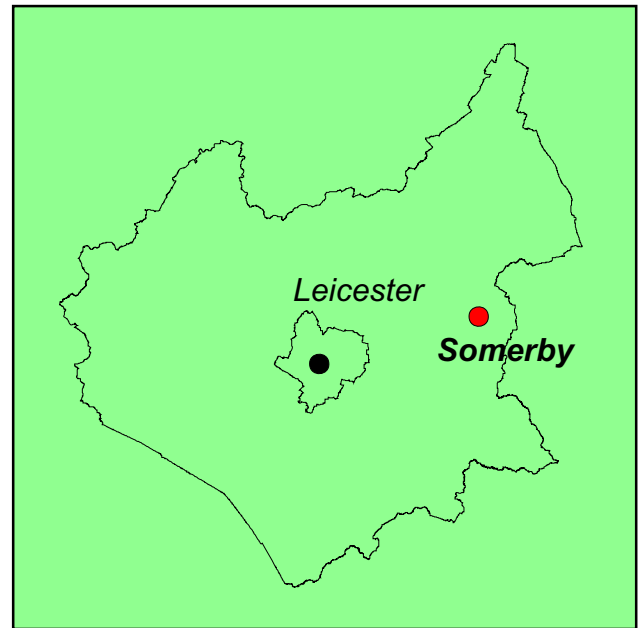
**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) were commissioned by Ross Thain & Co undertake an archaeological buildings recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire, prior to the demolition of an existing garage, construction of a new extension onto the existing house and the conversion of stables into garage and store (NGR: SK 7787 1047, Figs 1 & 2).

The work was carried out in August 2012 in response to a condition of planning consent granted by Leicestershire County Council and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2012) in response to the briefs issued for archaeological work issued by Richard Clark, Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC 2011a and b).

The site lies within the village of Somerby, between Church Lane to the east and Manor Lane to the west.

The underlying geology of the area is Lias Group mudstone, siltstone, limestone and sandstone overlain by glacial till. (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>).



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

## **2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The principal objectives of the building recording are set out in the briefs (LCC 2011 a and b) 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 August 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 Ross Thain & Co.

## **3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The listing description of Somerby House Farm describes the farm as early 18th-century with 19th and 20th-century additions and alterations. The site lies within the parish of Somerby which also encompasses Pickwell to the north. The main industry of the area has historically been agriculture with some quarrying of the local limestone. Nearby Lessthorpe to the north is regarded as a deserted village.

Much of the area was held by the Mowbray family until the 15th century when the estates passed into the ownership of William, Lord Berkley following the deaths of the Duke of Norfolk and his heir.

The area was inclosed in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.



Scale 1:250

Somerby House Farm

Fig 2



## **4 BUILDING RECORDING**

### **4.1 The Garage**

The outbuilding forms part of the western extent of the central farmyard. It is subdivided into a garage, wood store, stable and a storeroom containing an electrical fuse box and pipes (Fig 27). It is a single storey structure constructed of squared ironstone with a red pantile roof supported by a timber frame. Internally, the roof is hidden behind a flat ceiling throughout the structure.

The main part of the building comprises 18th and 19th-century stonework. This part of the building contains the garage and wood store. The southern extent of the building is a modern, brick-built extension which forms the stable and storeroom (Figs 25 & 27).

The garage is the largest room in the building. It is open fronted with a large pair of wooden doors facing the central farmyard (Figs 3, 4 & 27). The room forms an L-shape enclosing the wood shed. A large oil tank was previously housed in the space behind the wood store (Fig 13). Modern alterations in the garage consist of brick plinths to support the oil tank and a lowered ceiling supported by a brick block pillar against the west elevation (Fig 12). A circular flue pipe for a former freestanding stove descends through a square hatch in the ceiling (Fig 11).

The northern elevation of the garage appears to be of a different, perhaps older, pre 19th-century fabric than the main structure of the garage (Figs 10 & 25). The main farm building has an 18th-century origin and it can be assumed that the north elevation of the outbuilding represents the remains of a structure contemporary with the original farm. The west elevation shows the three phases more clearly, the fabric becoming more modern from north to south (Fig 25). An arched niche used as a wood store is built into the west external wall of the garage. This is of a later date than the wall into which it is built since it is surrounded by brick, in contrast to the stonework of the wall to the north (Figs 8 & 9). The brick work to the south of the niche is of a modern construction.

The southern extent of the building is a modern brick extension (Figs 5 & 7). This is subdivided into a stable and a utility or storeroom. Access to these rooms is via the east elevation. The stable and store room are separated by a wooden half wall running east-west down the centre of the structure (Figs 15 & 16). Blue spot pavers, perhaps re-used from other areas of the farm are used to floor the stable and store room.

### **4.2 The Stables**

The modern extension built against the south of the stables will also be demolished as part of the planned works. This is a brick-built structure constructed in the 1980s in keeping with the style of the stable and painted in a similar fashion internally (Figs 17 & 19). The older parts of the structure will be unaffected by these works. At the time of this survey, several of the rooms in the structure were used as storage and contained equipment and debris.

As with the garage, the stables appear to have a pre-19th-century origin represented by the stone-built portions of the structure (Fig 14). The east elevation has been refaced in red brick in the 19th-century. The stables show evidence of internal alterations including a blocked door between two rooms and a blocked window on the west elevation of the most northern room (Figs 12 - 23). In common with the other outbuildings, the stables are floored throughout with spot pavers. The rooms bear a combination of whitewash and black paint (Fig 21).



General view of the farmyard showing the garage, looking south-west Fig 3



East elevation of the garage, looking west Fig 4





The east elevation showing the modern extension Fig 5



The modern extension: stable and store, looking west Fig 6





The modern extension, south elevation, looking north Fig 7



The arched niche and modern extension, west elevation Fig 8





The arched niche showing phases of construction Fig 9



The north-west corner of the building Fig 10





The interior of the garage, looking south Fig 11

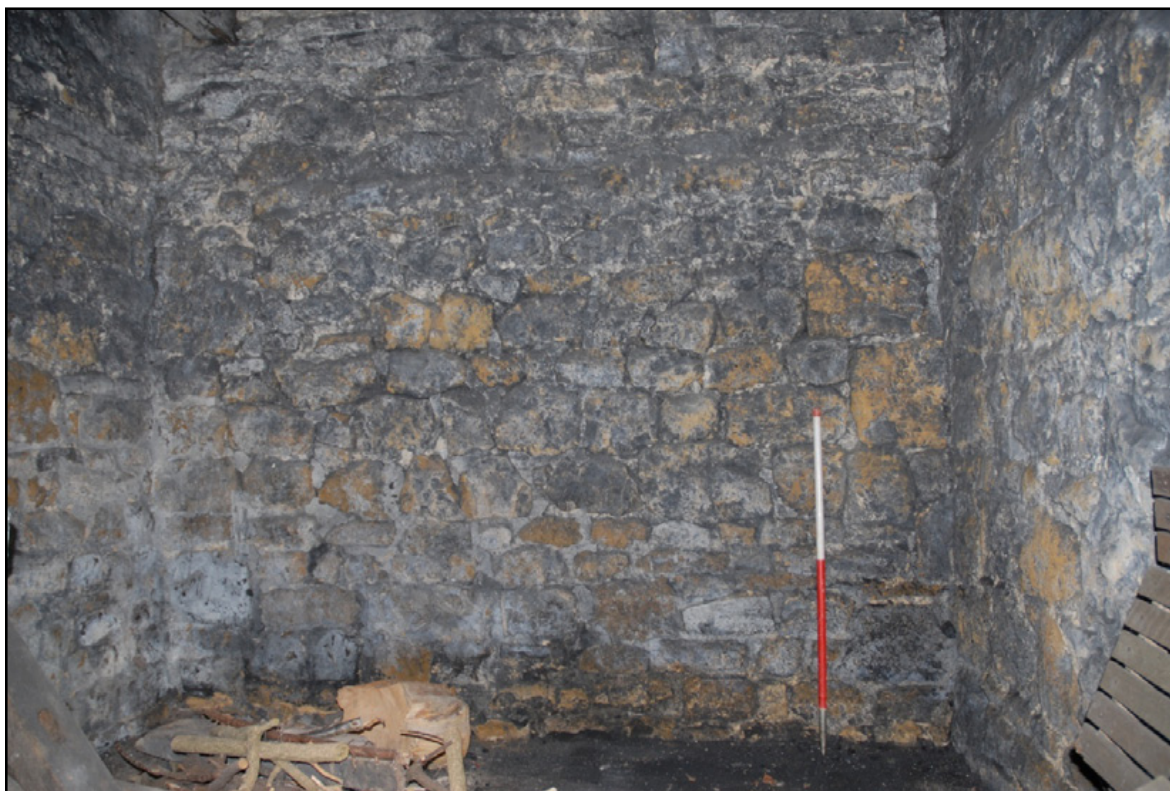


Modern breeze block roof support in the garage, looking west Fig 12





Position of the former oil tank in the garage, looking south Fig 13



Interior of the wood store Fig 14





The stable in the modern extension, looking west Fig 15



The storeroom in the modern extension Fig 16





The modern extension to the Stables Fig 17



The stables, looking north Fig 18



The interior of the modern extension to the stables Fig 19



Alteration to the former southern wall of the stables Fig 20





Interior of the stable with blocked door to the right Fig 21



Blocked doorway in the stable Fig 22

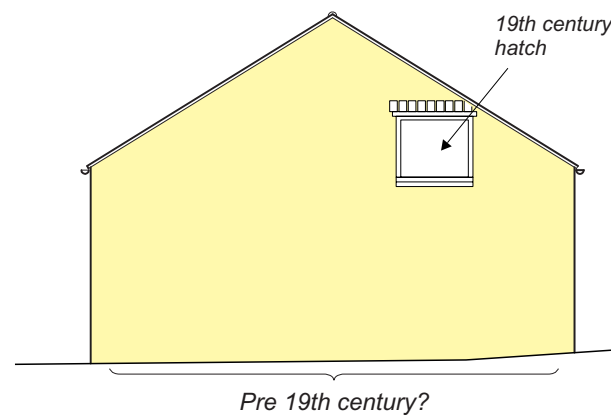




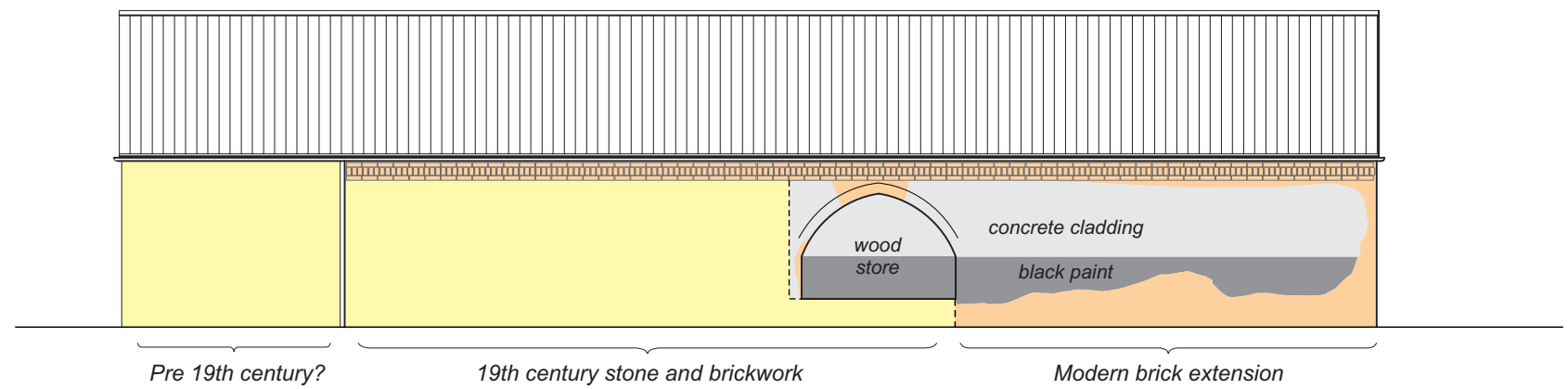
Blocked window in the west wall of the stables Fig 23



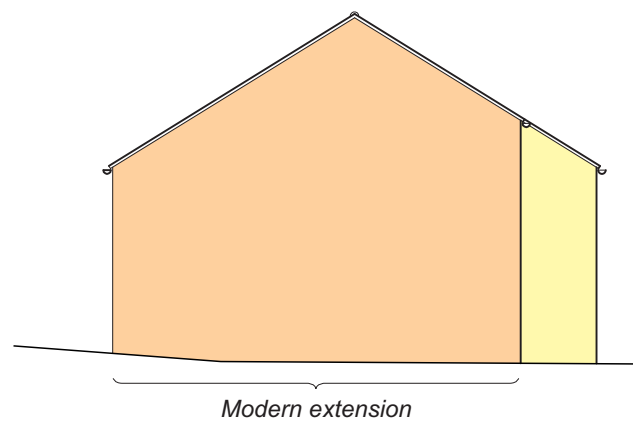
The original fabric of the stables at the north end of the east elevation Fig 24



**Garage - North elevation**



**Garage - West elevation**



**Garage - South elevation**

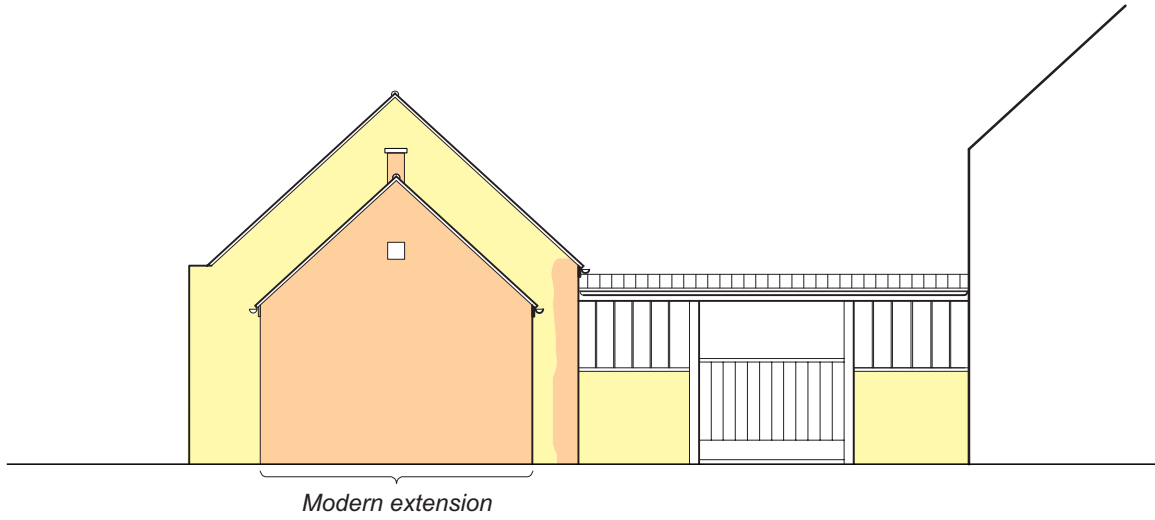


**Garage - East elevation**

Stone

Brick

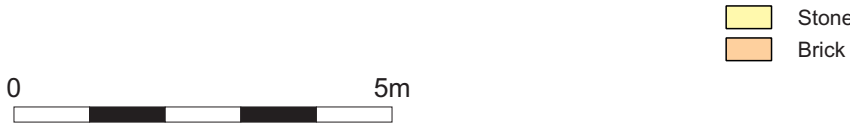




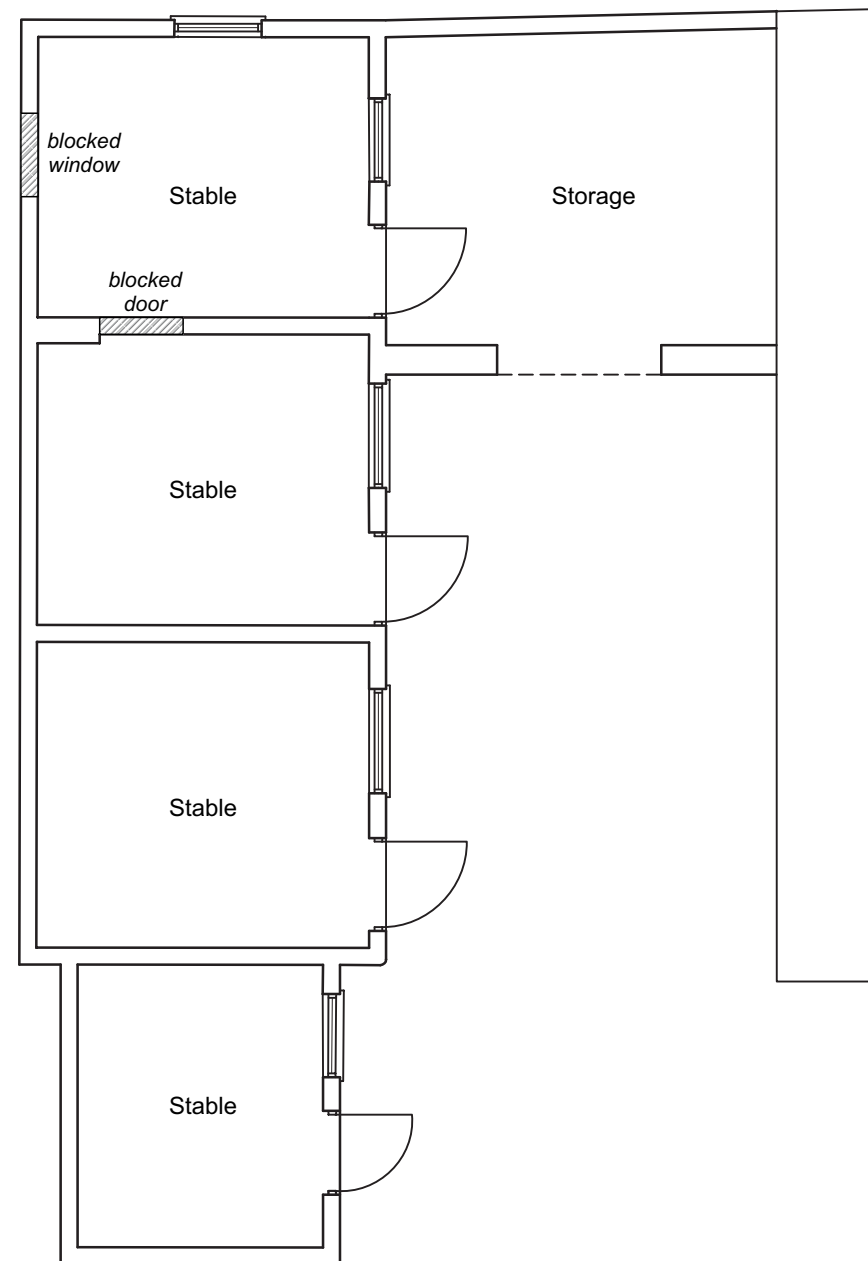
**Stables - East elevation**



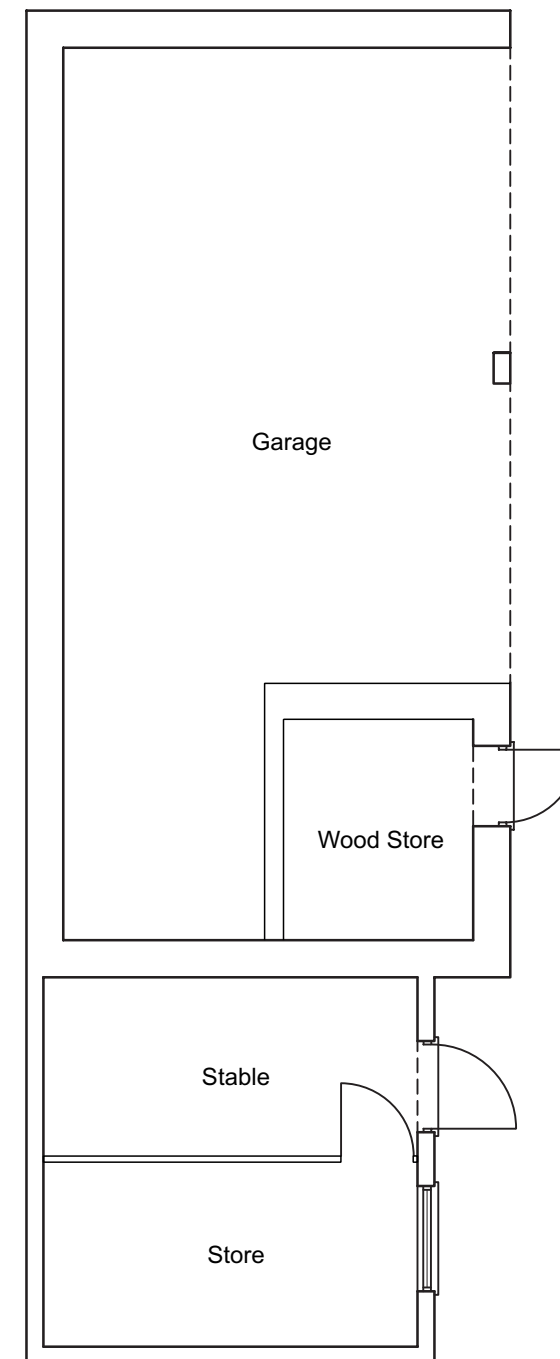
**Stables - South elevation**



**Stables Plan**



**Garage Plan**





## 5 CONCLUSION

The various outbuildings which make up Somerby House Farm provide evidence of a phase of 19th-century re-facing and alterations to older structures which appear to be contemporary with the original construction of the farm. These structures were then extended in modern times, in keeping with the style of the 19th-century fabric.

The garage, which is due to be demolished as part of the planned works provides a good example of this. The majority of the structure is of a 19th-century construction with the remains of an older fabric on the north elevation. The southern, brick built extension is of a modern construction.

The brick extension to the stables was constructed in the 1980s. The demolition of this extension should have very little impact on the main stables structure.

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Northamptonshire Archaeology  
a service of Northamptonshire County Council

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**Northamptonshire County Council**

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